



Ad-Hoc Query on allocation of refugees to municipalities for integration purposes

Requested by SE EMN NCP on 18th February 2013

Compilation produced on 27th May 2013

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom plus Norway (23 in Total)

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1. Background Information

Currently, Sweden is facing a large influx of various refugee groups. Due to a lack of available housing in parts of the country where the labour market is good, the housing situation for refugees and other persons that have been granted protection has become untenable, both from an individual viewpoint and from certain municipalities' side. The Swedish Government therefore wants to find out if other MS are experiencing similar problems, and if so, what measures they have taken to alleviate the problem.

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We would like to ask the following questions:

1. Does your Member State regulate the dispersal of refugees and other persons that have been granted protection to municipalities once they have received a residence permit?

If YES:

- a) Please specify how (through law, economic incentives, information, etc.)
- b) What support does the state provide to the individual refugees and/or the municipalities that receive them?
- c) What obligations are placed on the individual refugees and the municipalities that receive them?

If NO:

- d) How does the settlement of refugees take place once they have received a residence permit?

2. Does your MS share the Swedish experiences of a general shortage of available housing for newly arrived migrants?

We would very much appreciate your responses by **18 March 2013**.

2. Responses

	Austria	NO	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.
	Belgium	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No, asylum seekers who are granted international protection can access (if necessary) social welfare payments and are free to choose their place of residence. Most of them prefer to live in the larger cities. Some of them have difficulties in finding affordable quality accommodation. 2. Yes, for what concerns the housing of asylum seekers, the previous years have been marked by a reception crisis in Belgium. Due to the high influx of asylum seekers, not enough reception places could be provided in the reception network and people ended sometimes up in the street or in hotels. 2012 marked the end of the reception crisis, thanks to the introduction of several measures: introduction of list of safe countries of origin, the limitation of the right to reception for subsequent applicants, creation of extra reception places, increased attention to return policy, prevention campaigns, more efficient and faster asylum procedure, intensified cooperation between the asylum and reception agencies under the responsibility of one State Secretary. Partly due to these measures, the number of asylum applications in Belgium decreased in 2012 compared to the previous year. As a consequence, since January 2013 a reception place could be assigned to all new applicants and the capacity of emergency

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			<p>reception places could be downsized.</p> <p>Also other categories of newly arrived migrants (f.i. family reunification) and the lower segments of population in general have generally spoken difficulties in finding affordable housing, among others because the demand for social housing is bigger than the supply.</p>
	Bulgaria	Yes	<p>No, the Republic of Bulgaria does not regulate the allocation of refugees and other persons that have been granted protection to municipalities after they have received a residence permit.</p> <p>D) According to the current legislation, foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria who have been granted asylum or refugee status have equal rights and obligations. The rights and obligations of persons who have refugee status are the same as those of Bulgarian citizens. Foreigners who have been granted humanitarian status have the rights and obligations assigned to foreigners with long-term residence permits in the Republic of Bulgaria. The right to free movement and free choice of residence, which are enshrined under Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed through Resolution 217 A (III) of the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948, are guaranteed to foreigners residing in the country.</p> <p>An alien who has been granted refugee or humanitarian status may be provided with financial support for housing for a period of up to 6 months as from the date of coming into effect of the decision for status granting, under conditions and procedure laid down by the President of the State Agency for Refugees.</p> <p>An alien who has been granted refugee status has the right to acquire real estate within the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria under the terms and following the procedure provided for aliens.</p> <p>The bodies of local government and local administration accept in their territory and enter in the registers of population the aliens who have been granted refugee or humanitarian status, and their families, and provide them with an opportunity to enjoy their rights.</p> <p>Any alien who has been granted refugee or humanitarian status is obliged, within 14 days after the receipt of the decision granting such status, to appear at the municipality in the area where he/she will establish himself/herself, so that he/she could be entered into the register of population.</p> <p>2 Foreigners who are illegally residing in the country and who have not submitted applications for international protection are temporarily accommodated in specialized centres run by the Ministry of the Interior. Those who submit applications for protection are provided with accommodation in one of the reception centres of the Bulgarian State Agency for Refugees: two registration-and-reception centres with a total capacity to accommodate up to 562 asylum seekers and a transit centre with a capacity to accommodate up to 300 asylum seekers. Due to the rising number of asylum seekers in recent times, the State Agency for Refugees experiences a shortage of available housing for newly arrived migrants. The agency is actively seeking ways to increase its housing capacity in the already established centres as well as through the creation of new reception centres for asylum seekers.</p>
	Cyprus	Yes	<p>1. No. However, in cases where a large group of beneficiaries had been concentrated in a specific area with no perspective in finding jobs, we had proceeded in providing financial aid in co-operation with the Social Welfare Services to these persons in order to relocate to another area</p> <p>1d) Refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection are free to reside anywhere they want, within the the government-</p>

