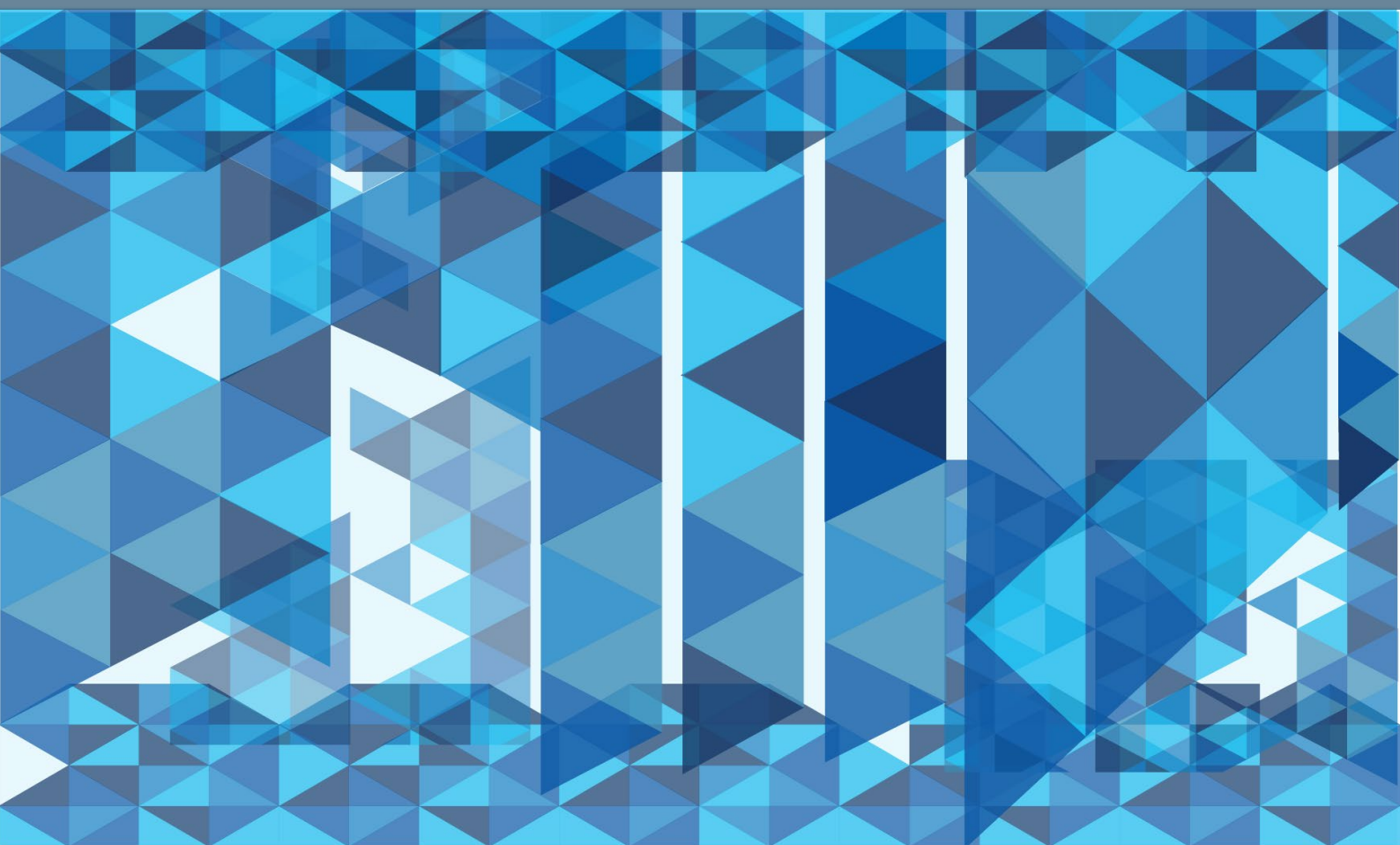


# Welcoming Programme: mid-term evaluation

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MID-TERM EVALUATION REPORT  
2019



Research: **Welcoming Programme: Mid-term evaluation**

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# ABBREVIATIONS

EU – European Union

IOM – Estonian office of the International Organisation for Migration

IP – International Protection (module)

MoI – Ministry of Interior

PBGB – Police and Border Guard Board, abbreviation in Estonian is PPA

TRP – Temporary Residence Permit

UX, UI - User Experience and User Interface

WP – Welcoming Programme

# 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2019, the Institute of Baltic Studies together with the service-design agency Velvet carried out applied research on two areas: the adaptation of newly arrived migrants (part I of the research and research report), and the mid-term evaluation of the Welcoming Programme (part II). The current report covers the results of part II. This report focuses on the Welcoming Programme, but also has direct connections with the first part of the study.

Newly arrived migrants face several challenges after arriving to a new host country. There is a lack of knowledge on the information about and availability of the services, including what has to be done to access these services and where and when. These challenges relate to many areas with which the newcomers come into contact during their stay in Estonia: health services, finding accommodation and/or a job, language learning, attending lifelong learning to be competitive, finding spare-time activities (e.g. volunteering) and persons with whom to communicate or socialise.

As stipulated in state regulations, adaptation is defined as a multilateral process where newly arrived migrants adapt to the new environment and host society. This process is characterised by the gaining of knowledge and skills that help a newcomer cope in their new environment in everyday life, the national sphere (e.g. legislation, rights and obligations) as well as in the behavioural sphere (understanding the fundamental values of the host society, cultural practices, etc.)<sup>1</sup>

As a result, the information about and access or non-access to services in these areas, influence the degree of short-term adaptation as well as long-term integration in Estonian society.

Integration, on the other hand, is seen as a mutual social cohesion in society between people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This is characterised by similar processes as in adaptation – gaining knowledge, skills and values – whereas its long-term perspective is to contribute to the development of Estonian society through practical cooperation and mutual openness. As a result of integration, socio-economic inequalities coming from cultural, linguistic, religious and nationality differences should decrease.<sup>2</sup> Thus, adaption and integration are similar processes in their goal, although integration is more substantial and fundamental in its essence, by placing more importance on the creation of mutual values, and adaptation places more importance on gaining knowledge and information. These processes can take place in parallel, or sequentially after each other (depending on the person/context/background, etc.).

