

EMN FOCUSSED STUDY 2018

Labour market integration of third-country nationals in EU Member States.

National report on Latvia.

TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This template outlines the information that should be included in the National Contributions to this focused study. For national contributions, the total number of pages should **not exceed 55 pages**. A limit of **35 pages** will apply to the Synthesis Report, in order to ensure that it remains concise and accessible.

The study's outcomes will consist of national reports for every country participating in the EMN except Norway, and an EU-level synthesis report, summarising the main results. The study shall be disseminated to policy makers and practitioners through the regular dissemination channels of the EMN. Since the study is topical to policy development, the dissemination plan may also include EU-level and national Conferences. To discuss the study at an EMN Annual Conference could be one option.

TOP-LINE "FACTSHEET"

National contribution (1 page only)

Please introduce the study and draw out key facts and figures from across all sections of the Focused Study, with a particular emphasis on elements that will be of relevance to (national, regional or local) policymakers.

The aim of the study "Labour market integration of third-country nationals" is to collect information about the implemented¹ integration measures of third-country nationals. The focused study discusses general integration policy of third-country nationals in Latvia and integration policy on the local labour market. The study provides an insight into certain integration measures, provided by the state and non-governmental organisations with co-funding of the state and European Structural Funds. Besides, the study collects information about few integration measures provided by the private sector, available to the future and current foreign employees of certain companies.

In Latvia activities of integration are provided in accordance with Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy (2012–2018)² (hereinafter – Guidelines). The Guidelines contain key basic principles of the integration policy of Latvia, specify the issues to be settled and targets to be achieved as well as shall define certain tasks and institutions responsible for performance thereof. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for implementation of the Guidelines.

One of the key labour market policy planning documents is Guidelines on Inclusive Employment for 2015-2020³, where one of the basic principles is "to establish policy, promoting development of the labour market and social integration of immigrants and their children, as well as policy within the framework of which the skills of immigrants would be used for promotion of economic growth".

¹ Integration measures, available only to asylum seekers, refugees, persons with alternative status and students, are not reviewed within the framework of the study.

² Cabinet Order No. 542 "Regarding the Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy for 2012 - 2018"

³ Cabinet Order No. 244 "Guidelines on inclusive employment for 2015 - 2020", adopted in Riga on 12 May 2015 (Minutes No. 32, §21), available: http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba_tirgus/pamatnostadnes_latvijas_vestnesis.pdf.

On 31 December 2017 there were 2.1 million⁴ inhabitants in Latvia, 85% out of which were the citizens of Latvia, 11% were non-citizens of Latvia⁵ and 4% – nationals of other countries. In total on 31 December 2017 more than 92 thousand foreigners lived in Latvia, out of which 74 571⁶ were third-country nationals – 47 726⁷ with a permanent residence permit (hereinafter referred to as – PRP) and 26 845⁸ with a temporary residence permit (hereinafter referred to also as – TRP).

The study performed in 2017 shows⁹ that in general the situation in the area of integration of third-country nationals has significantly changed since 2014. Majority of foreigners living in Latvia with PRP and TRP are the citizens of Russia. The second biggest group of third-country nationals in Latvia is the citizens of Ukraine followed by the citizens of Belarus and Uzbekistan. Other third-country nationals are less occurred in Latvia, but the citizens of China, India and Kazakhstan are among them the most often. Additional information about the biggest groups of third-country nationals is collected in Image 1.

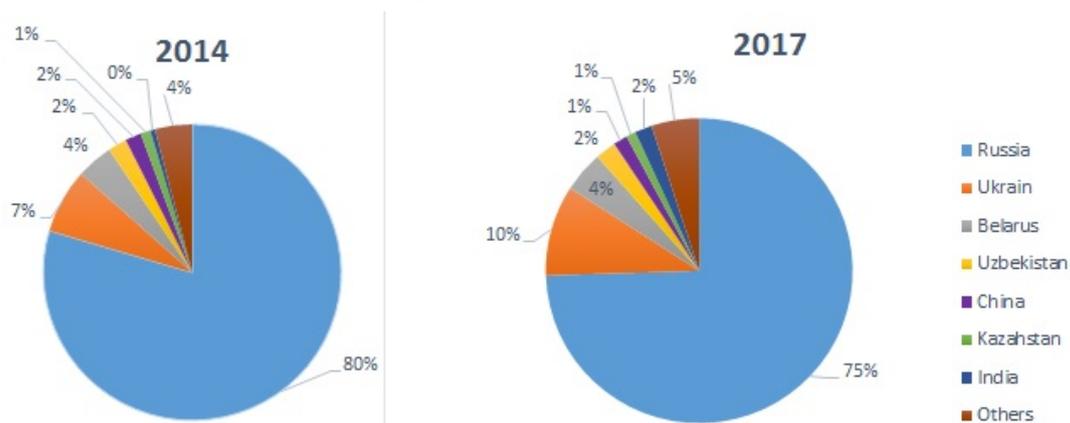


Image 1 Third-country nationals, to whom residence permits are issued in Latvia.

When describing the general situation in Latvia, it was concluded in various studies^{10,11,12, 13} that inclusion of third-country nationals in society and future plans about their life in Latvia are influenced by the variable immigration policy of the state. The biggest difficulties are related to the lack of knowledge or low level of knowledge of Latvian, which is the key pre-condition for successful integration in the labour market, education and business development. According to experts, demand for successive and high quality trainings in Latvian on different levels remain high among third-country nationals in all regions of Latvia.

⁴ Citizenship and migration data from the Population Register on 01.01.2018, available

http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/lv/assets/documents/1aaaa/ISVP_Latvija_pec_VPD.pdf

⁵ In Latvia - a person, who has the right to the passport of a non-citizen issued by the Republic of Latvia, in accordance with the Law On the Status of those Former U.S.S.R. Citizens who do not have the Citizenship of Latvia or that of any Other State.

⁶ Source: Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs

⁷ Source: Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs

⁸ Source: Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs

⁹ Study of the situation of third-country nationals in Latvia in 2017. Available http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/publications/BISS_Petijuma_zinojums_2017.pdf

¹⁰ Portrait of third-country nationals in Latvia, available http://www.sif.gov.lv/images/files/SIF/tres-valst-pils-port/Gramata_pilsonu_290615_web.pdf

¹¹ Study of the situation of third-country nationals in Latvia in 2017. Available http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/publications/BISS_Petijuma_zinojums_2017.pdf

¹² Social integration support activities for newcomers in Latvia : summary, available: http://providus.lv/article_files/3453/original/Mapping_Social_Orientation_LV_LATVISKI_26.03..pdf?1522063966

¹³ Participation of minorities in democratic processes in Latvia, available [https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/Mazakumtautibu%20lidzdaliba%20petijuma%20zinojums%202017\(1\).pdf](https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/Mazakumtautibu%20lidzdaliba%20petijuma%20zinojums%202017(1).pdf)

On 31 December 2017 there were 7688 residence permits issued with the right to employment.¹⁴ 2042 first time TRP with the right to employment were issued in 2017.¹⁵ It corresponds to 45% from the total number of third country nationals receiving first TRP in 2017. In relation to employment the first TRP were mostly received by persons from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. The number of TRP issued for the first time depending on the planned type of activity shows that only a small part of TRP is issued to highly qualified employees.¹⁶

When collecting statistical data, it may be concluded that the attraction of employed third-country nationals to various economical industries have changed in the area of employment. The proportion of third-country nationals employed in the transport, logistics and communications sector has rapidly increased since 2014.

Significant changes are made in the regulation of normative acts on immigration during recent years^{17,18,19} in relation to residence permits, labour force migration and commercial activities. At the same time with significant amendments to the Immigration Law the provisions for receipt of temporary residence permits were changed for third-country nationals - investors and various reliefs were approved for attraction of highly qualified employees from third countries.

In accordance with amendments to the Immigration Law²⁰, adopted on 2 February 2017, in order to ensure balanced development of the labour market and economics in the medium term, on 20 February 2018 the Cabinet approved a list of professions, where currently the significant shortage of labour force is to be observed and where foreign specialists could be attracted by applying preferential provisions, arranging work permits in cases when third-country nationals are invited to Latvia for work in these professions. At the same time the list is created in a way, in order to escape from the situation when employers attract low cost labour force from third countries with a purpose to reduce the average compensation in the particular speciality or industry.

1 Part I: General and labour market integration policies

*This section aims to provide an overview of general and labour market integration policies targeting third-country nationals across Member States, **excluding policies tailored for students/graduates, beneficiaries of international protection and asylum seekers**. The focus is on existing policies that have either been implemented recently (as of 2014) or that have been changed since 2014.*

1.1. OVERVIEW OF INTEGRATION POLICIES IN MEMBER STATES

Q1. Please briefly describe the context in your Member State pertaining to the situation of third-country nationals.

For this question please also include third-country nationals outside the scope of the study i.e. students, asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection.

- a) What are the main categories of third-country nationals coming to your Member State? Were there any changes in the composition from 2014 onwards?

¹⁴ Report on the migration and asylum situation in Latvia in 2017, available http://www.emn.lv/wp-content/uploads/ARM_2017_part2_LATVIA_FINAL_LV.pdf

¹⁵ Report on the migration and asylum situation in Latvia in 2017, available http://www.emn.lv/wp-content/uploads/ARM_2017_part2_LATVIA_FINAL_LV.pdf

¹⁶ The Role of Immigration for Labour Guaranty in Latvia, Synthesis Report, April 2018.

http://www.saeima.lv/petijumi/Imigrācijas_loma_darbaspeka_nodrosinajums_Latvija-2018_aprillis.pdf

¹⁷ Amendments to Immigration Law.- *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, No. 123 (5695), 29.06.2016– [came into force on 01.07.2016]

¹⁸ Amendments to Immigration Law.- *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, Nr. 242 (6069), 06.12.2017- [came into force on 01.01.2018]

¹⁹ Amendments to Immigration Law.- *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, Nr. 36 (5863), 16.02.2017- [came into force on 02.03.2017]

²⁰ Amendments to Immigration Law.- *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, Nr. 36 (5863), 16.02.2017- [came into force on 02.03.2017]

On 31 December 2017 more than 92 thousand foreigners lived in Latvia in total, 74 840²¹ out of which were third-country nationals – 47 977²² with a permanent residence permit and 26 863²³ with a temporary residence permit.

The number of temporary residence permits issued for the first time during the time period from 2014 to 2017 has decreased by several times for the citizens of Russia, China and Uzbekistan. While it has grown the most rapidly for the citizens of India. More detailed information about changes is summarized in Image 2²⁴.

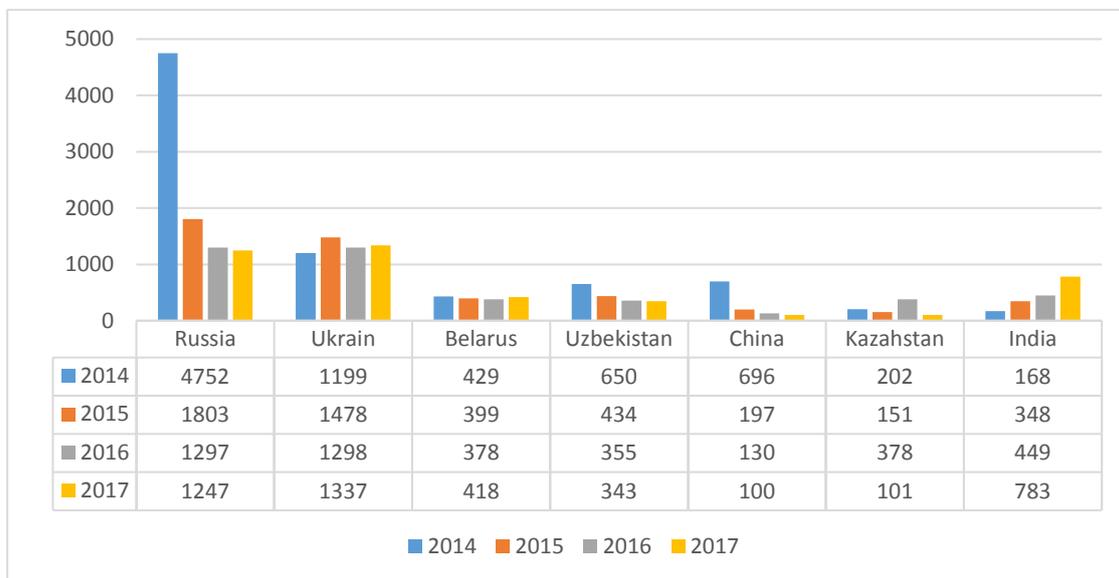
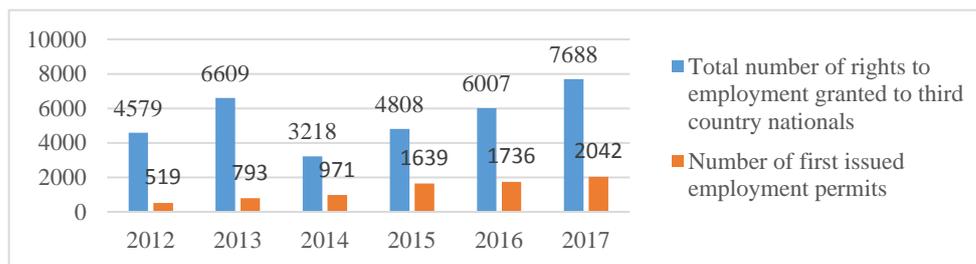


Image 2. Temporary residence permits issued for the first time to third-country nationals.