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			<p>controlled areas in the Republic of Cyprus. Those persons among the refugee population who are unable to find a job and do not have sufficient financial resources, receive public subsistence from the Social Welfare Services, which includes rent allowance.</p> <p>2. The problem that Cyprus is facing with refugee population that the government does not have the economic capacity to support these persons financially in order to find accommodation. The Government is obliged to provide financial aid in many cases, due to high rates of unemployment that the country is currently facing and which also affect the refugee population.</p>
	Czech Republic	NO	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.
	Estonia	Yes	<p>1. Yes. According to Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens § 73 a person enjoying international protection may stay at the reception centre or a place designated by the Ministry of Social Affairs or an agency within the area of government of the Ministry of Social Affairs until settling in the territory of a local government. The Ministry of Social Affairs or an agency within the area of government of the Ministry of Social Affairs shall organise the settlement of a person enjoying international protection in the territory of a local government in an agreement with the local government, taking into account the state of health of a person enjoying international protection, the place of the residence of the relatives by blood or marriage and other significant circumstances, and considering the housing and employment opportunities, including the proportional allocation of persons enjoying international protection among the local governments. Where necessary, the Ministry of Social Affairs or an agency within the area of government of the Ministry of Social Affairs has the right to involve a representative of the Ministry of the Interior in the proceedings for agreement with a local government. A person enjoying international protection may participate in the selection of the local government most suited to him. The Ministry of Social Affairs or an agency within the area of government of the Ministry of Social Affairs shall organise the settlement of a person enjoying international protection in the territory of a local government within four months as of the date of the issue of a residence permit to the alien. A person enjoying international protection has the right to receive state pensions, family support, employment services and employment subsidies, social benefits and other assistance on the same grounds provided by legislation as permanent residents of Estonia. A person enjoying international protection has the right to education and the right to take employment in Estonia on the bases and pursuant to the procedure provided by law. A local government may pay subsistence benefit to a person enjoying international protection whose financial status does not allow him to support himself. A natural persons or legal person may participate in referring a person enjoying international protection to the territory of a local government and supporting him by providing economic or other assistance. Provision of assistance shall be co-ordinated by a local government or by the Ministry of Social Affairs or an agency within the area of government of the Ministry of Social Affairs.</p> <p>2. There are some problems, but not significant due to the low number of persons who have been granted protection.</p>
	Finland	Yes	1. Yes. The municipalities may conclude (voluntarily) agreements with the ELY Centres (Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment) on assigning persons that have been granted international protection to the municipalities. However, the