Several services have been developed and implemented in Estonia for newly arrived migrants (see a more detailed overview and analysis of the services in part I of the research report), for example:

- general adaptation programme for all newcomers (the Welcoming Programme);
- teaching the Estonian language (several service providers, including public and private sector);
- migration advice (e.g. information provision on residence permits and other legal issues);

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<sup>1</sup> Kultuuriministeerium. (2019). Eesti riigi lõimumis- ja kohanemisteenused. Lisa 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

- programmes to attract foreign labour, foreign students and supporting employers (Work in Estonia) as well as universities (EURAXESS);
- project based activities that target different target groups of foreigners or different areas (e.g. refugees, employment, volunteering, socialising, etc.).

These services are mostly provided free of charge, or for a fee, by the following organisations: Enterprise Estonia (e.g. Work in Estonia, e-Estonia), the Unemployment Insurance Fund, Expat Relocation Estonia, IOM, different ministries, Rajaleidja, the Refugee Council, the Johannes Mihkelson Center, the Integration Foundation, the International House of Estonia and of Tartu, the Police and Border Guard Board, and several others. Migration and adaptation are also supported by international student services in higher education institutions, and by employers as well as (specialised) organisations engaging with foreigners and migrants through counselling, trainings and educational and informational materials.

One of the core activities supporting newcomers' adaptation in Estonia is the Welcoming Programme (WP). The predecessors of this programme were the trainings for newly arrived migrants carried out by Immisoft OÜ between 2012-2014. In 2014, the current form of the Welcoming Programme was piloted in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior (MoI), Expat Relocation Estonia, the Archimedes Foundation, the Estonian Research Council and IOM Estonia. As of 2018, the modules of the WP are offered as a service for newly arrived migrants in cooperation with Ministry of the Interior, Expat Relocation Estonia and IOM Estonia.

Today, the Welcoming Programme includes six thematic one-day modules, a three-day international protection module and an 80-hour A1 level Estonian language module. The Welcoming Programme is designed for all newly arrived migrants and participation is free of charge. Although several recent studies have briefly reflected upon the WP and its potential benefits to its target group<sup>3</sup>, there has been no comprehensive and systematic overview of the impact of the programme, the reasons for attending or not attending the programme, and understanding people's opinions on the programme and its development opportunities.

Therefore, this study focused on evaluating the piloting and implementation of the Welcoming Programme, in the period of 2015-2018. The aim of the study was to evaluate:

1. the relevance of the training modules (the Basic module, the Working and Entrepreneurship module, the Family Life module, the Children and Young People module, the Studying module, the Research module, and the International Protection module), and the content and structure of the A1 level language training module to the objectives of the WP;
2. the process of the enrolment to the modules based on the conditions set out in the regulation of the programme;
3. the rate and reasons for the participation, non-participation, discontinuation of training; the provision and quality of the trainings and the accessibility of trainings;
4. the training modules' handbooks, methodological and interactive materials and their relevance to the objectives of the Welcoming Programme and its regulation. Also, as appropriate, submitting proposals for modifying and/or supplementing existing materials;
5. the acquisition of the competencies of the modules (mentioned in a regulation) by the participants.

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<sup>3</sup> See more for example: Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018; Anniste, K., Masso, M. (2019). Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis.

The data for the evaluation was collected mainly in spring-summer 2019 and preliminary results were communicated regularly to the Ministry of Interior and Expat Relocation Estonia. As a result of the evaluation, possible proposals for modifications and the implementation of the Welcoming Programme were developed for a more efficient and effective programme (see the end of this report, chapters 7 and 9). As several changes have been implemented already, some of the critiques and descriptions are less relevant, but instances where this is known to be the case, are pointed out in the report.

Considering the positive feedback from the participants so far and the desire to increase the proportion of newly arrived migrants participating in the programme, the current form and function of the programme are analysed in light of the service design principles. Thus, **Chapter two** gives an overview of the methods used for the research. **Chapter three** provides an overview on the programme and provides general statistics. **Chapter four** reflects on the different aspects of service design. **Chapters five and six** focus on language learning courses and the International Protection module; and **Chapter seven** analyses the relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability of the programme based on these aspects.

While the report contains a number of recommendations to develop the field and the programme, it also provides an overview of similar activities in other countries (**chapter eight**), and it concludes with the recommendations that are the most important for the development of the programme (**chapter nine**).

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The Evaluation of the Welcoming Programme (WP) was carried out according to the general principles of the European Commission's evaluation guide for 2014-2020.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, these were adopted with the research questions as set out in the terms of reference for this research. Based on the specific research questions and the current situation of the Welcoming Programme (for example, earlier research showed a high level of satisfaction among participants but low levels of participation), the programme was analysed in the context of service design principles. In order to do so and to understand the service and to better frame the research, the "ATONE + S" method was used along with traditional programme evaluation methods (see more on ATONE+S method in chapter 4).

The **ATONE method** is a practitioner-based method, and the name is an acronym for: Actors, Touchpoints, value Offer, Needs, and Experience. Due to the complex and interconnected nature of the service being researched (the Welcoming Programme) the need for a new category quickly became evident and thus, the letter S was added for 'Structure of the Service'.<sup>5</sup>

The evaluation was carried out using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The primary methods of data collection were **interviews** (see personal interviews in chapter 2.1 and focus-group interviews in 2.3) and **observations** (see chapter 2.2), together with the service design methods of **service-safaris** (see chapter 2.4) and **online surveys** (see chapter 2.5). The results of the evaluation of the Welcoming Programme were validated during **design process workshop** (see chapter 2.6).

The aim of the research was to evaluate the piloting and implementation of the Welcoming Programme during the period of 2015-2018. However, considering the research questions (see chapter 1), the main focus is on the current situation of the Welcoming Programme. Therefore, the study includes the statistics of the programme from the years 2015-2018, while the focus of the interviews and observations mainly covered the 2018/2019 year of the programme.

### 2.1. Interviews

The interviews had three main aims: to gather input for the data collection instruments (questionnaires, observation sheets, survey methodology, working sheets, etc.), to acquire information about the implementation and other related coordinating activities of the programme, and to interpret and validate results from the earlier stages of the research (document analysis, other interviews, observations, etc.).