Until the end of 2017 the total number of granted rights to employment for third-country nationals has increased – 7688 rights to employment were granted (in 2016 – 6007, in 2015 – 4808, in 2014 - 3218).²⁵ Majority of third-country nationals were employed from Ukraine (4029), Belarus (1230) and Russia (1095).²⁶ Image 3 summarizes statistical data for comparison, what is the difference between the total number of third-country nationals employed in Latvia versus the number of work permits issued for the first time.



²¹ Source: Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, <http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/lv/sakums/statistika/uzturesanas-atlaujas.html>

²² Source: Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, <http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/lv/sakums/statistika/uzturesanas-atlaujas.html>

²³ Source: Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, <http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/lv/sakums/statistika/uzturesanas-atlaujas.html>

²⁴ Data of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs are used in Image 2

²⁵ Report on the Migration and Asylum Situation in Latvia in 2017, available http://www.emn.lv/wp-content/uploads/ARM_2017_part2_LATVIA_FINAL_LV.pdf

²⁶ Source: Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs

Image 3. Rights to employment granted to third-country nationals and residence permits issued for the first time in relation to employment.²⁷

2042 first time TRP with the right to employment were issued in 2017.²⁸ It corresponds to 45% of the total number of third-country persons receiving TRP for the first time. In relation to employment the TRP for the first time have been received by persons from the following countries: 102 from Azerbaijan, 268 from Belarus, 579 from Russia, 1120 from Ukraine.²⁹

When evaluating the issued TRP according to the reason of issue, it may be concluded that during the time period from 2014 to 2017 the biggest changes have occurred in the reason – investor into the immovable property, investors and employees. The number of temporary residence permits issued for the first time, depending on the planned type of activity, show that only a small proportion of TRP is issued to highly qualified employees. More detailed information is collected in Image 4³⁰.

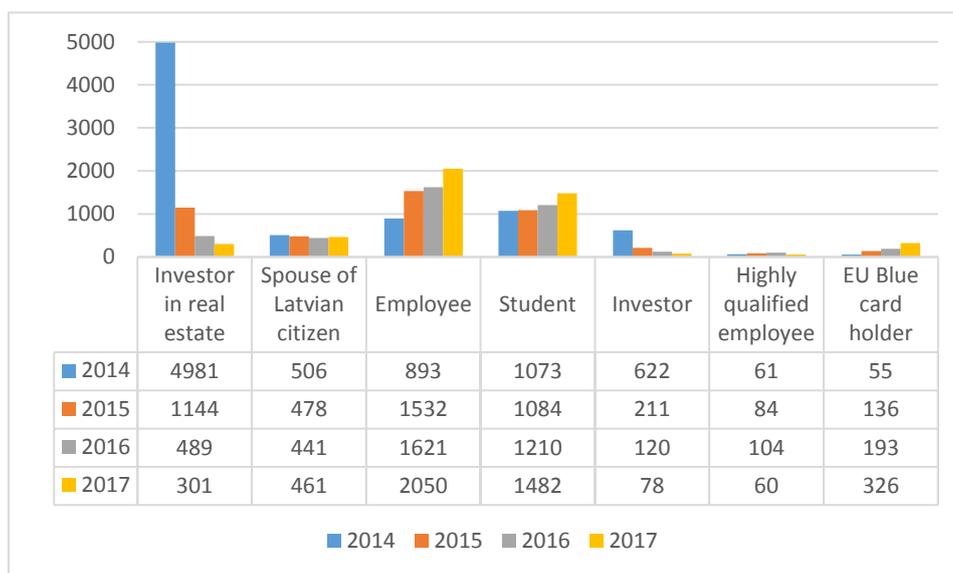


Image 4. Temporary residence permits issued for the first time according to biggest categories.

- b) In which sectors are third-country nationals predominantly occupied (e.g. agriculture, services, manufacturing, construction, personal care, seasonal jobs)? Are there differences in the employment rates of foreign and national citizens? Are there any differences in the employment rates by sex?

542 representatives of different professions were among third-country nationals employed in Latvia in 2017. The majority of guest workers were employed in such professions as truck and towing truck drivers (2911 or 38%), programmers (364 or 5%), cooks (288 or 4%), as well as pipelines assemblers (223 or 3%). Other professions, where the number of employed third-country nationals in 2017 exceeded 100, include concrete workers, ship repair mechanics, system analysts, building builders, shipbuilding locksmiths, builders, seasonal farm workers, professional athletes. It should be noted that the majority

²⁷ Report on the Migration and Asylum Situation in Latvia in 2017, available http://www.emn.lv/wp-content/uploads/ARM_2017_part2_LATVIA_FINAL_LV.pdf

²⁸ Report on the Migration and Asylum Situation in Latvia in 2017, available http://www.emn.lv/wp-content/uploads/ARM_2017_part2_LATVIA_FINAL_LV.pdf

²⁹ The Role of Immigration for Labour Guaranty in Latvia, Synthesis Report, April 2018.

http://www.saeima.lv/petijumi/Imigracijas_loma_darbaspeka_nodrosinajums_Latvija-2018_aprilis.pdf

³⁰ Data of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs are used in Image 4

of guest workers have had good education – 66% have acquired professional, vocational or higher education. In its turn, 24% of persons receiving work permits had principal and secondary education. Guest workers employed in Latvia already now occupy the work places, where insufficiency of labour force is currently observed and expected in the future.³¹ Image 5 summarizes a comparison about the most significant industries, where third-country nationals were employed during the time period from 2014 to 2017.

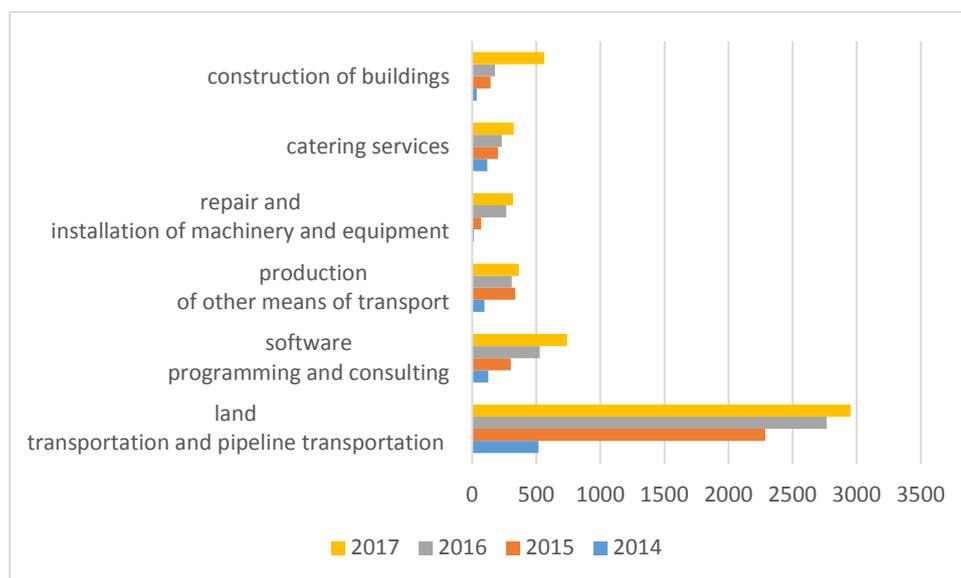


Image 5. The most significant areas of employment of third-country nationals.

The responsible institutions do not have technical possibilities to select statistical data about the total employment level according to nationality of the employee. In its turn, the State Employment Agency (hereafter – SEA) informs that on 31 December 2017 the authority has granted a status of unemployed person to 1487 (female – 1068, male – 419) third-country nationals and a status of job seeker to 22 (female – 8, male – 14) third-country nationals. The level of unemployment was 8.7% in Latvia in 2017³².

c) What are the main integration challenges your Member State focuses on? Describe briefly.

One of the challenges that policy makers face is overcoming the historical and social memory of Latvians that has caused lasting dislike for immigrants, in particular inflow of labour force. Considering the negative natural growth, the country has to make big efforts in order to ensure economic growth, the volume of necessary labour force and public understanding on these issues. Besides, when reflecting the topics, opinions related to migration and frameworks thereof, media increase the transmission of prejudicial attitudes to society.

From the perspective of third-country nationals, the lack of knowledge of Latvian is a significant challenge for access to the local labour market. In the Study of the Situation of Third-Country Nationals in Latvia³³ conducted in 2017, third-country nationals mentioned the lack of knowledge of Latvian as the most important reason for unemployment. Although a positive dynamics is to be observed for this indicator, in comparison with 2015, still more than a half (52%) of unemployed third-country nationals have indicated that they do not work due to lack of knowledge of language (in 2015 - such were 70.5%). The

³¹ The Role of Immigration for Labour Guaranty in Latvia, Synthesis Report, April 2018.

http://www.saeima.lv/petijumi/Imigracijas_loma_darbaspeka_nodrosinajums_Latvija-2018_aprilis.pdf

³² Data of the Central Statistical Bureau, available <http://www.csb.gov.lv/notikumi/2017-gada-bezdarba-limenis-latvija-samazinajies-lidz-87-46287.html>

³³ Study of the situation of third-country nationals in Latvia in 2017. Available http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/publications/BISS_Petijuma_zinojums_2017.pdf

next most often mentioned reasons for not working is low compensation (24%), difficulties to find job in their profession (20%) and too high requirements of knowledge of Latvian (17%). Another 13% of respondents indicated studies as a significant obstacle for work. At the same time, students quite often mentioned the difficulties to find a part-time job.

Q2. Is the term “integration” defined in national legislation or strategic documents of your Member State? If so, please describe the definition and its context, also specify whether these definitions explicitly relate to employment.

Please specify how this definition relates to the Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the EU adopted by the Council in 2004 (http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/common-basic-principles_en.pdf).

Definition of the term of integration is not included in any law. In Latvia in the context of integration policy the definition accepted in general is included in “Guidelines On National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy for 2012–2018”³⁴, which were approved under the order of the Cabinet Order in 2011. The definition of the society integration is as follows:

inclusion of all people living in Latvia in society, regardless of their nationality and self-identification. The joint basis of integration is Latvian language, feeling of belonging to the country of Latvia and democratic values thereof, tolerance towards the unique culture space of Latvia, creation of the common social memory. Society integration promotes civil participation that is driven towards democratic and rational solving of social issues, strengthens mutual cooperation and trust between individuals. Integration at the same time means openness of the nation and respect to detachment of minorities and their right to preserve their different identity. The duty of integration is also to promote inclusion of immigrants into society, offering motivating means and possibilities to acquire common basis of united society.

Q3. Does your Member State have a specific policy/strategic document/model for the integration of third-country nationals within the scope of this study? YES/NO.

If YES please briefly describe, by providing the title, time frame, institutional framework for implementation and oversight (around 200 words) *Please focus on general integration measures, as labour market integration will be addressed in the subsequent sections.*

NO

If NO, do you have a mainstream integration approach? Please very briefly describe (around 200 words)

Integration activities of third-country nationals are provided in Latvia in accordance with “Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy for 2012–2018”³⁵. The Guidelines contain basic principles of the integration policy of Latvia, specify the issues to be settled and targets to be achieved as well as shall define certain tasks, including the ones driven towards support of integration of third-country nationals, and institutions responsible for performance thereof. Two types of measures are distributed in the Guidelines: 1) measures of basic flow for whole society (strengthening of civil society and promotion of participation, elimination of discrimination, establishment and strengthening of language and culture space); 2) measures for specific target groups (diaspora, minorities, Roma, third-country nationals and non-citizens).

In addition, plans on the medium term introduction of the Guidelines are developed every two years. The implementation plan of Guidelines for 2017 - 2018³⁶ provide the social integration courses for

³⁴ Guidelines On National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy for 2012–2018, https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/KM_130515_Prec_Nac_ident_pilson_sab_un_ite_gr_polit_pamatnost_2012-2018.pdf

³⁵ Cabinet Order No. 542 “Regarding the Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy for 2012–2018”, adopted on 20 October 2011

³⁶ Cabinet Order No. 268 “Regarding the implementation plan of the Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy (2012–2018) for 2017-2018”, adopted on 18 February 2014.

beneficiaries of international protection, as well as services of individual consultations and measures, promoting participation of different newcomers in social and culture activities.

In the context of the focused study, there are regulatory enactments in force in Latvia, including the integration regulation of third-country nationals :

- Immigration Law, adopted by the Parliament on 31 October 2002 and the last amendments thereof that came into force on 1 January 2018, regulates the rights of third-country nationals to receive residence permits in Latvia, including for the purpose of employment, commencement of entrepreneurship and investment. In accordance with the procedure prescribed by this law, a foreigner has the right to request a temporary residence permit for a time period up to five years, when entering into an employment contract, becoming a member of the board or council, investing into commercial activities or immovable property, becoming a representative of the office of a foreign merchant for two years and a self-employed person for one year. The recent amendments to the Immigration Law provides three significant solutions - attraction of highly qualified specialists, shortened and improved general process for attraction of labour force, as well as a possibility for foreign students to work 20 hours per week with any employer.

- Cabinet Regulations « Specialities (Professions), Where Significant Shortage of Labour Force is to be Expected and Where Foreigners May be Invited for Work in the Republic of Latvia » (No.108 20.02.2018). In order to ensure balanced development of the labour market and economics in the medium term perspective, the Cabinet approved a list of professions, where significant shortage of labour force is currently observed and where foreign specialists could be attracted by applying preferential provisions, arranging work permits in cases, when third-country nationals are invited to the Republic of Latvia for work in these professions. Labour market policy in the context of attraction of third-country nationals is aimed at attraction of highly qualified specialists that would help to solve the shortage of labour force currently observed for number of companies, in particular in the processing industry and information communication technology sectors that is limiting the economic growth of Latvia, productivity increase of companies and attraction of investments, and thus also creation of well-paid work places.