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			<p>municipalities are not bound to receive refugees by these agreements which are terminable in the middle of the year. As the ELY Centres have not been able to conclude sufficient amount of agreements the asylum seekers have begun to move to the municipalities directly from the reception centres either with the assistance of the reception centres or independently. Those receiving international protection are entitled to free movement from one municipality to another.</p> <p>a) According to the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010), the ELY Centres assign refugees to the municipalities with which they have concluded an agreement governing reception of refugees. Thereafter, the municipality assigns housing (an apartment) to the person and arranges activities promoting the integration (integration plan and integration training).</p> <p>b) The State of Finland (ELY Centres) reimburses the costs relating to the arrangement of measures and services referred to in the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration to those municipalities with which an agreement governing reception of refugees has been concluded. 1) A municipality is provided with a formula-based reimbursement for the arrangements and guidance provided in the initial phase (for 3 years for former asylum seekers and for 4 years for quota refugees). 2) Furthermore, the costs of interpretation, special costs related to social and health care, and the integration assistance (which is a financial support paid for the refugees for 3 years) are reimbursed based on actual costs. Moreover, the assignment of refugees to municipalities is taken into consideration in the state subsidies which are paid to the municipalities i.e. based on the amount of migrant children in the compulsory school age. Newly arrived immigrant covered by the Act is entitled to a personalized integration plan covering the measures and services, the aim of which is to support him/her in acquiring a sufficient command of the Finnish or Swedish and to promote his/her opportunities for employment. Integration assistance is financial support paid to an immigrant so that he/she has secure means of support for the duration of the participation in the measures carried out as part of the integration plan (monthly for a maximum of 3 years).</p> <p>c) The immigrant covered by the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration shall adhere to the integration plan specifically drawn up for him/her and participate in measures and services agreed as part of the plan on a regular basis in order to receive the integration assistance. Municipalities shall ensure that the municipal services also suit the needs of the immigrants. Furthermore, municipalities shall arrange measures and services intended for the immigrants referred to in the Act (integration training etc.) in accordance with the demand for them in the municipality.</p> <p>2. The municipalities find that the reception of refugees and arrangement of measures and services supporting integration is a heavy responsibility. Therefore, Finland has for a long time experienced difficulties in settling refugees in municipalities. The situation is further complicated by the fact that it is impossible to predict the number of refugees moving independently from reception centres to municipalities and between municipalities. This again hampers considerably the reception of quota refugees and emergency cases.</p> <p>http://valtioneuvosto.fi/ajankohtaista/tiedotteet/tiedote/fi.jsp?oid=378475.</p> <p>http://www.migri.fi/for_the_media/releases/press_releases/press_releases/1/0/more_reception_centre_residents_look_for_accommodation_themselves_due_to_lack_of_municipal_residences</p>
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			http://www.migri.fi/for_media/meddelanden/pressmeddelanden/1/0/allt_fler_boende_vid_en_forlaggning_soker_sjalv_en_bostad_at_sig_da_kommunala_bostader_saknas
	France	Yes	<p>1. There is no dispersal regulation of refugees and other beneficiaries of protection to municipalities in France. Once former asylum seekers are granted protection or refugee status and receive a residence permit, they can have access to a temporary housing centre in order to prepare and ease their settlement. After what they are supposed to have access to the same benefits as any national and find an accommodation of their own.</p> <p>2. However, most of the temporary housing centres are today saturated, and in order to help families facing settlement difficulties, several local integration programs have been created in the last decade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2002, the program Accelair was set up by Forum Réfugiés in the Lyon area. Providing individual follow up (administrative tasks, information on the housing market, budget management, explanations on renting agreement etc) for 6 to 18 months, the program aims at helping refugees to find a permanent accomodation (especially via social lessors). In 10 years, 5000 refugees went through Accelair and were able to settle. In 2008, Forum Réfugiés was mandated by the Ministry of Interior to transfer Accelair at a national level. - In 2004, France Terre d'Asile created the national project RELOREF (Réseau pour l'Emploi et le Logement des Réfugiés – Job and housing network for refugees) providing 100 housing units in 18 territories in order to offer temporary solutions to refugees during their transfer from asylum seekers housing centres to permanent housing. - INSTALE was created in 2009 by the Association Régionale Coordination Asile, to face the housing shortage and following rent raise in Marseille and its surroundings, preventing refugees to access permanent housing. Providing individual follow ups, the program assists refugees in finding an accommodation and provides general information regarding the housing market. - The Paris area gathering 50% of refugees with very few permanent housing solutions available, France Terre d'Asile created PRIM (Promotion de l'Insertion par la Mobilité – Promotion of integration through mobility) in 2007. This program aims at offering refugees housing solutions outside of Paris by promoting geographic mobility towards areas with more availability. Fundings can be accessible for families experiencing important difficulties to move out. To this day, 997 refugees found a permanent accommodation through mobility.
	Germany	Yes	<p>1. The regulation of the dispersal of refugees and other persons that have been granted protection to municipalities in Germany depends on the legal status of the person concerned.</p> <p>Currently, Germany does not regulate the dispersal of refugees falling under the 1951 Refugee Convention (German Residence Act, sec. 25, para. 1 or 2) to municipalities. While such regulations existed in the past, these practices were found unlawful by a judgment of the Federal Administrative Court from January 15, 2008.</p>