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the following target groups:

- 1) state stakeholders of the Welcoming Programme – representatives of the Ministry of the Interior;
- 2) stakeholders related to the enrolment procedures and trainings – Expat Relocation Estonia, Police and Border Guard Board, IOM Estonia (6 interviews);

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<sup>4</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy. (2014). The programming period 2014–2020. Guidance document on monitoring and evaluation. European Cohesion Fund, European Regional Development Fund. Concepts and Recommendations.

<sup>5</sup> The method is developed by Simon Clatworthy. For more information please see chapter 4.

- 3) the direct target group of the programme – i.e. new migrants living in Estonia (17 personal, face-to-face interviews, 8 interviewees had taken part in a programme);
- 4) other experts and experts related to the programme or migration/adaptation area in general – representatives of enterprises, universities, service providers (e.g. medical service, education, adaptation), trainers, etc. (45 interviews).

Interviews provided input for both parts of the research: the applied research on the adaptation of newly arrived migrants (part I) and the evaluation of the Welcoming Programme (part II). The following research questions were addressed in the WP-related interviews:

- What kind of support and services have new migrants needed before, during, and after their arrival to Estonia?
- What are the different support services or support mechanisms for foreigners in different organisations?
- What kind of support is needed by different organisations to support the adaptation of newly arrived migrants?
- What is the need among different target groups for the Estonian Welcoming Programme?
- What is the satisfaction and/or feedback with the PBGB's migration advice service?
- What kind of role can different institutions/organisations play in supporting the integration and adaptation of newly arrived migrants (including in the provision of services by these organisations)?
- Are there any existing good practices for supporting the adaptation of newly arrived immigrants in Estonia?

Personal interviews lasted for around 0.5-2.5 hours. Most of the interviews took place face-to-face on site, although some were carried out via video conference or phone call. The physical, on-site interviews were conducted in Tallinn, Tartu and Narva.

## 2.2. Observations

The observations aimed **to get a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the workings of the Welcoming Programme modules**: the dynamics and interplay between the participants (and the trainer), the quality of the teaching, the information provided (or not provided) by the trainer, the overall setting of the training location (e.g. seating, lighting, general atmosphere), etc.

**Two different types of observations** were carried out: 1) observation by an independent observer and 2) an observation by a participant observer. With the Independent Observer, the trainer was aware of the presence of a particular observer during a module. This allowed the observer to discuss the module session with the trainer both before and after it had taken place. The second type of observation was carried out by a Participant Observer. Neither the trainers nor the participants were aware of the presence of the observer during these observations, with the observer pretending to be an ordinary participant.

The observations were structured and operationalised by using two different observer questionnaires in order to conduct two multivariate forms of observations. The first type of observation, which was mainly conducted by the lead partner of the research (Institute of Baltic Studies, IBS), was substance-oriented and focused on following main aspects of the modules:

1. **The structure of the module.** The main questions posed in this section were:
  - How was the module structured?
  - What was the content of the modules?
  - What was the balance between theory and practice?
2. **The teaching environment.** The main questions posed in this section were:
  - How was the Interaction between the trainer and the participants?
  - How was the interaction between the participants?
  - What did the physical environment look like?
  - How did the trainer approach and deal with (potentially) sensitive topics?
  - Were participants encouraged to ask questions?
3. **The goals/objectives of the module.** The main questions posed in this section were:
  - Did the trainer discuss the overall aim(s) of the module?
  - Did the trainer come back to the aims at the end of the module?
  - Did the trainer ask about the participants' expectations of the module?
  - Do you feel that that the module succeeded in fulfilling its stated objectives?

The second type of observation, which was mainly conducted by Velvet, was service-oriented and focused on:

1. **Actors**
  - Who is part of the module?
  - Which actors are mentioned or involved?
  - How are the actors related to each other?
2. **Touchpoints**
  - What are the person-person interactions? When do they happen?
  - What are the person-object interactions?
  - What are the person-environment interactions?
3. **Value offer**
  - What is the value generated during the trainings?
  - What is the perceived value in a participant's view?
  - How is the value being delivered?
  - What are the touchpoints that support the delivery?
4. **Needs**
  - What do the participants say are their needs, goals and objectives?
  - Is there any other need they don't mention but otherwise express?
  - What are the participants' questions?
  - Which topics are they more actively interested in?

## 5. Experience

- What are the participants' pain points?
- What are the participants' attitudes and behaviours and how do they relate to the trainer's?
- Are the interactions positive or negative?

In total, five thematic modules and language courses were observed, and 16 observations<sup>6</sup> were carried out in total (see in Table 2.1)<sup>7</sup>.

**Table 2.1.** Overview of observations carried out between May-September 2019

| Name of the module   | Location | Language |
|--|----------|----------|
| <b>Basic</b>   | Tallinn  | English  |
| <b>Basic</b>   | Tartu    | English  |
| <b>Family</b>  | Tartu    | English  |
| <b>Family</b>  | Narva    | Russian  |
| <b>Family</b>  | Tallinn  | Russian  |
| <b>Working and Entrepreneurship</b>                        | Tartu    | English  |
| <b>Working and Entrepreneurship (spin-off: Töötukassa)</b> | Tallinn  | English  |
| <b>Working and Entrepreneurship</b>                        | Tallinn  | English  |
| <b>Studying</b>  | Narva    | English  |
| <b>International Protection</b>                            | Tallinn  | Arabic   |
| <b>Language course</b>                                     | Tallinn  | English  |
| <b>Language course</b>                                     | Tallinn  | Russian  |
| <b>Language course</b>                                     | Tartu    | English  |
| <b>Language course (company)</b>                           | Tallinn  | English  |
| <b>Language course</b>                                     | Tallinn  | English  |
| <b>Language course (company)</b>                           | Tallinn  | Russian  |

The choice of the observations was based on the following criteria: variation of locations (Tallinn, Tartu, Narva), variation of trainers, variation of language (English, Russian, Arabic), and variation of the types/themes of the modules (basic, family, studying, etc.) The observations also varied in terms of the size of the participants (ranging from 3 to 25 (language training) participants). Observations lasted the whole training day and were carried out based on the before-mentioned observer questionnaires. The results of the observations are fully integrated within the different chapters of the report.

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<sup>6</sup> In case of two language courses one observation included up to three visits.