If your Member State has a specific policy/strategic document/model for the integration of third-country nationals within the scope of this study:

Q4. What are the main fields/measures which are being actively implemented as part of the specific policy/ strategic document/model for the integration (e.g. knowledge of language, civic orientation, values, constitution, culture, history, recognition of qualifications, housing, education, support of joint activities between nationals and third-country nationals etc.)? Please briefly list (around 200 words)

Please focus on general integration measures, as labour market integration will be addressed in the subsequent sections.

In accordance with the plan of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (2014 -2020) (hereinafter – AMIF) on the implementation of the National programme in the area of integration, it is planned to support coordinating structure and capacity increase of various specialist; activities of the advisory platform of NGOs representing third-country nationals; integration measures improving the cross-culture dialogue skills; integration courses; measures enabling to improve specific programmes for third-country nationals; improvement of information availability; courses of the Latvian language for different groups and development of methodology for teaching Latvian and media quality increase by training journalists from the funds of AMIF.³⁷

In order to promote inclusion of third-country nationals, who lawfully stay in Latvia, in the education system and labour market, the Ministry of Culture provides a possibility for third-country nationals to learn Latvian and to attend free integration courses during events supported within the framework of the AMIF project. Integration courses provide the opportunity for third-country nationals to acquire comprehensive knowledge about Latvia - history, culture, public administration, education and health

³⁷ Study of the situation of third-country nationals in Latvia in 2017. Available http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/publications/BISS_Petijuma_zinojums_2017.pdf

services, as well as about opportunities for business start-ups and legal regulation. All measures for the acquisition of the Latvian language supported by the Ministry of Culture are available to all third-country nationals, regardless of their purpose of arrival and length of residence. Only measures specific to persons who has been granted international protection are not available to other third-country nationals.

In its turn, in order to ensure sustainable establishment of the coordination system in order to support participation of immigrants and operation in all Latvian regions, as well as in order to establish a coordinated support system for immigrants, providing valuable information about the support, adaptation and integration measures, the Information Centre for Immigrants was established in 2016, which continues the work as the Information Centre for Newcomers in 2018.

1.2. LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION POLICIES IN MEMBER STATES

Q5. Does your Member State have a specific policy/strategic document/model for labour market integration of third-country nationals within the scope of this study? YES/NO

NO

If YES: Please describe:

a) is it part of a general integration policy/strategy?

b) When was this strategy / policy document developed? Please briefly describe the rationale behind the strategy (considerable increase of incoming third-country nationals, labour market needs, social cohesion, fight against poverty, fight against discrimination etc.).

c) What is/are the target group(s) of the labour market integration strategy (e.g. all third-country nationals, family members, workers, or is there a specific focus, such as on recently arrived)?

d) Does your Member State provide labour market integration measures to all third-country nationals or only to those with a prospect of permanent residency? Please elaborate.

e) What are the main objectives of the labour market integration strategy?

Objectives:

If NO: does your MS have a mainstream approach with regard to labour market integration?

If so, please describe the mainstream approach focussing only on those measures for third-country nationals within the scope of this study.

One of the key policy planning documents in the area of labour market integration is "Guidelines on Inclusive Employment in 2015-2020"³⁸, the purpose of which is to facilitate creation of the inclusive labour market, using the potential of human resources of the Latvian inhabitants valuably, including reducing the social consequences of unemployment, supporting the return of unemployed persons on the labour market and remaining of representatives of groups subject to the risk of social exclusion on the labour market as long as possible, as well as improving the quality of work places. One of the basic

³⁸ Cabinet Order No. 244 "Guidelines on inclusive employment for 2015 - 2020", adopted in Riga on 12 May 2015 (Minutes No. 32, §21), available: http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba_tirgus/pamatnostadnes_latvijas_vestnesis.pdf.

principles of guidelines is “to establish policy, promoting development of the labour market and social integration of immigrants and their children, as well as policy within the framework of which the skills of immigrants would be used for promotion of economic growth”.

Latvian and integration courses that are mostly implemented within the framework of programmes of the European Union funds are available to third-country nationals. Introduction of Multi-annual programme for 2007 - 2013 of the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals was performed in Latvia during the time period until 2015. Availability and provision of services determined in regulatory enactments to third-country nationals and persons of international protection are regularly provided from the national budget. Since January 2016 the activities in the area of admission and integration of third-country nationals and persons of international protection are implemented within the framework of the AMIF planning period for 2014 - 2020. 22 projects were implemented during 2016 and 2017 with a support from AMIF. 12 projects out of them were in the area of asylum and migration and 10 projects – in the area of integration, where third-country nationals were the direct target group of the projects. Both, state authorities as well as non-governmental organizations have got involved in the implementation of projects.³⁹

Q6. Have the increased migration flows since 2015 had any influence on the current regulation and/or policy of integration of third-country nationals in the labour market (e.g. has there been an increase of cooperation between different stakeholders and services as a consequence of increased migration flows or some measures/activities/finances were stopped due to new identified priorities)? If so, please briefly describe the changes.

Please do not focus on measures for beneficiaries of international protection, but only on changes in integration measures for other third-country nationals as a result of the migration flows since 2015.

As a result of migration flow experienced in 2015 changes have mostly occurred in legislation regarding the provided integration measures that refer to asylum seekers, refugees and persons with subsidiary protection. Also cooperation on integration of third-country nationals between various institutions and organizations has increased.

Q7. Have there been any debates in media/academia/NGOs on integration generally and integration in the labour market specifically, recently? Refer to the target group within the scope of this study. Please shortly describe the topics discussed.

During the recent years the biggest discussions in media were caused by “refugee crisis”, however according to the conclusions of the study “Reflexion and framing of migration in the Latvian media”⁴⁰, the concepts and target groups are often mixed, therefore it is not possible to differentiate the discourse of refugees and other migrants in media. Media coverage of migration and third-country nationals in media has been paternalistic, respectively, the reflected persons are categorized as different – without identity and a crowd, where all persons have similar signs and also features, which, in its turn, determine discourse of verbal publication. This topic is often used in order to portray the issues being the focus of attention of politicians and political decisions.

Amendments to the Immigration Law, adopted in 2014, which provided more strict conditions for acquisition of residence permits for persons, who invested into acquisition of the immovable property, caused more political rather than media or public discussions.

In 2017 - 2018 discussion at the government level were activated, mostly with participation of organizations of employers, regarding attraction of foreign workers and possible reliefs in the area of immigration. Discussions took place due to the Amendments to the Immigration Law, adopted by the

³⁹ Study of the situation of third-country nationals in Latvia in 2017. Available http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/publications/BISS_Petijuma_zinojums_2017.pdf

⁴⁰ Reproduction and framing of migration in the Latvian media (2015 - 2016). Available [https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/Migracijas%20atspoguļojums%20un%20aramejums%20LV%20medijos\(2017\).pdf](https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/Migracijas%20atspoguļojums%20un%20aramejums%20LV%20medijos(2017).pdf)

Parliament on 2 February 2017, which determined preferential provisions for highly qualified third-country nationals in the professions, where a significant shortage of labour force is expected.⁴¹ The Ministry of Economics developed the Cabinet Regulation "List of Specialities (Professions), Where Significant Shortage of Labour Force is to be Expected and Where Foreigners May be Invited For Work in the Republic of Latvia", which was adopted by the government on 20 February 2018, including 237 professions/ specialities in the list.⁴² Few employers' organizations, indicating on the lack of labour force, proposed to supplement the list of professions with other professions, where the medium or low qualification is required. For example, Employers' Confederation of Latvia (hereinafter – *LDDK*) and the Association of Haulers "Latvijas auto", as well as the Ministry of Transport proposed to include truck drivers in the list of professions. *LDDK* also recommended to supplement the list with specialists of the food industry and agriculture industry, as well as professions of the hospitality industry (cooks, hotel maids, dish washers etc.). In its turn, the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia (hereinafter – *LBAS*) proposed to delete several categories of highly qualified specialists from the list, such as doctors, indicating on the low salary as the reason for lack of labour force. Also the organizations of the agriculture and food industry recommended the decision makers to make further reliefs to employers for attraction of seasonal workers in the food and agriculture sector. While the Ministry of Economics and *LBAS* considered that promotion of massive inflow of medium and low qualification workers may provoke decrease of the average salary in the particular speciality or industry.⁴³

At the same time discussions of experts were held in 2017 regarding the Plan for society integration policy, organized by the Ministry of Culture. In the report "Strengthening of the unifying identity and cultural space of Latvia. Recommendations for the Plan on the Society Integration Policy for 2019 - 2025"⁴⁴ experts have collected the current information and results of discussions⁴⁵, including the section about integration of third-country nationals.

Q8. Is the labour market integration of third-country nationals within the scope of this study, seen as a political priority in your Member State and if so, by whom (national government, legislator, or other political actors)?

Among the policy priorities of the Government of Latvia is the reduction of labour force supply and demand mismatch in several sectors of the economy, which would affect Latvia's economic growth prospects. Given the low birth rates and negative migration saldo, the topic of attraction of foreign labour force has become topical. It directly correlates with the need to evaluate trends in the integration policy

⁴¹ It was determined that for requesters of the EU Blue Card, who will be employed in the profession that is included in the list of professions approved by the Cabinet, where significant shortfall or labour force is projected, the labour payment shall be determined pursuant to the average monthly gross payment of employees working in Latvia in the previous year, by applying the rate 1.2 (so far it was – 1.5). At the same time it was determined that in cases when a foreigner will be employed in the profession, including in the list of professions approved by the Cabinet, where significant shortfall of labour force is expected, the vacant position applied to the State Employment Agency shall be vacant for at least 10 working days (until now - one month). In accordance with amendments to the Immigration Law, the European Union Blue Card shall be granted also in cases, when the persons have not acquired the relevant higher education, but they have experience of at least five years in the relevant area.

⁴² Cabinet Regulation No. 108, Minutes. No. 11, § 26.

⁴³ *K.Liepiņa, Kas strādās vasarā – pirms sezonas kārtējo reizi trūkst darba roku* (Who will work in summer - workforce is missing again before the season), 27.04.2018, available here: www.delfi.lv/bizness/biznesa_vidē/kas-stradas-vasara-pirms-sezonas-kartejo-reizi-trukst-darba-roku.d?id=49976521

⁴⁴ The Ministry of Culture, the University of Latvia, Diaspora and Migration Study Centre of the University of Latvia "Strengthening of the unifying national identity and cultural space of Latvia. Proposals for the society integration policy plan for 2019-2025", Riga, 2017, available: https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/Ekspertu%20zinojums%20vienojosas%20nacionalas%20identitates%20un%20kulturtelpas%20nostiprinasanai.pdf

⁴⁵ For example, the report included a recommendation to adapt the service of the Latvian mentor not only for refugees and persons with alternative status (that NGOs plan to introduce in the middle of 2018), but also for other groups of newcomers, in order to help them to acquire professional vocabulary and better fit into the work environment. Experts emphasized the need to improve coordination of the integration policy for third-country nationals, introducing the principle of the one stop agency, to ensure free Latvian classes for newcomers, to train specialists, service providers and employers on the cross-cultural communication, anti-discrimination and diversity etc. It should be noted that several recommendations are currently being implemented within the framework of PMIF projects, administered by the Ministry of Culture (Latvian and integration classes for third-country nationals, Information Center for newcomers etc.)⁴⁵ and the Society Integration Foundation (project "Promotion of diversity", the purpose of which is to promote employment and socio-economical inclusion of persons subject to the risks of social exclusion and discrimination, and providing education for employers and their employees and raising public understanding on the issues of social inclusion and prevention of discrimination as one of the activities).

of third-country nationals in Latvia. After lengthy political discussions, on 13 February 2018, the Cabinet of Ministers supported the "Conceptual Report on Immigration Policy", which analyses the foreigners entry system and sets out concrete steps for improvement. The aim of the Conceptual report is to identify the key conditions which should be included in the Immigration Law and which would facilitate the development of foreigners' entry system that is balanced and corresponds to the interests of Latvia thus ensuring the protection of the national security, public order and Latvian population interests.

1.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION POLICY: INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Q9. Please provide an organogram of the institutional framework for the labour market integration of third-country nationals within the scope of this study indicating responsibilities of the different governmental actors in implementing integration policies and measures. Please also include local level and central level governance structures.

Please also include any other stakeholders/major players (e.g. Public Employment Services, NGOs, chambers of commerce, trade unions), if they have a significant role. Local level initiatives should only be included, if i) they arise from a national level mandate, or ii) they are established / operating through national funding mechanisms.

<p>Ministry of Welfare State Employment Agency (SEA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Development of the labour policy and organization and coordination of implementation thereof •Support measures provided by SEA to unemployed persons, job seekers and persons subject to the unemployment risk •Short-term forecasts of the labour market
<p>Ministry of Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Development and coordination of the society integration policy •Administration of projects of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF): Information centre for newcomers, Latvian and integration classes for third-country nationals
<p>Ministry of the Interior Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Policy making in the area of migration •Granting and annulling of residence permits and rights to employment
<p>Ministry of Education and Science</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Recognition of diplomas acquired abroad •Professional improvement courses, lifelong education
<p>Ministry of Economics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Medium-term and long-term forecasts of the labour market •Discussions on the availability of labour force and preferences for attraction of foreign workers in various professions
<p>The Society Integration Foundation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Financial support and facilitation of the society integration •The project “Promotion of diversity” (co-funded from the European Social Fund (ESF)), the purpose of which is to promote employment and socio-economical inclusion of persons subject to the risks of social exclusion and discrimination
<p>Social partners, employers, non-governmental organizations, experts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cross-sectoral Dialogue platform (union “Shelter “Safe Home””) •Discussions about the issues of attraction of foreign workers •Discussions on the Society integration policy plan

Q10. Does your Member State produce periodic monitoring reports (e.g. annual reports) on labour market integration of third-country nationals within the scope of this study? If yes, what

are the main integration indicators? How are they compiled and by whom? How do they relate to the Zaragoza indicators adopted in 2004⁴⁶?