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			<p>Other persons that have been granted protection under section 25, para. 3 of the German Residence Act are required to reside within the borders of the federal state that has granted their residence permit if they wish to receive unemployment or social welfare benefits under the Social Security Code.</p> <p>a) The dispersal of foreigners that have been granted protection under section 25, para. 3 of the German Residence Act who wish to receive unemployment or social welfare benefits to municipalities is regulated by a requirement to reside within a certain area which is attached to their residence permit.</p> <p>b) All foreigners that have been granted protection under section 25, para. 3 of the German Residence Act are entitled to private accommodation which they may choose for themselves. They are free to settle within the German territory if they dispose of sufficient resources to sustain themselves. If they do depend on unemployment or social welfare benefits they are free to search for private accommodation, however only within the territory of the federal state that has granted their residence permit. In this case their monthly rent will be covered up to a certain threshold by the Federal Employment Agency or the local social welfare offices. Further they are entitled to unemployment and social welfare benefits under the Social Security Code.</p> <p>c) Foreigners that have been granted protection under section 25, para. 3 of the German Residence Act who receive unemployment or social welfare benefits are obliged to reside within the federal state that has granted their residence permit.</p> <p>d) Refugees under section 25, para. 1 or 2 of the German Residence Act are free to settle within the German territory. They are entitled to private accommodation. In case of unemployment their monthly rent will be covered up to a certain threshold by the Federal Employment Agency or the local social welfare offices. With regards to further social welfare benefits refugees are entitled to benefits under the Social Security Code.</p> <p>2. Currently there is no information available on a general shortage of housing for newly arrived migrants in Germany.</p>
	Hungary	Yes	<p>1. There is no such a regulation in Hungary.</p> <p>a)-c) not applicable</p> <p>d) Refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary not having other accommodation are entitled to accommodation and alimentation at the reception centre for the maximum of a six-month-long period after the recognition. During these six months, they are obliged to take part in integration programmes and to cooperate in the moving out from the reception centre. The future accommodation is searched individually or sometimes with the help of NGOs. There is no obligatory place for settlement. Accommodation or housing allowance shall be granted as integration support if they meet the requirements set out in law.</p> <p>2. There is a general shortage of available housing.</p>
	Ireland	NO	<p>This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.</p>

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	Italy	Yes	<p>1. In Italy the dispersal occurs during the initial stage of the international protection application process as asylum seekers are housed in decentralised accommodation. The national asylum reception system is based on specific reception projects, it is called SPRAR (Protection System for Asylum Applicants and Refugees) and was established by Law no. 189/2002. SPRAR manages a network of local reception projects, created by local authorities to give assistance and protection to asylum seekers, refugees and persons under humanitarian protection by using the resources of a specific national fund created by the Ministry of Interior (National Fund for asylum policies and services). The Central Service of SPRAR has been assigned to the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI). The adopted model is the “integrated hospitality”, carried out in synergy with tertiary sector bodies, central institutions and local authorities. Thanks to this system, at local level, the local bodies may also benefit from the (free) support of third sector agencies that provide complementary activities and services. Obligations are linked to the requirements established by each integration project and by internal regulations. The applicant failing to comply with these regulations will be required to leave the project. Implementing bodies are also subject to obligations as they need to ensure all services foreseen and prove eligibility of expenses undertaken.</p> <p>2. A general shortage of available accommodation is experienced, since every year the SPRAR reception system has proved to be inadequately funded to host the overall number of new asylum applicants. According to an estimate provided by the Central Service appointed by the Ministry of Interior to manage the SPRAR, in 2010, when the flow of asylum applicants was extremely reduced, the number of applicants who could not be hosted by the system was equal to 2.500 units (the situation got worse in 2011 due to the “Arab spring” in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia).</p>
	Latvia	Yes	<p>1) When status is granted, refugees have right to choose place of residence in LV territory. Refugees have possibility to stay in the Asylum Seekers Reception Centre for short period - until they find housing with support of NGO’s or by themselves. Refugees are entitled to receive an allowance covering the subsistence costs as well as costs for state language learning (<i>1 year</i>).</p> <p>2) As there is no legal duty for municipalities regarding housing of refugees, persons with newly granted statuses can face problems with housing (<i>high rental payment</i>) – especially because they all are tended to stay in the capital or at least close to it.</p>
	Lithuania	Yes	<p>1. Currently, Lithuania has a small number of refugees, so there is no problem regarding the allocation of refugees to municipalities.</p> <p>a) Previously (in 2004-2008 years), there were some cases when the Refugees Reception Center took into consideration the increasing number of refugees allocated in certain municipalities and recommended to choose other municipalities.</p> <p>b) The support is provided to institutions that have agreements with the Refugees Reception Center, such as Lithuanian Red Cross Society, Caritas and municipalities. The Refugees Reception Center funds assistance to refugees (allowances, rent fees, trainings and expenses for administration).</p> <p>c) Refugees commit to integrate actively: look for a job, get a job, learn the Lithuanian language, re-qualify if needed. Institutions: commit to provide support, consultations, information, mediate, and etc.</p> <p>2. Most refugees want to stay in major cities of Lithuania. They are quite independent in doing this (looking for housing,</p>