<sup>7</sup> Some of the module sessions listed below were attended by more than one researcher and some longer courses several times by one researcher.

## 2.3. Focus group interviews

The focus group interviews gathered information and feedback from foreigners, trainers and language teachers to **better comprehend the process of migrant adaptation** itself as well as the difficulties experienced throughout this process. One of the main advantages of conducting focus groups is the group-based dynamics, which can offer pivotal insights into the process of migrant adaptation.

A single focus group plan was used for all of the different focus groups in order to make sure that all the focus group sessions followed the same structure. The plan is as follows:

1. Introductory round (10 min)
  - a. The primary aim of this section was to familiarise the focus groups participants with the purpose and structure of the focus group sessions. This also provided the focus group moderators with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the focus group participants themselves by asking them to briefly introduce themselves.
2. Problematic areas of adaptation and the use of services (35 min)
  - a. The use of a large poster, containing seven different service categories, formed the main basis for our focus group discussion in this section. These seven different service categories were:
    - i. Work and Internship
    - ii. Education
    - iii. Healthcare
    - iv. Free time opportunities (including volunteering)
    - v. Housing
    - vi. Bureaucracy
    - vii. Feeling welcome
  - b. Participants were asked to rate the seven different service categories by putting a sticker into the smiley face, the neutral face, or the sad face box. The focus group moderator subsequently proceeded by discussing a number of these service categories by asking participants why they had earmarked certain services as problematic or troublesome by enquiring about the difficulties they had experienced when using services belonging to these categories. The moderators also encouraged participants to think about ways to improve the services themselves or the participants' access to them.
3. Community and connectivity (35 min)
  - a. In this section, participants were asked to spend five minutes drawing their own social circle in Estonia on a blank sheet of paper. The participants were shown examples to help them think about the different ways to go about doing this, but were subsequently given free rein to draw their own respective social circle in whichever way they saw fit. The participants were then asked to briefly introduce and explain their own social circle to the group with one additional question in mind: 'How many of your friends or acquaintances are Estonian?' The ensuing group discussion concentrated on a number of additional themes, including the importance of language learning and the extent to which participants were aware of what is happening in Estonia.
4. Concluding section (5 min)

- a. The overarching purpose of this section was to conclude our focus group discussion.

A total of 21 focus group interviews were held (in English, Russian and Arabic), with each session focusing on a different target group (trainers, participants, non-participants) and in some cases, slightly different set of questions of different thematical areas was used.

**Table 2.2.** Type, location and date of the interviews

| Target group                                    | Date       | Location | Language |
|---|------------|----------|----------|
| Participants from Russia                        | 20.06.2019 | Tartu    | Russian  |
| Participants of international protection module | 27.06.2019 | Tartu    | Arabic   |
| Participants of international protection module | 27.06.2019 | Tartu    | Arabic   |
| Participants of international protection module | 28.06.2019 | Tallinn  | Arabic   |
| Trainers of language module                     | 15.08.2019 | Tallinn  | Estonian |
| Trainers of language module                     | 21.08.2019 | Tartu    | Estonian |
| Trainers of language module                     | 21.08.2019 | Tallinn  | Estonian |
| Family  | 03.09.2019 | Tallinn  | English  |
| Workers of Baltic College                       | 03.09.2019 | Tartu    | English  |
| Employees/Entrepreneurs                         | 05.09.2019 | Tallinn  | English  |
| Students/Interns                                | 05.09.2019 | Tallinn  | English  |
| University Faculty                              | 11.09.2019 | Tallinn  | English  |
| Persons from Russia                             | 11.09.2019 | Tallinn  | Russian  |
| IT Specialists                                  | 12.09.2019 | Tallinn  | English  |
| Persons who have lived in Tallinn 4-5 years     | 18.09.2019 | Tallinn  | Russian  |
| University Faculty                              | 19.09.2019 | Tallinn  | English  |
| Persons from Russia                             | 19.09.2019 | Narva    | Russian  |
| Persons from Ukraine                            | 19.09.2019 | Narva    | Russian  |
| Persons from Ukraine                            | 23.09.2019 | Tallinn  | Russian  |
| Persons from other countries                    | 24.09.2019 | Tallinn  | Russian  |
| Participants of international protection module | 12.10.2019 | Tallinn  | Arabic   |