Please briefly describe main trends observed, especially focusing on the indicators related to the labour market integration of third-country nationals. Please describe the methods (qualitative, quantitative) and data (census data, survey data, administrative data) used to produce such reports.

Pursuant to the order of the Ministry of Culture, studies on the situation of third-country nationals (who stay in Latvia on the basis of temporary residence permits and permanent residence permits not longer than 20 years) are developed in Latvia. So far such studies were made in 2009⁴⁷, 2015⁴⁸ and 2017⁴⁹. The purpose of studies is to understand the current situation, to assess changes and to create informative base for further implementation of the national immigration and integration policy. In addition, the summary "Strengthening of a unified national identity and culture space of Latvia"⁵⁰ was developed in 2017 on the basis of order of the Ministry of Culture. The purpose of the summary is, on the basis of the current studies in the area of development of civil society, statistical data, reports from authorities and information placed on mass media, to provide formulation of issues, directions for solutions as well as recommendations on the results and performance results of the policy of the area for inclusion into the Society Integration draft plan for 2019 - 2025.

The Manual on the methodology of assessment of the integration policy of third-country nationals⁵¹, developed in 2011, which is based on the basic principles of the integration policy defined by the EU (Zaragoza indicators) was used for studies conducted in 2017. In accordance with the assessment of the integration policy of third-country nationals, the methodology includes eight basic areas of the public life policy:

- Latvian language and basic knowledge about Latvia,
- employment,
- health,
- education,
- social and legal protection,
- dwelling,
- social contacts,
- political and civil participation.

Besides, it is determined that discrimination is included in all above mentioned areas of public life policy in the methodology for assessment of integration policy, therefore it is not distributed as a separate area.

Q11. Please describe the main challenges and obstacles in designing and implementing labour market integration policies for third-country nationals within the scope of this study in your Member State?

Please also mention which stakeholders face these challenges and obstacles.

Ministry of Culture is responsible for development and introduction of the national integration policy. According to the experts of the ministry, the key challenges in the context of development of the integration policy is the insufficient link between the immigration and integration measures, and lack of legal framework for integration measures.⁵² While, in relation to the introduction of the integration policy, the most significant challenge is coordination of integration measures and information availability, because also the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of

⁴⁷ Immigrants in Latvia: inclusion possibilities and conditions, 2009. Available

http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/resources/imigrantu_integracija/Imigranti_LV.pdf

⁴⁸ Analysis of the national identity, civil society and integration policy areas in Latvia, evaluating the implementation of the Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy (2012–2018)–" during the time period from 2012. – to 2014, considering the results and performance results of policy, determined in Section 5 of Guidelines, 2015. Available https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/Rez-rad_BISS.pdf

⁴⁹ Study of situation of third-country nationals in Latvia in 2017. Available

http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/publications/BISS_Petijuma_zinojums_2017.pdf

⁵² Presentation "Integration policy", 2016. Available

old.iksd.riga.lv/upload_file/IKSD_pievienotie/0_2016/04_2016/amitie_code_prezentacijas/4.%20Integracijas%20politika.pdf

Environment and Regional Development, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defence and the Society Integration Foundation as well as non-governmental organizations are getting involved in the process of creation of united society together with the Ministry of Culture.

On the basis of description of situation, previously performed studies and results of discussions in focus groups, experts have identified the following key issues in the context of introduction of integration policy of third-country nationals that are related to both, policy makers and policy introducers as well as third-country nationals themselves and other newcomers:

1. Lack of coordination during implementation of the integration policy. It is not always clear what authority is responsible for introduction of the integration policy and coordination between various involved institutions and organizations (including NGOs that introduce any activities) is missing. Coordination is delayed also by the fact that assessments on the integration of newcomers are performed irregularly, possibilities are restricted to respond as soon as possible to the identified shortages and necessities.
2. Availability and succession of acquisition of Latvian. The current volume of education classes is not sufficient, breaks between classes are too long, long waiting list for commencement of classes, besides practically it is possible to acquire only the first two levels of language skills free of charge.
3. Access to pre-school and secondary education. The fact that children do not know Latvian and that additional courses are not available delay the study process. Besides, the communication between teachers and children - newcomers and adaptation promotion process is imperfect due to language barrier, because it is short of financial and personnel resources and skills.
4. Support for promotion of employment. Available support measures for promotion of employment, including measures for teaching Latvian and increase or supplementation of professional qualification, are available in a targeted way only to recipients of international protection and registered unemployed persons, besides the access of all newcomers to such measures is restricted also due to language barrier. Big proportion of third-country nationals speak Russian in their work environment and do not feel the need to learn Latvian, as well as the current offer of language classes is not always easily available to employed persons. Access to employment is made difficult also due to recognition of education or professional qualification, acquired in foreign countries, in Latvia.
5. Availability of integration courses and support measures. Like availability of language classes, also availability of integration courses is based on the funding of projects, limiting the succession and continuity thereof. Besides, the content of integration courses not always correspond with the needs and interests of newcomers and is rather informative than interactive.
6. Limitations of civil and political participation. Persons without the citizenship of Latvia do not understand the various ways how it is possible to get involved in the decision making due to lack of information or availability of information in a foreign language.
7. Availability of the dwelling market. Prices of dwellings make it difficult to provide a place of residence for themselves and support for covering expenses of a dwelling to such group of newcomers is practically not available, because the offer of social apartments of local governments is influenced by the situation in each region or city.
8. There is a low level of understanding and tolerance both in society in general as well as among those people, who work with the target group on the daily basis.

⁵⁰ Strengthening of the unifying identity and cultural space of Latvia. Proposals for the society integration policy plan for 2019 -2025. Expert's report", 2017 Available https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/Ekspertu%20zinojums%20vienojosas%20nacionalas%20identitates%20un%20kulturteļpas%20nostiprinasanai.pdf

⁵¹ Manual on the methodology of assessment of the integration policy of third-country nationals, 2011. Available http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/resources/imigranti2011/BISS_TVVP_integr_pol_novert_metodika_2011.pdf

⁵² Presentation "Integration policy", 2016. Available old.iksd.riga.lv/upload_file/IKSD_pievienotie/0_2016/04_2016/amitie_code_prezentacijas/4.%20Integracijas%20politika.pdf

9. Lack of funding for introduction of comprehensive integration measures has also influenced the achievement of performance results and significantly limits the planning of further activities.⁵³

2 Part II: Member States measures and practices facilitating labour market integration of third-country nationals

*This part aims to provide an overview of the main integration approaches and identifying existing individual measures that have either been implemented recently (as of 2014) or that have been changed since 2014. The target group is third-country nationals across Member States, **excluding students/graduates, beneficiaries of international protection and asylum seekers.***

2.1 OVERVIEW OF MAIN INTEGRATION AREAS

Q12. Please indicate in the table below and describe the main areas/components of your policy for integration of third-country nationals into labour market.

If your Member State has a mainstream policy, please focus only on specific measures for third-country nationals' integration into the labour market within the scope of the study

Please focus on:

- a) *The main objectives and approach in each relevant area, and actors involved.*
- b) *Briefly describe the implementation framework.*

Please only refer to the general approach for each area without describing specific measure, which will be described in the section below.

Area/component	General overview Please describe the scope and aim under each area. If relevant, specify if measures are voluntary or compulsory and is they are provided free or charge.	Stakeholders Briefly describe who is responsible of planning, implementing, monitoring and for the oversight of the implementation of measures under each area.
1. Training and Qualification (including digital tools aiming to promote learning and foster integration into the labour market)	Measures for increase of qualification and skills are available to third-country nationals, who have received a status of an unemployed person at the State Employment Agency (hereinafter – SEA) in accordance with the labour market demand. They include trainings and employment services, including practical trainings at the employer, competition increase measures, acquisition of informal education, professional further education courses, paid public works, measures for commencement of self-employment or entrepreneurship. Participation in the offered	SEA is responsible for introduction and implementation of measures.

⁵³ Strengthening of the unifying identity and cultural space of Latvia. Proposals for the society integration policy plan for 2019 -2025. Expert's report", 2017 Available https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/Ekspertu%20zinojums%20vienojosas%20nacionalas%20identitates%20un%20kulturteļpas%20nostiprinasanai.pdf

	measures of SEA is voluntary. The voucher method is used for certain measures, when a participant of the measure - an unemployed person receives a grant 5 euro per study day.	
2. Enhancement of (soft) skills	General purpose of the Latvian classes is to promote inclusion of persons, who are third-country nationals and lawfully stay in Latvia, in the education system and labour market, as well as to improve availability of services to the target group. Latvian classes are offered also by several local governments within the framework of their budgets for persons declared in the territory of the local government.	Within the framework of AMIF projects, the Latvian classes are implemented by the Latvian Language Agency, which is a direct administration authority, the union "Education Development Centre" and University of Daugavpils.
	Free integration courses are organized within the framework of projects supported by AMIF. The general purpose of courses is to promote inclusion of third-country nationals in the Latvian society.	Within the framework of AMIF projects, the integration courses are implemented by the union "Cooperation platform", Lifelong education, culture and science communication union of the Daugavpils University "Intelligence Park" and the union "Innovation Centre".
	Persons having a status of an unemployed person or job seeker are offered by SEA to attend the language classes (Latvian, English, German, Russian, French, Swedish and Norwegian) if such need is identified. The purpose of language classes is to ensure increase of qualification and skills of unemployed persons and job seekers, promoting competitiveness thereof on the market. Participation in the courses is voluntary and is organized on the basis of the voucher method, when a participant of the measure can choose the education institution by himself and additionally - an unemployed person receives a grant 5 euro per training day.	SEA is responsible for introduction and implementation of measures.
3. Provision of information and counselling	In order to ensure establishment and operation of sustainable coordination system for support of participation of immigrants across all regions of Latvia and in order to establish coordinated support system for immigrants,	Operation of the "Information Centre for Immigrants" within the framework of the project is provided by the non-governmental organisation "Shelter "Safe Home"". The

	<p>who have acquired the right to stay in Latvia, providing valuable information about support, adaptation and integration services in Latvia, the Ministry of Culture has established a uniform coordinating structure "Information Centre for newcomers", which is operating as "one-stop agency" and where every third-country national may receive the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - necessary information about life in Latvia; - consultations of professional lawyers regarding residence permits and procedure for receipt thereof, regarding working possibilities in Latvia, health care, education, social and household issues; - psychologist's consultations in the situations of crisis or after trauma for settlement of issues; - translation services into 15 rare languages; - in order to promote the socio-economical inclusion process of the target group, consultations are provided to service providers, employers and local social workers; - in order to improve mutual communication and cooperation between institutions involved in the integration process of the target group, the "Cross-sectoral dialogue platform" is established, involving the representatives of public authorities, local governments, non-governmental organisations and private institutions, including entrepreneurs, therein. 	<p>project is co-funded within the framework of AMIF.</p>
	<p>Third-country nationals, who have legal ground to stay in Latvia, have access to free individual consultation with the</p>	<p>The career consultant's service is provided by the SEA.</p>

	<p>career consultant⁵⁴. The consultation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interview, during which the consultant evaluates the particular situation and selects the appropriate consultation methods, taking into account motivation, education, current needs, health status of the person and other nuances; • upon finding out the wishes and skills of the person, the consultant helps to find and purposefully use their personal abilities; • provides information about the most appropriate services of the SEA in the particular case and, if necessary, helps to draw up CV, motivation letter and to establish the strategy for searching a job. 	
	<p>SEA organises “Informative days” for persons with a status of an unemployed person or job seeker, where information is provided about the range of services available at the SEA as well as providing informative support in searching for a job. Such “Informative days” take place in all branches of SEA at least once per week.</p>	<p>SEA is responsible for introduction and implementation of measures.</p>
<p>4. Enhancement of intercultural/civic relations in the workplace</p>	<p>Employers, who employ qualified third-country nationals, implement measures for integration of such persons in the society of Latvia, providing Latvian classes, health insurance and providing a support on the issue of dwelling.⁵⁵</p>	<p>Employers</p>
<p>5. Tailor-made comprehensive programmes/plans/contracts targeting specific and/or vulnerable groups</p>	<p>SEA has developed activation measures for <u>long-term unemployed persons</u>, during which it is possible to receive individual consultations of</p>	<p>SEA is responsible for introduction and implementation of measures.</p>

⁵⁴ As far as all services of SEA are provided in the official language, then if a third-country national has failed to acquire the official language in the level in order to be able to understand information, as much as possible the opportunity to ensure free translation services is used within the framework of the project of the union “Shelter “Safe Home”” or a person commanding the language is attracted, providing information in the language understandable to the customer.

