

THE 5-YEAR LESSONS OF MANAGING ASYLUM IN EUROPE: HOW TO IMPLEMENT A SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION STRATEGY

Conference in the framework of AMIF project “NIEM: Measuring and Improving Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection”

22 October 2019, AC Hotel by Marriott, Dzirnavu Str.33, Riga

The conference is organized with the support of Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia and UNHCR Regional Representation in Northern Europe

NIEM: Measuring and Improving Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection

The National Integration Evaluation Mechanism (NIEM) is a six-years long transnational project which aims to prepare key actors in the integration field in 15 EU Member States to better face the current challenges and improve the integration outcomes of beneficiaries of international protection. Conflict situations tend to last longer, and it takes currently on average 17 years, before refugees fleeing civil wars may eventually have a chance to return to their home country. Hence, the long-term integration of newly arrived beneficiaries of international protection is without alternative and presents an immediate challenge for European societies.

In June 2019, the NIEM partnership published a Baseline report on how European countries compare in their refugee integration policies. Some of the key findings were that (1) European countries vary widely in the quality of their integration policies, despite the standards set by EU and international law; (2) Rarely do refugees experience fully favourable conditions to integrate in any area of life; (3) The health and education sectors are making the greatest efforts to help those in need. Much more needs to be done by public housing, employment and training services; (4) Administrative barriers are widespread, especially to help refugees access the housing they need; (5) Most national governments do not work in partnership with civil society and local and regional governments to develop and implement their policies.

In October 2019, an evaluation of progress since the baseline assessment will be published. It is in line with this occasion that Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS invites you to a conference “*The 5-year Lessons of Managing Asylum in Europe: How to Implement a Successful Integration Strategy*” to look at Latvia’s and Europe’s successes and challenges in developing, implementing, and monitoring the integration of beneficiaries of international protection.

This is a particularly important moment for holding a conference of this kind as some of the most significant strategic planning documents are currently developed such as the National Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy. The outlined objectives will serve as reference points for assigning funding opportunities and will set the priorities for the next planning period. It is therefore of utmost importance to reflect on what has been achieved well so far, and even more crucially, to pinpoint the areas of development that appear as most challenging for the coming years. The conference will provide a platform for bringing together specialists and experts from various fields to collectively discuss and debate the overall strategy of integration as well as specifically the issue of housing.

AGENDA	
9:30-10:00	Arrival, registration and welcoming coffee
10:00-10:15	Opening of the conference, introduction of the NIEM project (PROVIDUS)
10:15-11:15	Anne Bathily – Integration Policy Expert <i>Components of a long-term vision and costs of non-strategy</i>
11:30-13:30	<p>Panel Discussion I: Development of Integration Policy Documents in Latvia (Action Plan, Integration Policy Guidelines) – process, monitoring, evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zane Vāgnere - Ministry of Culture, Deputy State Secretary • Andrejs Judins - Member of Parliament • Paulina Wlazlak – City of Gdansk <p>Discussion with the audience</p>
13:30-14:30	Lunch
14:30-16:30	<p>Panel Discussion II: Housing – Crucial Dimension of Comprehensive Integration Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alda Sebre - Society Integration Foundation • Santa Tivaņenkova – Ombudsman Office • Marcel Colun - UNHCR <p>Discussion with the audience</p>
16:30-17:00	Concluding remarks and end of the conference