## 2.4. Service safari

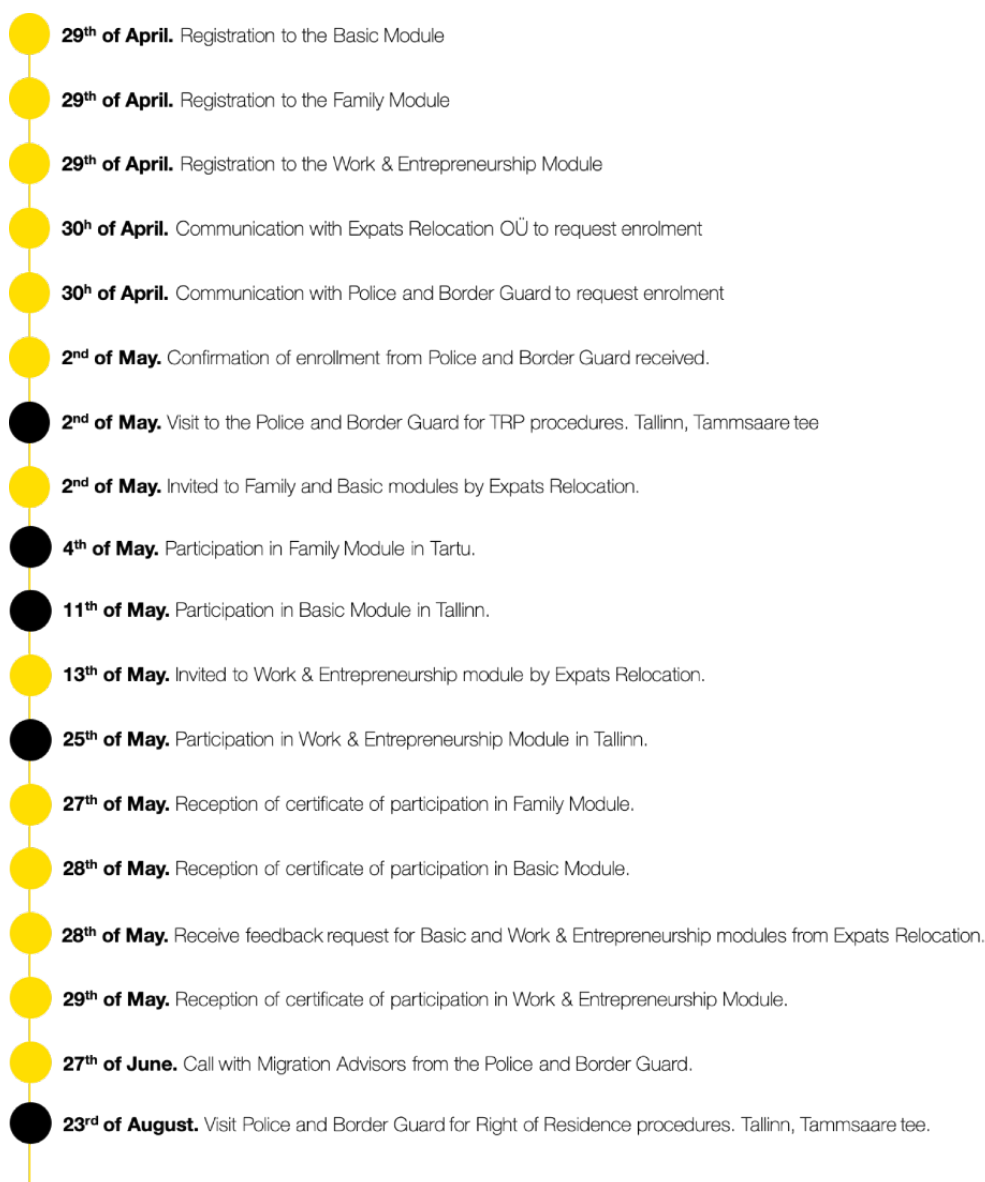
The tool known as a “service safari” by service designers is an immersive method in which the design researcher experiences the service first-hand by taking the role of a user, or sometimes a service provider. For this research, the immersion was facilitated by the researcher being a foreigner herself (Velvet), and thus being

able to use the service in the way it was intended to be by any foreigner without needing special arrangements to do so.

The service safari included all steps and interactions that the foreigner attending the Welcoming Programme usually goes through him/herself: from the registration to the WP up to the reception of the certificate of participation. By using the service safari approach, the design researcher took part in three observed modules. The service safari method increased the researcher's understanding of the participants' experience, and together with the other observations, interviews and survey, it provided sufficient detail and material to create personas and user journeys.

Figure 2.1 gives an overview of the main interactions undergone by the researcher during the service safari.

**Figure 2.1.** Main interactions with the Welcoming Programme during the service safari



## 2.5. Online survey

An online survey was carried out among the participants of the Welcoming Programme. The goal of the survey was mainly to gather qualitative data (comments, thoughts, emotions) on the specific issues related to their participation in any of the thematic modules or language trainings.

The survey comprised 14 (semi) closed (multiple-choice) and 5 open (essay) questions on a number of different aspects relating to the Welcoming Programme, including, for example: 1) through which channels did you get information about the Welcoming Programme? 2) what were the reasons for not participating in some of the modules? 3) what is the most valuable thing you gained from taking part in the Welcoming Programme?, etc. The survey was translated into both English and Russian.

An online link to the questionnaire was sent to all persons who had registered themselves to some of the modules (database and contacts provided by the Ministry of the Interior). The survey was sent out in two waves: 300 random contacts received the survey on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 and the rest of the 3 326 contacts on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2019. A reminder was sent to all recipients on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2019. The questionnaire was closed on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June. A total number of 944 recipients completed the full survey (i.e. with the response rate of 26%). Ten winners of 50-EUR gift cards were randomly drawn among the survey respondents.

## **2.6. Validation seminars**

Based on the two main aims of the research, two separate reports were written: 1) a general overview of the current situation regarding newly arrived migrants; and 2) an evaluation of the Welcoming Programme. As there were two different focuses and the amount of information to be validated was large, two separate validation events were carried out.

The first validation seminar was on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October with the focus on the Welcoming Programme. The validation seminar was carried out in a format of workshop where topics were viewed from users' perspective (service design). The workshop lasted 5 hours (with breaks) and 22 participants from 12 organisations (e.g. representatives from the Ministry of Interior, Expat Relocation Estonia, IOM, Töötukassa, the Estonian Research Council, the Integration Foundation, Agenda PR, Johannes Mihkelsoni Keskus, Tiigervisioon, Velvet, the Institute of Baltic Studies, and foreigners) attended. The validation seminar was built up so that representing results of the research alternated with discussions and group work. Next to validating the results of the research, the aim of the seminar was to get additional ideas to solve existing problems and to gather people connected to the programme to increase their understanding about the needs of the target groups so that these are taken into account to a better extent while carrying out their activities. The results of the seminar are integrated into the report. A longer overview about the seminar can be found in the annexes (Annex 1).

A second validation seminar took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November with the focus on the current situation regarding newly arrived migrants and services that are or should be developed to support their settling and integration. As the main focus was on services, the seminar was for a smaller circle of participants: representatives of the Institute of Baltic Studies and different departments of the Ministry of Interior (10 persons). The results of the seminar are also integrated into the report.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE ESTONIAN WELCOMING PROGRAMME

The Welcoming Programme (WP) is a part of the government action “*Development, piloting and implementation of adaptation training actions*” (no. 2.6.2) that belongs under the policy-measure of “Creating opportunities to increase active employment and social activity among permanent residents in Estonia and low-integrated people, and to support the adaptation and subsequent integration of newly arrived migrants” (no. 2.6). Thus, among others, the goal of this programme is to accelerate adaptation.<sup>8</sup> The measure is financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESF) for the period of 2014-2020.<sup>9</sup> The total budget for the action is EUR 6 718 734.

The Welcoming Programme has been offered since 2015 and its aim is to support newly arrived migrants (those whom have lived in Estonia for up to five years) in the migration process and their subsequent integration by **providing them with a knowledge of state and society, daily life, work, study and family issues and facilitating their acquisition of Estonian**.<sup>10</sup> According to the Regulation on the Adaptation Program<sup>11</sup>, the programme consists of eight modules that can be grouped into four categories (Table 3.1)<sup>12</sup> and that should support the adaptation of the newly arrived migrant in Estonia.

