



Roctock,

UBC conference

15.03.2016.

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***WE NEED MORE REFUGEES IN
ESTONIA TO CREATE A SYSTEM...***

**THE ROLE OF NGO-s AND LOCAL
MUNICIPALITIES**

Background of Estonian refugee situation



- Estonia joined in **1997** with Geneva Convention
- From 1997 to 2016 by total, Estonia has had the smallest number of asylum applications in EU
- There were **226** applications and **97** positive answers to asylum seekers in year 2015 (and 147 applications and only 20 positive answers in 2014)
- **2** reception centres (Vao and Vägeva)
- Estonian governments has agreed to receive **550** refugees within the EU resettlement program
- NGO-s in Estonia in this field: JMC, Estonian Centre of Human Rights, Estonian Refugee Council, IOM Estonia.

What was a small number for a state in 2015?



European Union

Population: 506.000.000

Refugees: 1.000.000



Lebanon

Population: 5.800.000

Refugees: 1.300.000



The background of the situation

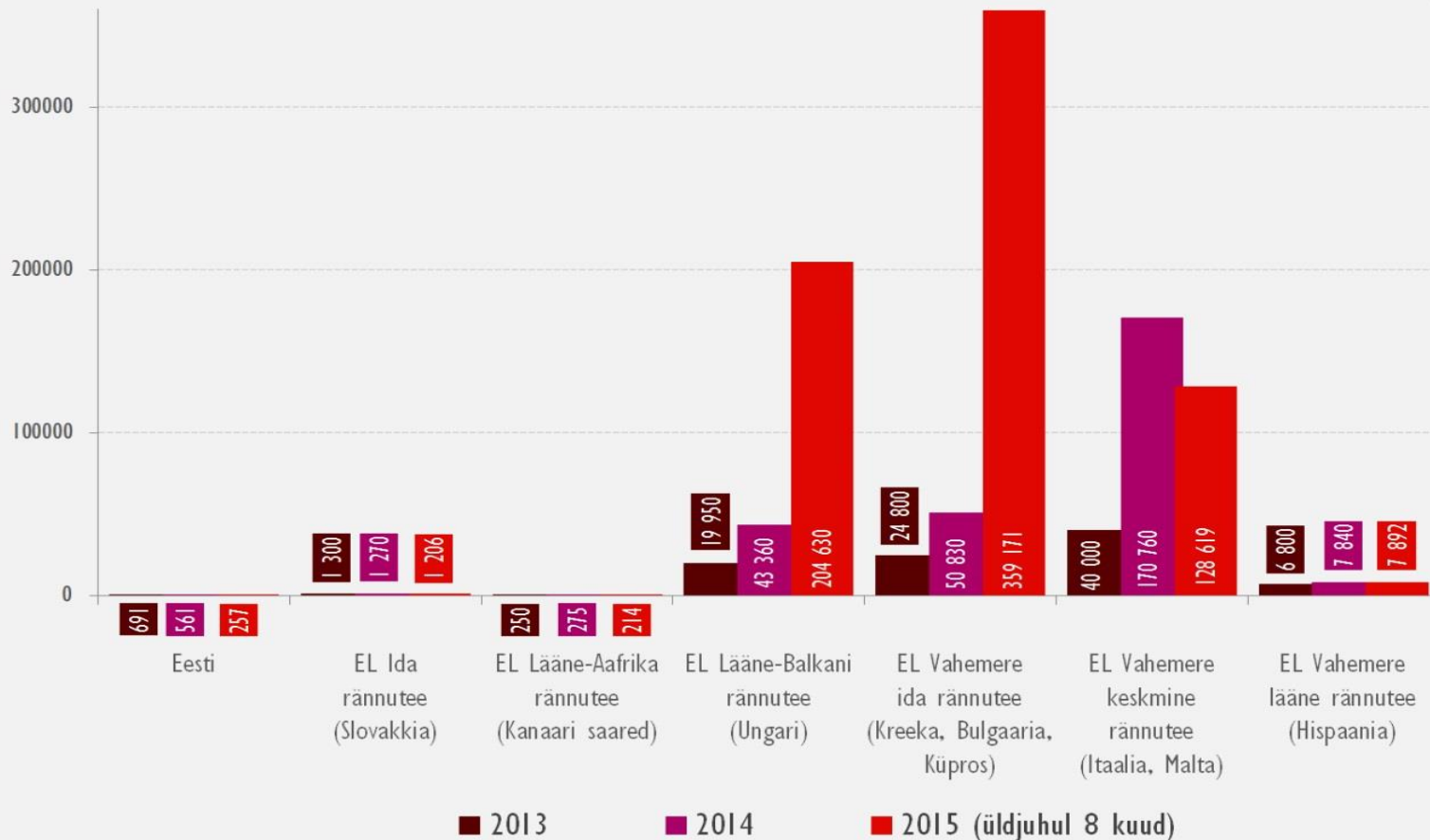


Reasons for such a small number in Estonia:

- Estonia lacks the ethnic and cultural communities who originate from these countries
- ...therefore we lack people who could be the mediators for the newcomers
- Estonia is not on the way of main migration roads (very often refugees` arrival to Estonia is accidental)
- Estonia is not only on the map for refugees but it is also lacking from the map of smugglers

Estonia is not on the map for migrants

Eesti ei ole oluline rändetee: illegaalsete immigrantide hulk rändeteede kaupa



That is why we do not have a system...

Challenges for Estonian reception system



- Local municipalities have not been actively involved in reception system for more than 10 years (because of the low number and because the housing is done through private sector)
- Local municipalities (incl. large cities like Tallinn and Tartu) lack the work experience of receiving refugees
- There is no professional, specific psychological assistance for refugees (which could focus on this group of people)
- There are not enough interpreters for services (in medicine, school system, job market agencies etc.)
- At the moment, everything in the everyday practice of integration process goes through NGO-s
- **We have to learn from practices of European states**
- **! But first we have to create a cooperative system between local municipalities and NGO-s**

JMC support services



What do we do?

JMC support persons



- JMC have about 30 support persons for a work with refugees (incl 1 from Iraq and 1 from Kashmir), we have about 60 clients
- What are the tasks for support persons?

The main objective is to create a bridge

which could help refugee better to integrate to

-new social environment (networks, jobs, communities)

-new cultural environment (traditions, norms, values)

-new legal and political system (legislation, rights, state policy)

The main activities for the support person is to help...

-to communicate with different institutions and services (migration office, local governments, schools, medical services etc)

-helping to communicate with Unemployment Fund

-to cope with cultural / psychological problems

-to help to study Estonian language

The cooperation between JMC and Tartu City Council



Local multilevel governance?



- In cooperation with city council, our idea is to create a multilevel team in Tartu who`d assist a refugee (at least) for 1 year:

Case manager (Tartu city)

JMC support person

Unemployment Fund

Services and networks

(schools, churches, cultural centres etc.)

What do we need to do?



- Regular roundtables with the team
- Cooperation with different networks
- Co-creation with the refugees
- To implement a good planning for refugees
- To train interpreters and psychologists for this target group
- To develop studies of Estonian language for more appropriate learning process

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Refugees, welcome to Estonia and help us better the system!



Thank you very much!



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ESTONIA

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