⁵⁵ Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, *Trešo valstu pilsoņu situācijas izpēte Latvijā 2017* (Study of the Situation of Third-Country Nationals in Latvia, 2017). Report on results of the study, available https://www.km.gov.lv/uploads/ckeditor/files/Sabiedribas_integracija/Petijumi/TVP_petijuma_zinojums_2017-BISS.pdf

	<p>specialists (career consultant, psychotherapist and psychologist). Within the framework of the measure, an unemployed person may perform paid health check with the occupational doctor, to receive narcologist's opinion, to perform determination of professional suitability and to participate in the motivation programme, which is developed in particular for unemployed persons with addictions.</p> <p>In order to promote inclusion of unemployed persons, being in less beneficial situation, including long-term unemployed persons, in the society and settlement for permanent work, the SEA offers subsidised work places.</p>	
	<p>In order to ensure balanced development of the labour market and economics in the medium term perspective, the Cabinet approved a list of professions⁵⁶, where significant shortage of labour force is currently observed and where foreign specialists could be attracted by applying preferential provisions, arranging work permits in cases, when third-country nationals are invited to the Republic of Latvia for work in these professions. Preferences included in the regulation refer only to highly qualified specialists.</p>	<p>The responsible authority is the Ministry of Economics, who develops the medium-term and long-term forecasts for labour market and maintains the labour market analysis and forecasting system.</p>
<p>6. Incentive measures for migrants or employers</p>	<p>Work search support measures of the SEA⁵⁷ – development of the individual job search plan, profiling of an unemployed (classification for further involvement in the active employment measures), determination of the appropriate work, information on the search methods for work are available to third-country nationals as well as any other unemployed persons or</p>	<p>The career consultant's service is provided by the SEA.</p>

⁵⁶ Cabinet Regulation No. 108 "Specialities (Professions), Where Significant Shortage of Labour Force is to be Expected and Where Foreigners May be Invited for Work in the Republic of Latvia" – *Latvijas Vēstnesis* No. 47 (6133), 6 March 2018.

⁵⁷ As far as all services of SEA are provided in the official language, then if a third-country national has failed to acquire the official language in the level in order to be able to understand information, as much as possible the opportunity to ensure free translation services is used within the framework of the project of the union "Shelter "Safe Home"" or a person commanding the language is attracted, providing information in the language understandable to the customer.

	<p>job seekers registered with the SEA.</p> <p>Entrepreneurs, when hiring immigrants for work, may use the same support provided by the SEA as when employing any citizen of Latvia, for example, to receive partial grant for salary, work supervisor, in certain cases also for adjustment of the work place in case of the subsidized work or training with the employer.</p>	
<p>7. Support for self-employment</p>	<p>All unemployed persons and job seekers registered with the SEA, including third-country nationals, have a possibility to participate in the measure for commencement of commercial activity or self-employment. The purpose of the measure is to provide advisory and financial support, helping unemployed persons with prior preparation and introduction in the performance of commercial activity to commence commercial activity or self-employment. Consultations on the preparation and development of the business plan are provided.</p> <p>As far as participation in this measure requires the relevant education and quite good knowledge of Latvian, the involvement of third-country nationals in this measures in very low.</p>	<p>SEA is responsible for introduction and implementation of measures.</p>

2.2 PROMISING EXAMPLES OF INTEGRATION MEASURES IMPLEMENTED BY MEMBER STATES

This section focuses on selected measures initiated and at the same time implemented and/or financed by the Member States. Please note that any support measure provided by civil society organisations without any (financial) involvement of the Member State is beyond the scope of the study. Only those measures by civil society organisations that receive public support are included.

The focus is on labour integration measures for regularly staying third-country nationals with a right to work. The target group also includes third-country national family members of EU nationals and of third-country nationals. Measures specifically targeting students/graduates and beneficiary of international protection should not be included.

Please describe 1 -2 measures across integration areas for a total of up to 6 measures per MS.

Please prioritise specific measures developed with the aim to support third-country nationals' labour market integration and which are considered a good or promising practice by relevant actors.

Please also include measures (if available) that address the labour market integration of vulnerable or specific groups (vulnerable third-country nationals, women, etc.).

Please do not mention measures focussing on (EU) nationals, beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers and students/graduates only. Mainstream measures which are accessible also for (EU) nationals and beneficiaries of international protection should be listed below only in case they represent examples of good or promising practices regarding the integration of third-country nationals (i.e. the measure is frequently used by third-country nationals, there is a positive feedback from third-country nationals etc.).

Labour integration areas

1. **Training and Qualification** (e.g. vocational/job training, recognition of qualification/skill assessment (not to map legal procedures), combating over-qualification (matching skills/qualification with labour market needs), measures to accelerate insertion of third-country nationals into the labour market, digital tools)
2. **Enhancement of (soft) skills** (e.g. work-based language courses, or other language courses for improvement of chances on the labour market, computer literacy, self-development)
3. **Provision of information and counselling** (e.g. enhancement of knowledge about the labour market, career guidance, counselling, mentoring, coaching, website, leaflets, IT programmes/applications)
4. **Enhancement of intercultural/civic relations in the work place inclusion** (e.g. prevention of discrimination and awareness raising about diversity in the workplace, civic/ social-cultural orientation courses provided as a part of inclusion in the workplace)
5. **Tailor made measures** to specific group of third-country nationals (e.g. programmes/plans/contracts containing different elements of labour market integration for e.g. women, vulnerable persons)
6. **Incentive measures for migrants or employers** (e.g. measures to encourage employers to hire migrants or migrants to take a job)
7. **Support for self-employment** (e.g. entrepreneurship courses, courses on how to set up a company)

Type of measures

1. Programme and systematic measures (multi-year / long term)
2. Projects (ad-hoc)
3. Legislative/policy (structural) measure

Please fill out the table describing the measures and please copy the table below for further measures.

Measure 1	
Overview	
Name	Cabinet Regulations No. 108 "Specialities (Professions), Where Significant Shortage of Labour Force is to be Expected and Where Foreigners May be Invited for Work in the Republic of Latvia"
Type	<i>Legislative/policy (structural) measure</i>
Area	<i>Tailor-made to specific group of third country nationals (e.g. programmes/plans/contracts containing different elements of labour market integration for e.g. women, vulnerable persons)</i>
Access	Highly qualified third-country nationals
Target group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made labour market integration measure (only third-country nationals) <input type="checkbox"/> Mainstream labour market integration measure (for all) <i>If the measure is for all, please describe here how third-country nationals are specifically targeted in the measure</i>
Coverage	<i>National</i> <i>If "other", please add further information here</i>
Budget	N/A
Link	https://likumi.lv/ta/id/297537-specialitates-profesijas-kuras-prognoze-butisku-darbaspeka-trukumu-un-kuras-darba-latvijas-republika-var-uzaicinat-arzemniekus
Description	
<p>M1.Q1. Please describe how third-country nationals can access the measure, notably:</p> <p>a) <i>Elaborate in brief on the conditions and process of accessing for third-country nationals</i></p> <p>b) <i>Is the measure voluntary or compulsory? Is it provided free of charge?</i></p> <p>c) <i>If applicable, indicate if there are any differences in conditions for third-country nationals and (EU) nationals</i></p> <p>d) <i>Are there any reasons for a third-country national to be excluded/to lose access to the measure? If so, which ones?</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>a) <i>The list of professions includes 237 highly qualified professions/ specialities, where it is planned to attract third-country nationals by applying preferential conditions, when arranging work permits.</i></p> <p>b) <i>Voluntary and free of charge.</i></p> <p>c) <i>The following preferences refer to third-country nationals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>if an employee wants to receive the EU Blue Card - the minimum salary shall not be below the average gross labour payment in Latvia in the previous year, multiplied by coefficient 1.2;</i> </div>	

- in other cases - a foreigner could be attracted for the vacant position that is registered with the SEA for at least 10 working day.

EU citizens may apply for the vacant positions included in the list in accordance with the same procedure as the citizens of Latvia by applying for the available vacant position during publication thereof. There are no restrictions referred to salary.

d) The above mentioned preferences will not be applied to third-country nationals, who are planned to be employed in Latvia in the profession or speciality that is not included in the list of professions included in the Cabinet Regulation. Besides, the preferences will not be referred to a foreigner, who fails to perform other criteria currently provided in regulatory enactments for receipt of a work permit.

M1.Q2. Please describe briefly the context in which the measure has started:

- a) When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration?
- b) Any link with the increase of the migration flow starting in 2015 (e.g. the measure was stopped due to changed priorities, conditions to access the measure changed?)
- c) What was the need/purpose to start/implement such measure (e.g. labour market needs in the Member State, need for integration of third-country nationals, changes in integration policies, incentive for a migrant/for an employee)
- d) When is the measure provided (e.g. upon arrival, upon arrival until (please add till when) , no determined time limitation)
- e) Key activities

a) On 20 February 2018 (Cabinet Regulation No. 108 "Specialities (Professions), Where Significant Shortage of Labour Force is to be Expected and Where Foreigners May be Invited for Work in the Republic of Latvia" were adopted in accordance with amendments to the Immigration Law adopted by the Parliament on 2 February 2017)

b) No

c) Lack of highly qualified specialists, which is currently observed in the number of companies, in particular in the processing industry and ICT industry, limits the economic growth of Latvia, productivity growth of companies and attraction of investments, and thus formation of well-paid work places. The issue of availability of work force becomes even more topical in Latvia. The Ministry of Economics estimates that the situation will become even tougher in the coming years. Latvia is not missing people, but obvious shortage of employees with appropriate skills in the centres of commercial activity of Latvia is observed. The Ministry of Economics created the list of professions, where shortage of workforce is expected:

- by using the data on the estimated lack of workforce, available at the disposal of the ministry;
- by identifying professions, where employers face shortfall of workforce already now (survey of employers);
- by forecasting in which professions the significant lack of workforce is to be expected in the close future.

At the same time the list is created in a way, in order to escape from the situation when employers attract low cost labour force from third countries with a purpose to reduce the average compensation in the particular speciality or industry.

d) Necessary documents are arranged when a third-country national is not yet in Latvia. The employer shall prepare a invitation for a third-country national at the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs. Before preparation of the invitation the employer shall register the vacant position with the State Employment Agency and in case it wants to invite a foreigner, who is employed in any of the professions included in the list of professions, the vacant position shall be registered for at least 10 working days. Besides, when preparing a invitation for a foreigner, who wants to receive the EU Blue Card, the employer shall confirm the labour payment, which in the particular case (if the profession

is included in the list of professions) cannot be below the average gross labour payment in Latvia in the previous year by applying a coefficient 1.2.

e) *The following preferences will be applied for attraction of specialist included in the list of professions:*

- *if an employee wants to receive the EU Blue Card - the minimum salary shall not be below the average gross labour payment in Latvia in the previous year, multiplied by coefficient 1.2 (instead of the current coefficient 1.5);*
- *in other cases - a foreigner could be attracted for the vacant position that is registered with the State Employment Agency for at least 10 working day (current requirement – for at least a month).*

M1.Q3. Please briefly describe the implementation modalities, notably:

- a) *By whom is it implemented (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sectors etc.), and what are the coordination structures?*
- b) *If applicable, are there any reimbursement (totally or partially)/cost sharing possibilities for a third-country national?*
- c) *How and by whom is it promoted to third-country nationals?*

a) *the draft Regulation was prepared by the Ministry of Economics, but the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs is the implementer.*

b) *N/A*

c) *Information is being distributed through informative materials of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Economics, as well as by publishing press releases.*

M1.Q4. Please briefly describe the impact of the measure and notably:

- a) *Did it meet the anticipated objectives? YES/NO/Partly*
- b) *What are the main outcomes*
- c) *Monitoring and evaluation of impact (please describe the evaluation tools and methodology, if possible specify what indicators have been adopted and how those were measured)*
- d) *Challenges during implementation and remedies applied*
- e) *Likelihood of continuation of the measure. If discontinued, please explain why*

Assessment of the measure is not yet performed, because the implementation thereof was commenced in the beginning of 2018.

In 2016 677 rights to employment were issued to foreigners, who are employed in the specialities/ professions included in the above mentioned regulation. It is expected that the number of issued work permits will not significantly increase, because preferences are primary directed in order to fasten the process of arrangement of work permits for foreigners, who are planned to be employed in particular specialities, giving an opportunity for employers to attract necessary specialists in a faster manner.

Measure 2	
Overview	
Name	INFORMATION CENTER FOR IMMIGRANTS
Type	<i>Projects (ad-hoc)</i>
Area	<i>Provision of information and counselling</i>

Access	All third country nationals
Target group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made labour market integration measure (only third-country nationals) <input type="checkbox"/> Mainstream labour market integration measure (for all) <i>If the measure is for all, please describe here how third-country nationals are specifically targeted in the measure</i>
Coverage	<i>Local (region, province, municipality)</i> <i>If "other", please add further information here</i>
Budget	The budget is approx. 939 944,15 EUR It is provided by AMIF 704 995,61 EUR, Latvia 234 998,54 EUR
Link	http://www.patverums-dm.lv/lv/informacijas-centrs-imigrantiem http://www.integration.lv
Description	
<p>M2.Q1. Please describe how third-country nationals can access the measure, notably:</p> <p>a) <i>Elaborate in brief on the conditions and process of accessing for third-country nationals</i> b) <i>Is the measure voluntary or compulsory? Is it provided free of charge?</i> c) <i>If applicable, indicate if there are any differences in conditions for third-country nationals and (EU) nationals</i> d) <i>Are there any reasons for a third-country national to be excluded/to lose access to the measure? If so, which ones?</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>a) <i>Mandatory requirement in order to receive services of the centre is lawful stay in Latvia. When appearing at the Information Centre for the first time, the clients are requested to present the personal identity document, usually it is a residence permit.</i></p> <p>b) <i>All services of the Information Centre for third-country nationals, including asylum seekers, are free of charge.</i></p> <p>c) <i>n/a</i></p> <p>d) <i>If the residence permit has expired for third-country nationals, the support is not provided.</i></p> </div> <p>M2.Q2. Please describe briefly the context in which the measure has started:</p> <p>a) <i>When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration?</i> b) <i>Any link with the increase of the migration flow starting in 2015 (e.g. the measure was stopped due to changed priorities, conditions to access the measure changed?)</i> c) <i>What was the need/purpose to start/implement such measure (e.g. labour market needs in the Member State, need for integration of third-country nationals, changes in integration policies, incentive for a migrant/for an employee)</i> d) <i>When is the measure provided (e.g. upon arrival, upon arrival until (please add till when), no determined time limitation)</i> e) <i>Key activities</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>a) <i>18.05.2016 – 31.12.2017</i></p> </div>	

b) Information Centre provided support and consultations not only to asylum seekers, but all third-country nationals, therefore the flow of the refugee crisis in 2015 has not affected the operation of the centre.

c) Commencement of the operation of the Information Centre was necessary in order to establish a support system for third-country nationals by establishing "a one-stop agency", where it could be possible to receive different types of services at the same place.

d) Services are provided, when a person has arrived to Latvia.

e) Information Centre was available in Riga and four regions of Latvia and operated as a one-stop agency - providing information and support to clients, service providers and inhabitants of Latvia, including providing services of interpreters into the language rarely faced in Latvia - Arabic, Kurdish, Farsi, Dari, Tigrin, Uzbek, Pashto etc. The agreement provides the ~43% of funding of the project are dedicated for provision of translation services. Trainings were organized regarding the issues of access between various cultures for education of specialists, the network of volunteers we developed and coordinated, experience exchange measures were organised and regular information to society was provided within the framework of the project.