**Table 3.1.** Groups and names of modules

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Basic module</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>training that introduces Estonian state, society, culture and everyday life</b></li> </ul>  |
| <b>Thematical modules</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Working and Entrepreneurship</b> - training on working and doing business in Estonia</li> <li>• <b>Studying</b> - training on Estonian higher education and higher education</li> <li>• <b>Research</b> - training on the organisation of Estonian research and higher education</li> <li>• <b>Family Life</b> - training for those newly arrived migrants who have come with family; introducing living in Estonia, support services for family and children, opportunities for education and leisure time</li> <li>• <b>Children and Young People</b> - introducing Estonia and living in Estonia for 3-15 year olds</li> </ul> |
| <b>Language training</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic level (A1; A2 from 2019<sup>13</sup>) language acquisition for first language proficiency</li> </ul>   |
| <b>International protection</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introducing life in Estonia and the organisation of Estonian society for people who have received international protection in Estonia</li> </ul>   |

<sup>8</sup> Siseministri 27.03.2015 käskkirjaga nr 1-3/87. Toetuse andmise tingimused uussisserändajate kohanemise toetamiseks. P. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Siseministri 27.03.2015 käskkirjaga nr 1-3/87. Toetuse andmise tingimused uussisserändajate kohanemise toetamiseks.

<sup>10</sup> Riigi Teataja. (31.05.2017). Kohanemisprogramm

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> See also the Settle in Estonia webpage and <https://www.settleinestonia.ee/en/#moodulid>.

<sup>13</sup> Siseministri 27.03.2015 käskkirjaga nr 1-3/87. Toetuse andmise tingimused uussisserändajate kohanemise toetamiseks and Seletuskiri „Siseministri 27. märtsi 2015. a käskkirja nr 1-3/87 „Toetuse andmise tingimused uussisserändajate kohanemise toetamiseks“ muutmise“.

The importance of the adaptation programme is also highlighted in the Estonian integration plan “Integrating Estonia 2020”.<sup>14</sup> One of the three key objectives of “Integrating Estonia 2020” is to support the integration of newly arrived migrants as a growing target group in Estonian society. According to the plan, as a result of the Welcoming Programme, the newly arrived migrants have acquired the essential knowledge of how to manage better in Estonia and thus, should be “adapted into Estonian society”.<sup>15</sup> This is supported by the expectation that the Welcoming Programme “will provide adaptation training that takes into account the needs of newly arrived migrants, which will help them acquire basic practical knowledge of everyday life, the organisation of society and statehood and basic Estonian language skills.”

As a method, the Welcoming Programme modules last for 5-8 hours, with the exception of language training and the international protection module. The A1 level language studies last for 80 academic hours, and the international protection module lasts for 14-18 hours.<sup>16</sup> All modules, including language training, are free for all newly arrived migrants and anyone can choose which modules or language courses to take and in which order. Each module can only be attended once. All modules and language trainings are offered in English and Russian in Tallinn and Tartu and upon completion of training groups (at least 5 participants<sup>17</sup>) in Narva. The international protection module is also conducted in Arabic and in some cases, also in other languages. The international protection module is compulsory for people who have received international protection in Estonia.

The trainings are based on the information packages of the modules (handbooks, videos, lecturers’ methodological materials, tests) and lecturer’s materials. Training packages were developed in 2015 taking into account mandatory and recommended topics as well as general competence requirements in the annexes to the WP regulation and were coordinated with relevant ministries and agencies (e.g. the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, and the PBGB). According to the monitoring reports, the training materials have been reviewed and adapted annually, if relevant and necessary, based on the feedback received from the trainers, relevant organisations and participants themselves. Training packages are partially available on the Settle in Estonia website.<sup>18</sup>

A person can register for the training through the Settle in Estonia website after receiving a **letter of notification** from the Police and Border Guard Board (PBGB/PPA) about enrolment and an identity document.<sup>19</sup> Thus, it is not possible to participate in the program before receiving the relevant documents or, for example, for those with short-term visas or foreign students without a residence permit. As of 2016, an enrolment reminder about the programme is sent to most of the eligible newly arrived migrants.

If no notification letter has been received, but the eligibility criteria are met (i.e. the person has been in Estonia less than five years based on a temporary Estonian residence permit or temporary right of residence in Estonia), a request to attend the programme must be made. Applicants must also apply if they qualify for the programme and have obtained a temporary Estonian residence permit or temporary right of residence in Estonia before 1 August 2015, the date of implementation of the Welcoming Programme. Thus, access to the programme also depends on the awareness of the newly arrived migrant.

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<sup>14</sup> Kultuuriministeerium. (2014). Lõimuv Eesti. Lõimumisvaldkonna arengukava 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Sub-objective 3: “Uussisserändajad on Eesti ühiskonnas kohanenud”. The indicator is the percentage of newly arrived foreigners of the opinion that their competitiveness in coping with society has improved.

<sup>16</sup> Depending on needs and situation the international protection module may also last just one day.

<sup>17</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne.

<sup>18</sup> An older version of the website was evaluated and described for the purposes of this report. The Settle in Estonia site was updated in autumn 2019 and while the additional materials for the modules are now easier to find visitors are no longer able to obtain additional information on the module while pressing ‘sign up’.

<sup>19</sup> Settle in Estonia webpage: <https://www.settleinestonia.ee/en/faq/>

The service provider is obliged to inform the PBGB immediately of persons who have completed the module or language training,<sup>20</sup> partly to ensure participant takes each module only once. A test by the research team confirmed that it is not possible to participate in one module more than once.

### 3.1. Statistical overview

Between 2015-2018 there have been about 344 trainings, incl. 140 language courses, 55 basic modules and 50 working and entrepreneurship modules. All trainings have the same level of difficulty. About 78% of trainings have taken place in Tallinn, 13% in Tartu and 8% in Narva. During the evaluation period (March-October 2019), at least four trainings have been cancelled due to low number of registration and/or taken place without any registered participants coming to attend the training<sup>21</sup>.