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			concluding contracts with the owners of the apartment). Refugees have more job opportunities in big cities; therefore this is one of the reasons to stay there. Lithuania has a small number of refugees, thus refugees have a possibility to stay in major cities without any restrictions. Moreover, the funding does not depend on the chosen city. The situation in the Lithuanian labor market is unfavorable to refugees, but recently the refugees who have professions manage to get a job.
	Luxembourg	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NO, LU does not have a system of dispersal of refugees among municipalities. Refugees are free to move anywhere in the country. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once an asylum applicant has been granted international protection (according to Geneva Convention or subsidiary protection), OLAI offers assistance with finding housing in LU by referral to agencies in the field of housing (fond du logement, agence immobilière sociale); • In case of vacancy, houses or flats which are managed by OLAI (properties of governmental administration) are let out for a limited period of 3 years. These houses are located throughout the country. 2. LU has a general shortage of houses for people with low income – whether they are nationals, EU citizens, migrants or refugees. Though social housing is well developed in LU newly recognized refugees (and newly arrived migrants) do not have immediate access to public social housing.
	Netherlands	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, for over 20 years the Netherlands knows a obligatory system (by law, the Huisvestingwet or Law on Housing), in which municipalities (gemeenten) have to offer housing with priority to admitted asylum seekers. Every semester, each municipality is given, by the Ministry of Security and Justice, a ‘quotum’, the number of admitted asylum seekers that will have to be housed in that semester. The number of people that will have to be housed is based on the number of expected admittances in that half year, divided by the equation of the population of each individual municipality to the whole population of the Netherlands. Distribution of the number of refugees that must be housed is not based on economic or social principles, every municipality has to participate in this housing program. So, the local housing of admitted asylum seekers is an obligatory task of all the municipalities, who, in turn, will have to make agreements with local housing corporations/associations on the number and pace at which the houses become available. Thus this task needs planning, thinking ahead as the Netherlands is also confronted with a lack of (socially fitting) houses for refugees and other starters. The COA, the Dutch Organization for the Reception of Asylum seekers, has (by law) the task of ‘distributing’ the new admitted asylum seekers among the municipalities. Admitted asylum seekers are obliged to accept the offered house, otherwise they will loose the right for reception and support. Once housed they are free to re-allocate themselves. But there is only a right on priority on housing the very first time. The municipalities are not directly supported for the housing of refugees, but receive an additional fund of €1000 for each housed refugee, for social inclusion actions. Admitted asylum seekers are obliged to follow an integration-course. 2. Yes, the Netherlands shares the Swedish experience of a general shortage in available houses. As most admitted asylum seekers have to fall back on social benefits, they have to be housed on the social housing market (not the high-end of the market), in which they have to compete with others like starters. As said, they are housed with priority. This off course causes some friction, but as the admitted asylum seekers are dispersed among all municipalities, de ‘burden’ is equally shared. This keeps the system still going.