M2.Q3. Please briefly describe the implementation modalities, notably:

- a) By whom is it implemented (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sectors etc.), and what are the coordination structures?
- b) If applicable, are there any reimbursement (totally or partially)/cost sharing possibilities for a third-country national?
- c) How and by whom is it promoted to third-country nationals?

a) The project was implemented by the non-governmental organisation "Shelter "Safe Home"". Supervision and administration functions of the project were provided by the Ministry of Culture.

b) N/A

c) Information about the services of the centre was distributed through mass media, social networks, such as www.integration.lv, as well as by using the Google Adward tool. Besides, the specialists of the centre have visited all local authorities of Latvia, informing about the service, as well as close cooperation with public authorities have been established during several years and they recommend to clients to use services of the centre.

M2.Q4. Please briefly describe the impact of the measure and notably:

- a) Did it meet the anticipated objectives? YES/NO/Partly
- b) What are the main outcomes
- c) Monitoring and evaluation of impact (please describe the evaluation tools and methodology, if possible specify what indicators have been adopted and how those were measured)
- d) Challenges during implementation and remedies applied
- e) Likelihood of continuation of the measure. If discontinued, please explain why

a) Yes

b) 2532 third-country nationals, having very different legal and social issues, received services at the Information Centre between May 2016 and 31 December 2017. During this period of time clients from 85 countries turned to the centre, in total more than 3437 consultations were provided. Most often the clients have chosen to get consulted in presence – in 2106 cases, 1021 consultations were provided through phone, using Skype – 332, but via e-mail – 196 times. Quite often the possibility was used to get consulted repeatedly.

Besides, the clients could get also psychological support, which was used by 10 clients (in total 136 psychologist's consultation were provided). Translation service was provided 1988 times in the centre, in total 3153.5 hours to 643 clients.

	<p><i>Interpreters services were provided not only for communication of clients with consultants of the centre, but were available also to specialists, who work with foreigners, for example various state administration authorities, social services of several local governments, crisis centres, education and health care institutions, banks and employers.</i></p> <p><i>Specialists of the centre have developed the website www.integration.lv. Foreigners as well as specialists, who work with third-country nationals, can obtain practical answers to various questions, as well as find current information about the courses of Latvian and integration, about events, organized by several organizations in Latvia.</i></p> <p><i>c) During the whole implementation period the introduction of it was supervised by the external appraiser of the project, who followed the progress of the project and gave instructions in order to achieve the target of the project. In total there were 4 reports of the external appraiser prepared during the implementation of the project.</i></p> <p><i>Besides, at the end of each month the coordinator of interpreters requested cooperation organization and representatives of institutions to give a feedback regarding the quality of translation service.</i></p> <p><i>d) When the centre commenced to work, addressing and reaching customers was the challenge. Employees of the centre spent a lot of time in order to provide information to authorities regarding the services available in the centre.</i></p> <p><i>e) Since 2 January 2018 the centre continues to operate as "Information Centre for Newcomers"; agreement regarding implementation of the work of the centre is concluded until 30 June 2020.</i></p>
Measure 3	
Overview	
Name	Professional further education and professional improvement programmes
Type	<i>Programme and systematic measures (multi-year / long term)</i>
Area	<i>Training and qualification</i>
Access	The measure is available to unemployed persons, including all third-country nationals, who are registered with the State Employment Agency as unemployed persons and comply with the set criteria for involvement in the measure.
Target group	<input type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made labour market integration measure (only third-country nationals) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstream labour market integration measure (for all) When providing consultations and information about the professional further education and professional improvement programmes, an interpreter or a person commanding the language shall be attracted in case of need, providing information to the customer in the understandable language. Studies take place only in the official language.
Coverage	<i>National</i> <i>If "other", please add further information here</i>
Budget	The budget is approx. 3,5 million EUR It is provided by: 85% ESF, 15 % national public and private funding
Link	http://www.nva.gov.lv/index.php?cid=433&mid=311&txt=2837&from=0

Description
<p>M3.Q1. Please describe how third-country nationals can access the measure, notably:</p> <p>a) <i>Elaborate in brief on the conditions and process of accessing for third-country nationals</i> b) <i>Is the measure voluntary or compulsory? Is it provided free of charge?</i> c) <i>If applicable, indicate if there are any differences in conditions for third-country nationals and (EU) nationals</i> d) <i>Are there any reasons for a third-country national to be excluded/to lose access to the measure? If so, which ones?</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>a) Access provisions for third-country nationals are the same as to other unemployed persons. The following persons may apply for participation in the acquisition of professional further education and professional development education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an unemployed person, who previously has not acquired professional qualification; • an unemployed person, whose previously acquired professional qualification or professional experience is not demanded on the labour market; • an unemployed person, whose previously acquired professional qualification fails to comply with the requirements determined for the relevant profession, for example, the professional development document (certificate) determined by regulatory enactments, confirming the right to continue to work in the previously acquired profession, is not received; • an unemployed person, who has lost professional skills, because he/she has not worked in the acquired profession for at least three years or due to health condition cannot continue to be employed in the acquired profession. <p>b) The measure is voluntary and free of charge. A grant is paid EUR 5 for one study day.</p> <p>c) No, there are no differences.</p> <p>d) Reasons for discharge are the same as to any other unemployed person – if more than 20% of studies are missed, the unemployed person is discharged from studies. If reasons for missed lessons are not justifying, the unemployed person has an obligation to compensate the whole grant received during studies and study fee used for education. As long as the person has failed to pay back the grant received from SEA and the study fee used for studies, the participation in other measures of the SEA is denied.</p> </div> <p>M3.Q2. Please describe briefly the context in which the measure has started:</p> <p>a) <i>When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration?</i> b) <i>Any link with the increase of the migration flow starting in 2015 (e.g. the measure was stopped due to changed priorities, conditions to access the measure changed?)</i> c) <i>What was the need/purpose to start/implement such measure (e.g. labour market needs in the Member State, need for integration of third-country nationals, changes in integration policies, incentive for a migrant/for an employee)</i> d) <i>When is the measure provided (e.g. upon arrival, upon arrival until (please add till when) , no determined time limitation)</i> e) <i>Key activities</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>a) It is the programme, the implementation of which is currently planned within the framework of the EU funds programming period for 2014-2020, but the programme has been also previously implemented both, within the framework of the ESF projects as well as funded from the state budget.</p> <p>b) There is no relation observed with migration trends since 2015.</p> <p>c) The measure was established in order to give a possibility to unemployed persons to acquire professional qualification or improve their professional skills as well as acquire</p> </div>

systematized professional knowledge and skills appropriate for the various requirements of the labour market.

d) Period of implementation of the measure is not determined.

e) The most popular professions acquired or improved by third-country nationals in 2017 are the professional development programme - social carer (160 - 320 hours) and professional further education programmes - warehouse manager (960 hours), tailor (640 hours), record keeper (640 hours), computer system technician (960 hours) and logistics worker (960 hours).

M3.Q3. Please briefly describe the implementation modalities, notably:

- a) *By whom is it implemented (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sectors etc.), and what are the coordination structures?*
- b) *If applicable, are there any reimbursement (totally or partially)/cost sharing possibilities for a third-country national?*
- c) *How and by whom is it promoted to third-country nationals?*

a) Education programmes are provided by education institution that the SEA selects through announcement procedure or any other registered education institution. The measure is implemented by a voucher method.

b) studies for all unemployed persons or job seekers are free of charge.

c) Employees of the SEA provide consultations and information about the professional further education and professional improvement programmes, an interpreter or a person commanding the language can be attracted in case of need, providing information to the customer in the understandable language.

M3.Q4. Please briefly describe the impact of the measure and notably:

- a) *Did it meet the anticipated objectives? YES/NO/Partly*
- b) *What are the main outcomes*
- c) *Monitoring and evaluation of impact (please describe the evaluation tools and methodology, if possible specify what indicators have been adopted and how those were measured)*
- d) *Challenges during implementation and remedies applied*
- e) *Likelihood of continuation of the measure. If discontinued, please explain why*

a) Purpose of the measure - to provide a possibility for unemployed persons to acquire professional qualification or to improve their professional skills and to acquire systematized professional knowledge and skills appropriate for the various requirements of the labour market – achievement is constantly monitored and currently the results show on the need to continue studies.

b) Key planned result is commencement of employment of the customer within a time period of 6 months after completion of the study programme.

c) Results of the measures are assessed, taking into account whether the unemployed person has acquired the planned qualification during further education courses or commenced to work during 6 months after completion of the development programme. In 2017 nearly 98 persons were involved in this activity. After six months already 23 persons started to work. Some persons still continue to participate in the education courses.

d) Information is regularly updated regarding the most demanded professions on the labour market and accordingly the list of professions to be taught is improved, deleting or adding new professions demanded on the labour market.

e) It is planned to implement this measure also in the future.

Measure 4

Overview					
Name	Active employment measure “Measure for certain groups of persons” (subsidized work place)				
Type	<i>Programme and systematic measures (multi-year / long term)</i>				
Area	<i>Tailor-made to specific group of third country nationals (e.g. programmes/plans/contracts containing different elements of labour market integration for e.g. women, vulnerable persons)</i>				
Access	The measure is available to unemployed persons, including all third-country nationals, who are registered with the SEA as unemployed persons and comply with the set criteria for involvement in the measure.				
Target group	<input type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made labour market integration measure (only third-country nationals) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstream labour market integration measure (for all) When providing consultations and information about this measure, an interpreter or a person commanding the language is attracted in case of need, providing information to the client in the understandable language. In certain cases the employment contract is translated into the language understandable for the unemployed person.				
Coverage	<i>National</i> <i>If “other”, please add further information here</i>				
Budget	The budget is approx. 4,5 millions EUR It is provided by: 85% ESF, 15 % national public and private funding				
Link	http://www.nva.gov.lv/index.php?cid=433&mid=53&txt=4013&mode=content&method=edit&from=0				
Description					
<p>M4.Q1. Please describe how third-country nationals can access the measure, notably:</p> <p>a) <i>Elaborate in brief on the conditions and process of accessing for third-country nationals</i></p> <p>b) <i>Is the measure voluntary or compulsory? Is it provided free of charge?</i></p> <p>c) <i>If applicable, indicate if there are any differences in conditions for third-country nationals and (EU) nationals</i></p> <p>d) <i>Are there any reasons for a third-country national to be excluded/to lose access to the measure? If so, which ones?</i></p> <p>a) Access provisions for third-country nationals are the same as to other unemployed persons. Unemployed persons, who comply with at least one of the following criteria, are involved in the measure:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Criteria</th> <th>Duration of employment in the measure</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A young person⁵⁸, who has been unemployed for at least 6 months; A young person, who has not acquired the general education or professional qualification or has graduated the full-time </td> <td>6 months</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Criteria	Duration of employment in the measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A young person⁵⁸, who has been unemployed for at least 6 months; A young person, who has not acquired the general education or professional qualification or has graduated the full-time 	6 months
Criteria	Duration of employment in the measure				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A young person⁵⁸, who has been unemployed for at least 6 months; A young person, who has not acquired the general education or professional qualification or has graduated the full-time 	6 months				

⁵⁸ A young person – a person who is 15 – 29 years old and is not a full time student.

education programme no later than two years ago and has not yet acquired the first permanent employment;		
• A young person, who has acquired the status of a refugee or alternative person;		
• A person, who has been unemployed for at least 12 months;		12 months
• A person, who is older than 55 years;		
• A person, who has acquired the status of a refugee or alternative person;		24 months
• A person, who has been unemployed for at least 24 months;		
• A person, who has been unemployed for at least 12 months, is an adult with one or several dependants		24 months
• A person, who has been unemployed for at least 12 months and is older than 55 years		
• A person with disability		24 months

- b) The measure is voluntary. An unemployed person receives a salary in accordance with the concluded employment contract, but not below the minimum salary.
- c) No, there are no differences.
- d) Reasons for denial or termination of the service are the same for any other unemployed person – the unemployed person fails to comply with the involvement criteria or the unemployed person, while working at the subsidized work place, fails to perform the duties set forth in the employment contract.