By the end of 2018 there had been 4 048 participants in the programme, whereas the planned target level for 2018 was 2 353 (Table 3.2, Figure 3.1), approximately twice the number planned. In 2018, about 88% of participants were of the opinion that their Estonian language skills, and practical awareness and knowledge about Estonia, Estonian society and culture have improved.<sup>22</sup>

**Table 3.2.** Output and result indicators

|   | Planned target level 2018 | Actual achievement | % of planned target level (2018) | Planned target level 2023 | % of planned target level (2023) | Comments   |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Number of participants in WP trainings</b>   | 2 353                     | 4 048              | 172%                             | 12 843                    | 32%                              | In 2017 and 2018 there were more participants than planned   |
| <b>Number of participants of WP whom Estonian language skills, practical informedness and knowledge about Estonia, Estonian society and culture have improved</b> | 1 647                     | 3 166              | 192%                             | 8 990                     | 35%                              | In 2017 90.3% and in 2018 88.1% of participants marked that their skills and knowledge about Estonian language, Estonia, Estonian society and culture have improved. |

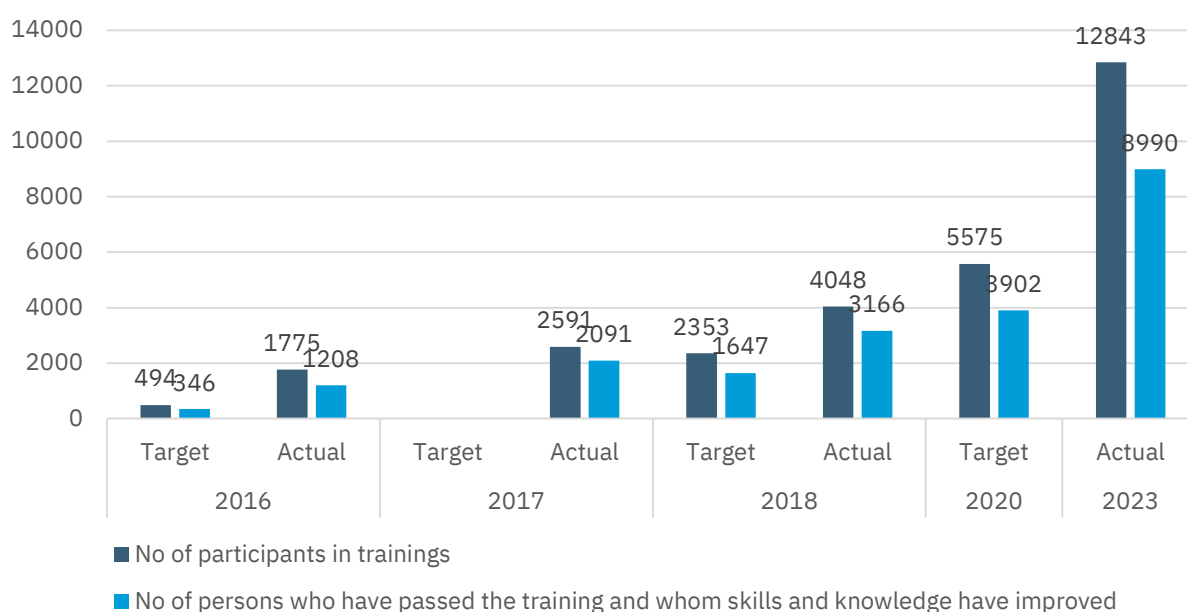
*Source: Monitoring report 2018, TAT*

<sup>20</sup> Riigi Teataja. (31.05.2017). Kohanemisprogramm. §9.

<sup>21</sup> There are no official statistics but according to the estimates of Expat Relocation Estonia, about 10-15 trainings have been cancelled between 2015-2019 due to low number of registrations.

<sup>22</sup> This indicator derives from the similar question asked from the participant feedback forms of every module (options: yes/no/do not know).

**Figure 3.1.** Output and result indicators by years



Source: Monitoring report 2018, TAT

Participants of the WP are generally highly educated, 20-30 years old on average, and live in Tallinn or Harju county. Only 14.7% of eligible new migrants have attended the programme.<sup>23</sup> Based on the data on the participation of the programme, approximately 66% of participants have attended just one module.

By spring 2019, there have been around 10 202 registrations and 4 988 participations (i.e. less than 49% of those who register, participate). Those who have registered to modules in English, are less likely to attend (real participation rate vis-à-vis registration is 41% for English vs 51% for Russian language groups). The most popular modules have been the language training, and the Work and Basic modules. Most of the participants have a reason to stay that is either family, work, or study reasons, and about one fifth of the participants are EU citizens (i.e. the majority of the participants in the WP are non-EU citizens). Through the years most of the participants have Russian and Ukraine citizenship (respectively about 24% and 18%), with other citizenships represented less than 5% respectively.

### Methodological notes

For this research report, we were not able to acquire information on the date the participants arrived in Estonia (to analyse how soon they attended the programme after their arrival, i.e. what the average time of entry to the service is). Also, the possible variance between the place of residency in Estonia of the participants vs which city they attend the course, was not analysed due to a lack of complete data.

Data on the eligibility, registrations and participations was received in spring 2019, at different points in time and therefore was not fully comparable with information in the (official) monitoring reports. Quite often, in our datasets, there was lack of data about some variables and several mistakes in data were also noticed, which required a manual cleaning of the data and re-coding the information.

<sup>23</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 54.

Due to these reasons, we were not able to fully utilise that data for this report, and several recommendations in this regard can be given for the future analysis and collection of data: a) in several cases, it seemed as though the same person had taken part more than once in the exact same module (same time, place, etc.) or the exact same module in a different language; b) in case of language training data, it was difficult to follow in the dataset which modules were passed, as in addition to very common notes of “passed” and “interrupted” was the phrase “went over”; and it is unclear whether this meant only the moving from a training or also moving to a training; c) some trainings are marked in the datasets as taking place in two languages.

In addition to clear deviations in categories and double-participation, the data also contains additional written notes explaining these deviations, but these notes vary extensively and some are not easy to understand (and to code and categorise).

In the case of existing datasets, other important data was also missing: less than half of the participants had information about their educational background (and in several cases the education category was difficult to understand, e.g. “general education”), several did not have information about their citizenship, and in the case of the children’s module, it may be parents’ information included rather than that of the child. Therefore, the data is somewhat incomplete and although it can give some indications, it is not a valid overview for a full statistical analysis.