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	Poland	Yes	<p>1. No</p> <p>d) Recognized refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection once they have been granted a protection status they are entitled to receive financial support (within the framework of one-year long individual integration program – IPI) which they may use paying for housing expenses (they usually rent free-market apartments). They are also free to choose the municipality where they want to live. When the integration program finishes, they usually apply for social housing (local authority housing) under the same terms and conditions as Polish citizens. Since the waiting list is always long (they can wait up to 5 years) they decide to rent an apartment on their own.</p> <p>2. Yes. Poland experience shortage of available housing not only for newly arrived migrants, but especially for settled beneficiaries of international protection as well as for Polish citizens.</p>
	Slovak Republic	Yes	<p>1. No.</p> <p>d) Following the granting of asylum this person is usually placed in the integration center, where he/she has the possibility to undertake the Slovak language courses. After the period of stay in the integration center the person with granted asylum is offered the possibility of accommodation (only once). The person with granted asylum or subsidiary protection is usually assisted in these matters by the representatives of NGOs, which for a certain period also pay (fully or partially) for the accommodation.</p> <p>2. No, the asylum seekers in the SR are primarily accommodated in the asylum facilities.</p>
	Slovenia	NO	<p>1. This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.</p>
	Spain	NO	<p>1. This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that their response is not disseminated further.</p>
	Sweden	Yes	<p>1. Yes, through a system of voluntary agreements between the State and the municipalities. However, once refugees have received a residence permit in Sweden, they are free to move anywhere in the country.</p> <p>a) The Introduction Act (2010) stipulates that the State, through the Public Employment Service, shall offer assistance with finding housing to those who have a right to an introduction plan. The assistance is offered to the individual refugee one time only and only to those refugees who themselves request help with finding housing. If the persons decline the presented housing offer, they are bound to leave the refugee accommodation as soon as possible thereafter.</p> <p>b) The Government compensates the receiving municipalities for the costs in connection with support and activities that facilitate settling into the community. The compensation is in two parts, first a basic allowance to a municipality that has an agreement for receiving newly arrived refugees. Second, a standard allowance for each newly-arrived refugee to cover the costs of reception and practical help in connection with, for example, housing. Newly arrived migrants covered by the Introduction Act have the right to an individual plan which includes activities that help the individual to learn Swedish and get a job as quickly as possible. While taking part in the activities in the plan, the individual is paid a special allowance called introduction benefits, a monthly reimbursement during a period of maximum two years.</p> <p>c) The individual covered by the Introduction Act is obliged to take part in the individually tailored introduction activities, in order to receive the introduction benefits. The activities in the introduction plan should contain, at minimum, Swedish language courses, civic</p>

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			<p>orientation and employment preparation activities. The municipalities that receive refugees are obliged to offer civic orientation courses about the Swedish society (covering at least 60 hours), Swedish language courses, up to 525 hours, both free of charge for the immigrant, as well as practical help with housing and education.</p> <p>2. Currently, Sweden is facing a large influx of various refugee groups. Due to a lack of available housing in parts of the country where the labour market is good, the housing situation has become untenable, both from an individual viewpoint and from certain municipalities' side.</p>
	United Kingdom	Yes	<p>The UK accommodates asylum seekers in most areas of the UK through contracts with private suppliers.</p> <p>As part of the accommodation contract providers are expected to cope with any increase or decrease in the numbers of service users and any type of service user.</p> <p>Providers are also expected (as part of the contract) to liaise with municipal areas and gain their approval before housing an asylum seekers in any area.</p> <p>Private providers and the state share data to help municipalities plan and assess the impact on services and housing in their area .</p> <p>The state recently re-tendered its contracts and held an e-auction to obtain the best value accommodation providers.</p> <p>There are pressures on the supply of housing in some parts of the UK, but the system is current functioning in the normal way.</p> <p>If a persons asylum claim is accepted and they become a refugee then the local authority/municipality where the person has been living takes over the responsibility to provide accommodation.</p>
	Norway	Yes	<p>Norway has a system where refugees who have been granted a residence permit as a refugee can choose where they want to settle, and in principle they can settle wherever they want. However, most refugees settle with public assistance. This can happen in any of the municipality, given that it has accepted the person/family in question. Settling refugees is a voluntary task for the municipalities, and each municipality decide how many refugees they want to settle every year. The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) is responsible for managing settlements. The aim is that to settle persons given protection in a municipality within six months of them having been granted a residence permit, or within three months for unaccompanied minors and families with children.</p> <p>The municipalities receive integration grants when settling refugees, as a fixed sum per refugee over a five-year period. It is to compensate the municipalities for the financial expenses they might have in connection to the settlement of the refugees. This sum is currently NOK 616 800 for the five-year period for adult refugees and NOK 596 800 for children under 18. The municipalities also get additional grants for settling elderly, handicapped persons and unaccompanied minors.</p> <p>Norway is experiencing some of the same challenges as Sweden. Many municipalities report to IMDi that the lack of suitable housing is a</p>

EMN Ad-Hoc Query on allocation of refugees to municipalities for integration purposes

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

			main challenge. Many of those being settled with public assistance are single men, and the lack of available and affordable housing for this group is challenging. Norway is also facing housing challenges as a consequence of a high number of labor immigrants coming to Norway from Eastern and Southern Europe who also are in need of suitable, inexpensive housing. Some of the measures being taken to alleviate the challenge regarding a lack of suitable housing is to encourage municipalities to settle several single individuals in a shared apartment or house. The government plans to change the criteria for grants to the municipalities for building rental housing for refugees and other priority groups. The government will be able to provide up to 40 percent of financing to the municipalities, an increase from 20 percent.
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