M4.Q2. Please describe briefly the context in which the measure has started:

- a) *When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration?*
- b) *Any link with the increase of the migration flow starting in 2015 (e.g. the measure was stopped due to changed priorities, conditions to access the measure changed?)*
- c) *What was the need/purpose to start/implement such measure (e.g. labour market needs in the Member State, need for integration of third-country nationals, changes in integration policies, incentive for a migrant/for an employee)*
- d) *When is the measure provided (e.g. upon arrival, upon arrival until (please add till when) , no determined time limitation)*
- e) *Key activities*

a) It is the programme, the implementation of which is planned within the framework of the EU funds programming period for 2014-2020, but the programme has been also previously implemented both, within the framework of the ESF projects as well as funded from the state budget.

b) There is no relation observed with migration trends since 2015.

c) The key reason for commencement of the measure is the necessity to help unemployed persons to understand the requirements of the labour market, to promote inclusion of unemployed persons in society and settlement into a permanent work.

d) Period of implementation of the measure is not determined.

e) Third-country nationals have actively used the opportunities of subsidized work, for example, in 2017 they have worked in such professions as – cleaner, sewing equipment operator, shop-assistant – consultant, kitchen worker, household manager, household worker, head of the service hotel, security guard, dressmaker, office manager and project coordinator.

M4.Q3. Please briefly describe the implementation modalities, notably:

- a) *By whom is it implemented (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sectors etc.), and what are the coordination structures?*
- b) *If applicable, are there any reimbursement (totally or partially)/cost sharing possibilities for a third-country national?*
- c) *How and by whom is it promoted to third-country nationals?*

a) SEA in cooperation with natural and legal persons (employers) organize the establishment of subsidized work places. Employers, who may apply for implementation of the measure:

- Merchants (except medical treatment institutions, where the share of the state or local government in the equity capital jointly or separately exceeds 50%, as well as education institutions, the key duty of which is implementation of education programmes);
- Self-employed persons;
- Unions (except political parties) or foundations;
- Agriculture services cooperative companies.

b) The measure is free of charge; the unemployed person receives a salary.

c) Employees of SEA provide consultations and information about this measure, an interpreter or a person commanding the language may be attracted in case of need, providing information to the client in the understandable language.

M4.Q4. Please briefly describe the impact of the measure and notably:

- a) *Did it meet the anticipated objectives? YES/NO/Partly*
- b) *What are the main outcomes*
- c) *Monitoring and evaluation of impact (please describe the evaluation tools and methodology, if possible specify what indicators have been adopted and how those were measured)*
- d) *Challenges during implementation and remedies applied*
- e) *Likelihood of continuation of the measure. If discontinued, please explain why*

a) Fulfilment of the target of the measure is constantly monitored and currently the results show on the need to continue the measures.

b) The planned outcome result – number of unemployed persons, including long-term unemployed persons, who are involved in the measure. The planned outcome result – number of participants of the measure, who are employed, including self-employed within six months after participation in the measure.

c) Results of the measure are assessed, taking into account, how big number of all persons involved in the measure are employed, including self-employed within six months after participation in the measure. In 2017 17 persons were involved in subsidized work. The results will be known only at the end of 2018.

d) Variable requirements of the labour market, arising from applications of employers for subsidized work places, are taken into account for implementation of the measure.

e) It is planned to implement this measure also in the future.

Measure 5	
Overview	
Name	The courses of Latvian within the framework of the project “I live in Latvia– learn Latvian”
Type	<i>Projects (ad-hoc)</i>

Area	<i>Training and qualification</i>
Access	All third country nationals
Target group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made labour market integration measure (only third-country nationals) <input type="checkbox"/> Mainstream labour market integration measure (for all) <i>If the measure is for all, please describe here how third-country nationals are specifically targeted in the measure</i>
Coverage	<i>Local (region, province, municipality)</i> <i>If "other", please add further information here</i>
Budget	The budget is approx. 233 081,53 EUR It is provided by 75% AMIF, 25% Latvia
Link	http://www.iac.edu.lv/projekti/aktualie-projekti/dzivoju-latvija-macos-latviesu-valodu/
Description	
<p>M5.Q1. Please describe how third-country nationals can access the measure, notably:</p> <p>a) <i>Elaborate in brief on the conditions and process of accessing for third-country nationals</i> b) <i>Is the measure voluntary or compulsory? Is it provided free of charge?</i> c) <i>If applicable, indicate if there are any differences in conditions for third-country nationals and (EU) nationals</i> d) <i>Are there any reasons for a third-country national to be excluded/to lose access to the measure? If so, which ones?</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>a) <i>All third-country nationals, who lawfully stay in Latvia, may apply for participation of courses of Latvian.</i></p> <p>b) <i>Participation in the courses is voluntary and free of charge. Training materials are provided to participants of the project.</i></p> <p>c) <i>N/A</i></p> <p>d) <i>Persons may be discharged, if their residence permits have expired or they are annulled. In order the language courses would be considered successfully completed, 90% of classes shall be mandatory attended. Besides, also the provision that a third-country national cannot simultaneously attend several courses of Latvian, organized within the framework of projects of the AMIF planning period for 2014-2020.</i></p> </div> <p>M5.Q2. Please describe briefly the context in which the measure has started:</p> <p>a) <i>When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration?</i> b) <i>Any link with the increase of the migration flow starting in 2015 (e.g. the measure was stopped due to changed priorities, conditions to access the measure changed?)</i> c) <i>What was the need/purpose to start/implement such measure (e.g. labour market needs in the Member State, need for integration of third-country nationals, changes in integration policies, incentive for a migrant/for an employee)</i> d) <i>When is the measure provided (e.g. upon arrival, upon arrival until (please add till when) , no determined time limitation)</i> e) <i>Key activities</i></p>	

- a) *Period of the project is from 15.11.2016 to 31.12.2018.*
- b) *No.*
- c) *Courses of the official language is one of the possibilities to implement the society integration policy. In order third-country nationals could valuably integrate into the education system and labour market of Latvia and their access to the available services would improve, the basic knowledge of Latvia has a decisive role.*
- d) *Courses are available after arrival to Latvia.*
- e) *The key activity of the project is the intensive courses of Latvian (120 hours). It is planned to teach 300 third-country nationals.*

M5.Q3. Please briefly describe the implementation modalities, notably:

- a) *By whom is it implemented (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sectors etc.), and what are the coordination structures?*
- b) *If applicable, are there any reimbursement (totally or partially)/cost sharing possibilities for a third-country national?*
- c) *How and by whom is it promoted to third-country nationals?*

- a) *The project is implemented by the non-governmental organisation "Education Development Centre". The authority coordinating the project is the Ministry of Culture as the authority delegated by AMIF.*
- b) *N/A*
- c) *Information about the possibility to apply for courses is mostly distributed through cooperation partners of the organization. Informative booklets are available as well as information can be found on the website provided for third-country nationals www.integration.lv.un on the website and Facebook account of IAC. Participants further recommend the information about the possibility to participate to their acquaintances entering Latvia.*

M5.Q4. Please briefly describe the impact of the measure and notably:

- a) *Did it meet the anticipated objectives? YES/NO/Partly*
- b) *What are the main outcomes*
- c) *Monitoring and evaluation of impact (please describe the evaluation tools and methodology, if possible specify what indicators have been adopted and how those were measured)*
- d) *Challenges during implementation and remedies applied*
- e) *Likelihood of continuation of the measure. If discontinued, please explain why*

- a) *Taking into account the fact that the project will close at the end of 2018, the final results are not known yet.*
- b) *During 2017 the courses were attended by 173 persons (A level – 111, B level – 62).*
- c) *At the end of the courses participants complete the course assessment questionnaire. Implementers of the project will prepare reports and performance results at the end of the project in order to summarize how successfully the participants have commenced and completed language courses and how many have further on passed the examination of the proficiency of the official language and has acquired the certificate of proficiency of the official language.*
- d) *The following can be mentioned as challenges during the process of organization and provision of courses: 1) difficulties in completion of groups, in order the requirements of participants about the interlanguage of the trainings process would correspond (for example, Russian or English); 2) maintenance of the interest of participants until successful completion of courses, because quite often the participants understand that the offered schedule of classes does not fit for them or they face family problems, where they have nowhere to leave children or religion prohibits to attend classes, or the motivation is missing;*

<p>3) it is not easy to find good teachers of Latvian with the appropriate qualification. One of the introduced solutions is that groups for citizens of China are completed separately.</p> <p>e) Currently it is not known, whether the project will be continued, because it depends from the provisions of the competition of projects announced by AMIF and requirements for implementers of courses.</p>

Measure 6	
Overview	
Name	PROVIDUS project "Integration of Society in the Workplace"
Type	<i>Projects (ad-hoc)</i>
Area	<i>Incentive measures for migrants or employers</i>
Access	All third country nationals
Target group	<input type="checkbox"/> Tailor-made labour market integration measure (only third-country nationals) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mainstream labour market integration measure (for all) Third country nationals space specific challenges for integration in the labour market and regarding access to support for socio-economic change. The aim of this project is to understand how employers address these challenges regarding specific target groups.
Coverage	<i>Local (region, province, municipality)</i> <i>If "other", please add further information here</i>
Budget	The budget is approx. 6970,00 EUR It is provided by Riga Municipality.
Link	http://providus.lv/en/article/integration-of-society-in-the-work-place
Description	
<p>M6.Q1. Please describe how third-country nationals can access the measure, notably:</p> <p>a) <i>Elaborate in brief on the conditions and process of accessing for third-country nationals</i></p> <p>b) <i>Is the measure voluntary or compulsory? Is it provided free of charge?</i></p> <p>c) <i>If applicable, indicate if there are any differences in conditions for third-country nationals and (EU) nationals</i></p> <p>d) <i>Are there any reasons for a third-country national to be excluded/to lose access to the measure? If so, which ones?</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>a) <i>During the assessment process, employers employing foreign nationals will be interviewed, and specific challenges regarding third country nationals will be identified. In addition, a focus-group with third country nationals as participants will be organized to further analyze the role of employers in facilitating their integration in the society.</i></p> <p>b) <i>The measure is voluntary, no motivation fee is paid for participating in the focus group.</i></p> </div>	

- c) *As the project deals with both labour market integration and access to support activities for socio-economic integration, one of the tasks is to highlight the differences in challenges faced by both groups as well as to identify best practices in addressing these challenges.*
- d) *No.*

M6.Q2. Please describe briefly the context in which the measure has started:

- a) *When was the measure introduced and what was/is its duration?*
- b) *Any link with the increase of the migration flow starting in 2015 (e.g. the measure was stopped due to changed priorities, conditions to access the measure changed?)*
- c) *What was the need/purpose to start/implement such measure (e.g. labour market needs in the Member State, need for integration of third-country nationals, changes in integration policies, incentive for a migrant/for an employee)*
- d) *When is the measure provided (e.g. upon arrival, upon arrival until (please add till when) , no determined time limitation)*
- e) *Key activities*

- a) *The project lasts for 8.5 months from March to November 2018.*
- b) *No.*
- c) *Currently an Integration policy plan for 2019-2025 is being developed, which includes assessing the previously implemented activities and the role of various governance levels, not least the role of the private sector. This project is an attempt to highlight the potential of the private sector in promoting socio-economic integration of third country nationals.*
- d) *No determined time limitation, the most intensive support period is to be identified during the assessment.*
- e) *This project aims to survey the existing practices in Riga and develop a methodological material including the examples of best practices, concerns of the employers and employees during the integration process, as well as possible responses to them. Main research methods: semi-structured interviews with employers, focus groups with third country nationals and EU nationals separately, analysis of secondary data. In the conclusion of the project a seminar will be organized where information on the prepared material will be shared with the employers and municipality representatives and the debate on the integration issues in the work environment will take place.*

M6.Q3. Please briefly describe the implementation modalities, notably:

- a) *By whom is it implemented (agency, government institution, NGOs, private sectors etc.), and what are the coordination structures?*
- b) *If applicable, are there any reimbursement (totally or partially)/cost sharing possibilities for a third-country national?*
- c) *How and by whom is it promoted to third-country nationals?*

- a) *NGO – center for public policy PROVIDUS is responsible for implementation of all project activities*
- b) *N/A*
- c) *By PROVIDUS, through employers, through immigrant NGOs, social media*

M6.Q4. Please briefly describe the impact of the measure and notably:

- a) *Did it meet the anticipated objectives? YES/NO/Partly*
- b) *What are the main outcomes*
- c) *Monitoring and evaluation of impact (please describe the evaluation tools and methodology, if possible specify what indicators have been adopted and how those were measured)*
- d) *Challenges during implementation and remedies applied*

e) *Likelihood of continuation of the measure. If discontinued, please explain why*

Reaching of objectives and main outcomes cannot be assessed yet, as the project is still ongoing.

2.3 PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES TO FACILITATE LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS

This section aims to produce a first insight from across a number of Member States and private sector contexts in the form of case studies to identify examples of good or promising practices in private sector initiatives for facilitating access and/or retention of third-country nationals in employment.

Case studies should include initiatives **initiated** by the private sector regardless of whether funding is fully or only partly provided by the private sector (i.e. supported by contributions from external funds including public funds) to third-country nationals within the scope of this study. Measures may include initiatives implemented by private actors alone or in cooperation with third parties as for instance employee or employer organisations, chambers of commerce, NGOs, etc.

The questions should be answered by each NCP and limited to examples from **two industry sectors** (in-exhaustive list below) and for each industry sector chosen NCPs should report on **up to three case studies (total of maximum 6 case studies per Member State)**. You may want to select measures across the different **labour integration areas** (1-7) and the **types of measures** (1-3) summarised in Section 2.2.

Please aim to have a '**representative**' **group of measures** from small/medium/ large enterprises. Notably, identify examples focussing on **different target groups** (low-medium-skilled, seasonal workers, etc.) as well as on **different sizes of enterprises** from the selected sectors.

Case studies should be based on desk research, secondary data and where appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, for example national or European chambers of commerce, employer and employee organisations, etc.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ The Signature of the European Partnership on integration between the European Commission and representatives of Economic and Social partners at EU level, can be a useful reference for taking contact with national representatives of Economic and social partners: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/legal-migration/integration/docs/20171220_european_partnership_for_integration_en.pdf; it has been translated into all EU languages.

Size of Private Sector Organisation

1. Micro: <10 Employees
2. Small: 10 – 49 Employees
3. Medium: 50 - 249 Employees
4. Large: >250 Employees

Example Categories

1. Low-skilled workers
2. Medium-skilled workers
3. High qualified workers
4. Seasonal workers
5. Family members of nationals and third-country nationals
6. Domestic workers

Type of Private Sector Organisation

1. National
2. International (e.g. with subsidiaries in the Member State)

Industry Sectors

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Agriculture, forestry and fishing | 6. Transport and communication |
| 2. Energy and water | 7. Financial and business services |
| 3. Manufacturing | 8. Public admin, education and health |
| 4. Construction | 9. Domestic work sector |
| 5. Wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants | 10. Other services |

Q13. Based on brief desk research of secondary resources and consultations with relevant stakeholders, are you aware of any private sector initiatives supporting or facilitating the labour market integration of third-country nationals in the scope of this study, within your MS? (YES).

When gathering information about several companies that employ third-country nationals, it succeeded to receive replies only from few ones, because, taking into account the fact that the majority of employees is from ?post-Soviet / ex-Soviet / former USSR? countries (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Uzbekistan) and command Russian, the companies do not provide additional integration measures. Support is mainly provided individually or handouts are prepared. Some companies indicated that the number of employed third-country nationals is not so big and therefore there is no need for additional integration activities. In some company employees voluntary, at the own initiative, teach Latvian and provide a support for settlement of domestic issues.

Q14. Which industry sectors were the case studies selected from and on what grounds has the selection taken place? Please indicate a maximum of two sectors.

Data provided by the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs on the requests received from companies for issue of residence permits in relation to employment were used as a basis for gathering information about companies. Companies in the area of information and technologies, banking sector, transport carriers and catering service providers were addressed. The focus study includes those examples, where a positive answer was received from, and detailed information was set forth that complied with the context of the focus study.

Private Sector - Measure 1	
Overview	
Name	Supporting of foreign employees
Company size	<i>Large: >250 Employees</i>
Company type	<i>National</i>
Sector	<i>Financial and business services</i>
Area*	<i>Enhancement of (soft) skills</i>
Access	Highly skilled employees
Target group	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Low skilled,</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Medium skilled,</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>High skilled</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Specific group such as vulnerable, young, female, seasonal workers, etc.</i>
Coverage	Other (e.g. within the company, labour office) Within the company
Budget	Employment of third-country nationals is not provided in the strategy of the company and such employment is rather an exception than a standard practice, therefore expenses of the support measures are covered from the budget item "unexpected expenses".
Link	-
Description	
<p>PSM1.Q1. Please briefly describe the main feature of the measure, notably:</p> <p>a) <i>Targeted phase of employment (attracting/hiring third-country nationals, early career support, continual development, facilitating access to national professional networks)</i></p> <p>b) <u><i>Objective and main activities</i></u></p> <p>c) <i>Cooperation framework (for instance if the measure is implemented in cooperation with third parties, including employees or employers' organisations, chambers of commerce, NGOs etc.</i></p> <p>d) <i>How can third-country nationals access the measure? Are they selected?</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>a) <i>Support measures are offered after recruitment of the employee.</i></p> <p>b) <i>In order to promote general welfare level of third-country nationals, when working in Latvia and supporting inclusion in the new work place, the company supports teaching Latvian to employees outside of the work place. At the same time, employees individually receive consultations on social issues – about dwelling, health care, children education institutions etc.</i></p> <p>c) <i>N/A</i></p> </div>	

d) The company informs employees about the possibility to receive practical support. Measures are offered individually.

PSM1.Q2. Please briefly assess the impact of the initiative, namely:

- a) Describe if the measure has been evaluated and if so what were the findings, what monitoring and evaluation tools (self-evaluation, external evaluation...) have been used (please specify indicators used if possible)
- b) Elaborate on achievements of set objectives and main outcomes
- c) Elaborate on challenges and remedies adopted (e.g. structural barriers/facilitators, levy schemes-grants to compensate funding gaps, taxation incentives etc.)

Considering that the measures offered by the company are not systematic, but provided individually, the company does not perform separate assessment of the provided support measures. If a new employee continues to work with the company for a long time, it is assumed that the purpose of the provided support measures is achieved.

Private Sector – Measure 2 Information and communication technology area	
Overview	
Name	Integration measures for new employees (onboarding process)
Company size	Large: >250 Employees
Company type	International (e.g. with subsidiaries in the Member State)
Sector	Other services
Area*	Provision of information and counselling
Access	All third-country nationals and EU nationals
Target group	<input type="checkbox"/> Low skilled, <input type="checkbox"/> Medium skilled, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High skilled <input type="checkbox"/> Specific group such as vulnerable, young, female, seasonal workers, etc.
Coverage	National If "other", please add further information here
Budget	The budget is approx. - It is provided by -
Link	Not publicly available information
Description	

PSM2.Q1. Please briefly describe the main feature of the measure, notably:

- e) *Targeted phase of employment (attracting/hiring third-country nationals, early career support, continual development, facilitating access to national professional networks)*
- f) Objective and main activities
- g) *Cooperation framework (for instance if the measure is implemented in cooperation with third parties, including employees or employers' organisations, chambers of commerce, NGOs etc.*
- h) How can third-country nationals access the measure? Are they selected?

a) *Early career support – during the onboarding – process, where all new employees participate*

b) *The purpose of the onboarding process is – to introduce the new employee as much as possible with the work environment of the company, internal culture and values thereof, thus causing clear view on what is expected from the new employee. The onboarding process consists of:*

- *practical introduction with the new work place on the first day, when information is provided on the issues of labour safety and the inventory necessary for performance of work duties is issued. The new employee is instructed on the issues of employee's ethics and confidentiality, The issues of work methodology are discussed;*

- *during the first month the new employee participates in one day trainings in presence about the company in general. Training is provided by the company's staff.*

- *after the first three months of employment there is a check-point, when additional information is provided to the new employee.*

A career counsellor is allocated for each new employee, who leads the career course of the employee and follows up the professional development of the employee, and a mentor, who provides advices and recommendations in order the new employee would acquire as much as possible and perform his or her work duties.

The following are available to third-country nationals:

- *relocation specialist, who provides support for arrangement of residence documents;*

- *"a body" from among employees, who provides support for settlement of social issues.*

c) *Integration measures are provided by the company itself.*

d) *All new employees are involved in the integration measures. 10 persons per month on average.*

PSM2.Q2. Please briefly assess the impact of the initiative, namely:

d) *Describe if the measure has been evaluated and if so what were the findings, what monitoring and evaluation tools (self-evaluation, external evaluation...) have been used (please specify indicators used if possible)*

e) *Elaborate on achievements of set objectives and main outcomes*

f) *Elaborate on challenges and remedies adopted (e.g. structural barriers/facilitators, levy schemes-grants to compensate funding gaps, taxation incentives etc.)*

a) *Onboarding process provided by the company is constantly evaluated and it is performed by the agile group of the Company.*

b) *When participating in integration measures, the new employee of the company has completely become acquainted with the values of the company and is able to adapt to them, has successfully fit into the work place and team, successfully performs his or her work duties and the professional development plan has been developed for him or her.*

c) *When starting to work with the new company, a lot of new information has to be acquired that is related not only to performance of direct work duties, but also with the work*

environment and traditions of the company. Therefore the company has developed an onboarding process, – which is effective and “friendly” to new employees on the basis of regular assessment.

Conclusions (optional)

Q15. With regard to the aims of this study, what conclusions would you draw from your findings?

Note: The text in this part will serve as a source when compiling the synthesis report.

The framework document of the integration policy implemented in Latvia is “Guidelines On National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy or 2012–2018”. The ultimate goal of the Guidelines is a strong, united Latvian nation – national and democratic community, ensuring preservation and enrichment of the unifying basis thereof – Latvian language, culture and national identity, European democratic values and unique culture space – for balanced development of – the national democratic country. In accordance with the Guidelines, in order immigrants could live and get involved in the Latvian society, it is important to understand and accept the basic values of the European Union and the country of Latvia and to acquire Latvian. One of the key mainstream policy planning documents which also concerns integration of third-country nationals into labour market is “Guidelines on inclusive employment in 2015-2020”⁶⁰.

Several national authorities (Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Environment and Regional Development, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence and authorities being under subordination of these ministries), non-governmental organizations, local government and media are involved in the successful provision of the integration process of third-country nationals. Cooperation between representatives of different stakeholders - employers, trade unions, religious organisations, mass media and non-governmental organisations - is important and should be further encouraged.

The most significant element, facilitating more rapid integration of third-country nationals, is knowledge of the official language. Language proficiency opens a possibility to successfully use the opportunities provided by the education and local labour market, to participate in various social structures and institutions, to take part in the Latvian information and culture space. In order to ensure faster creation of ties with local society, a possibility is provided for third-country nationals to acquire basic knowledge of Latvian, funded by the programmes of the state budget and AMIF. Courses of Latvian to third-country nationals are freely available and they are provided by both, national authority (SEA, Latvian Language Agency) as well as various non-governmental organisations and local governments.

Among third-country nationals, who lawfully stay in Latvia, those, who are invited to work for the particular company, are in better position as the employer and colleagues will take care for their integration into society and work place. Taking into account that the largest groups of third-country nationals, who are employed by companies in Latvia, come from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Uzbekistan, and they mostly have at least oral command of Russian language, some surveyed companies stated that they do not offer additional integration measures organized within the framework of the company. Therefore it may be considered that the knowledge of Russian significantly facilitate integration of third-country nationals in the Latvian labour market and society.

In its turn, the second category of third-country nationals, to whom a broad range of support measures is provided, are registered unemployed persons and job seekers. They can participate in the competitiveness

⁶⁰ Cabinet Order No. 244 “Guidelines on inclusive employment for 2015 - 2020”, adopted in Riga on 12 May 2015 (Minutes No. 32, §21), available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/273969-par-ieklausos-nodarbinatibas-pamatnostadnem-2015-2020-gadam>

raising measures, offered by SEA, including those aiming to improve the knowledge of Latvian and other foreign language, to raise professional qualification and development of skills.

The information collected in the focus study shows that integration measures are mostly organized in the form of project, co-funded by the AMIF. Therefore regularity, long-term nature and succession is not provided for integration measures, because implementers of each implemented project change. Since 2016 AMIF (2014-2020) has supported 22⁶¹ projects in Latvia. 12 projects out of them in the area of asylum and migration and 10 projects – in the area of integration. Both, state authorities as well as non-governmental organizations have got involved in the implementation of projects. Supported AMIF project activities in the integration area are as follows:

- 1) establishment of the national level coordination system in order to ensure support for participation of immigrants;
- 2) development of the use of Latvian in public space, including multiform approach for acquisition of Latvian;
- 3) integration of third-country nationals in the Latvian society, involving mass media in this process;
- 4) involvement of third-country nationals in the social life of Latvia, including support to provision of participations of vulnerable persons and persons of international protection.⁶²

When performing analysis of statistical data within the framework of focused study, it was established that it is not possible to determine the number physically employed third-country nationals from information systems. Therefore the data are hard to compare, because only the number of issued rights to employment is known, which does not reflect the proportion of actually employed third-country nationals.

One of the most important aspects of socio-economical inclusion is provision of fundamental rights of a human - the right to employment, dwelling, education, health and social protection. In order to ensure the above mentioned right and immigrants would be informed about their duties, the access to information is required. The most broadly available information to third-country nationals in Latvia is available on different internet addresses, such as – www.integration.lv, <http://workinlatvia.liaa.gov.lv/>, and the “Information Centre for Newcomers” was established in 2016, where it is possible to receive consultations both in presence in Riga, Cesis and Daugavpils as well as electronically.

Taking into account the trends of the labour market in Latvia, the government has approved reliefs in 2018⁶³ for attraction of highly qualified specialists. Therefore the government has made a signal that Latvia does not plan to open labour market for labour force of low costs from non-EU countries in the coming years. Lack of highly qualified specialists, which is currently observed in the number of companies, in particular in the processing industry and information communication technology industry, limits the economic growth of Latvia, productivity growth of companies and attraction of investments, and thus formation of well-paid work places. The issue of availability of work force becomes even more topical in Latvia.

⁶¹ Study of situation of third-country nationals in Latvia in 2017. Available http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/publications/BISS_Petijuma_zinojums_2017.pdf

⁶² Study of situation of third-country nationals in Latvia in 2017. Available http://www.biss.soc.lv/downloads/publications/BISS_Petijuma_zinojums_2017.pdf

⁶³ 1) if the employee will want to receive the EU Blue Card - the minimum salary shall not be below the average gross labour payment in Latvia in the previous year, multiplied by coefficient 1.2 (instead of the current coefficient 1.5); 2) in other cases - a foreigner could be attracted for the vacant position that is registered with the State Employment Agency for at least 10 working days (current requirement – at least for one month).