However, this data can in principle be linked and analysed by linking the data from different databases/registries together, which, unfortunately, would take a considerable amount of time. Nevertheless, an easy and simple solution to get much better insight for future analyses is to ask migrants about their date of arrival and place of residency in Estonia for example when registering to the modules – this would give easy access to information for important questions such as what the average period of time of entry to the service (after the arrival to Estonia) is.

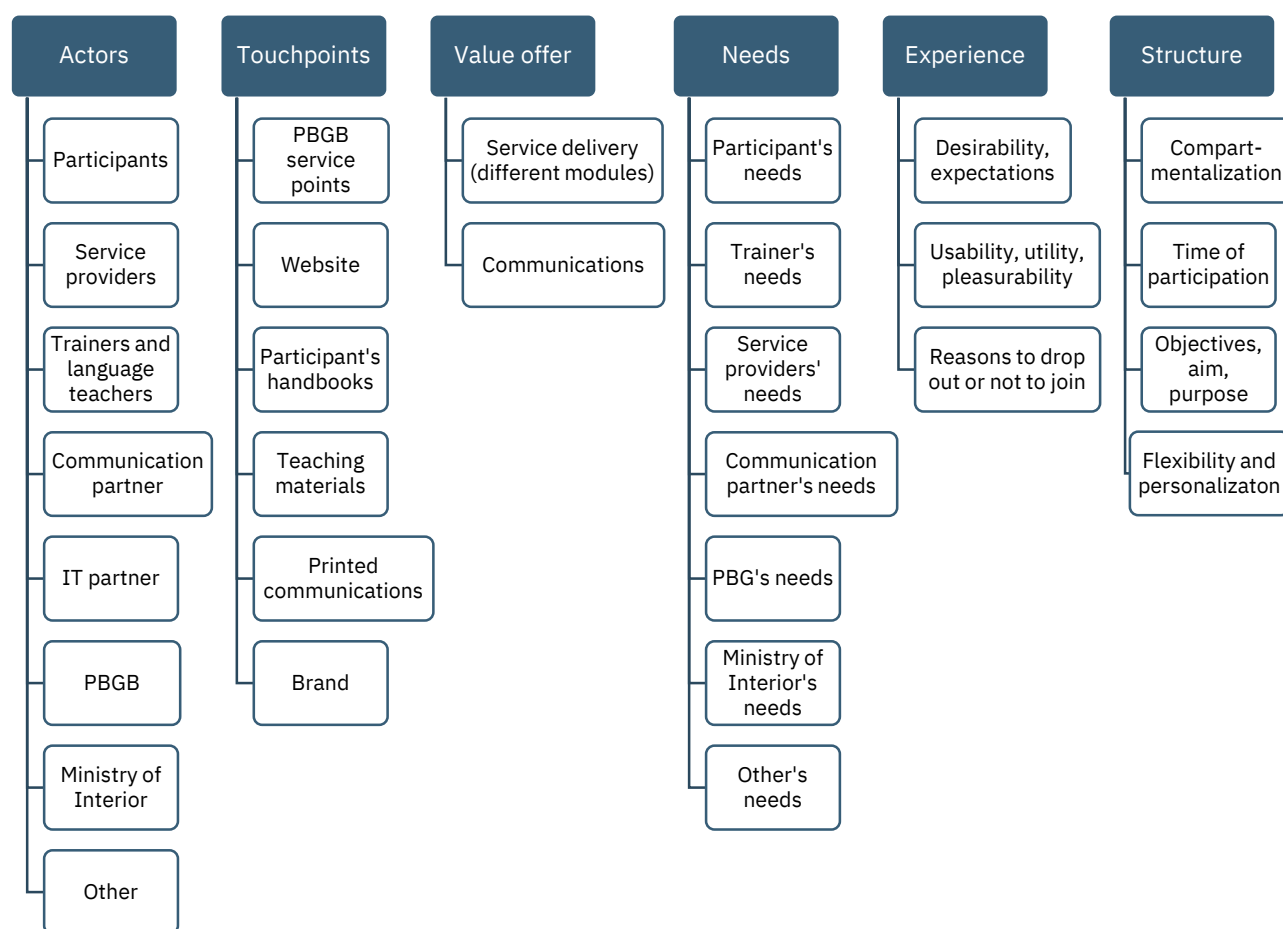
## 4. FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

This chapter describes and analyses the Welcoming Programme through the framework of design process methodology, the “AT-ONE + (S)” method. The analysis is based on interviews and observations, service safari, an online survey among the WP participants and secondary data analysis. This chapter does not focus on recommendations to solve the described situation. Recommendations are found mainly in chapters 7 (based on evaluation criteria) and 9 (main recommendations) whereby descriptions in this chapter are the basis for recommendations.

The chapter is structured into sub-chapters following each of the six AT-ONE+S thematic areas (see also the Figure 4.1 below):

1. **Actors** – description of actors connected to the programme and analysis of actors from the perspective of the people, organisations and stakeholders of the WP (e.g. participants, trainers, language teachers, service providers, etc). Each of these groups are analysed in the separate sub-chapters. Special emphasis is put on the users of the service (the participants) and the target group of the service (newly arrived immigrants, or foreigners);
2. **Touchpoints** – analysis on all the elements that provide the user with service encounters and/or contact or interaction while using the WP (e.g. website, handbooks, videos, printed communication, brand, etc.);
3. **Value Offer** – analysis on the value being exchanged between the WP and the participant, as well as the elements that support the delivery of value (e.g. What is the value of the WP? What are the participants gaining? What is the purpose of the WP? etc.);
4. **Needs** – analysis of the needs of all actors, both perceived and latent. Special attention is paid to the needs of participants (e.g. What do participants say they need? What are their challenges? What do stakeholders need for their work? etc.);
5. **Experience** – analysis of the service’s desirability, accessibility, usability and utility from the perspective of the participant (e.g. does the service match participants’ expectations? Is the service easy to use for all participants? etc.);
6. **Structure** – analysis of the processes, entities and configuration of the service and their impact on the service delivery and creation of value (e.g. redundant processes, lack of flexibility, compartmentalisation of the WP, etc.)

**Figure 4.1.** Framework of the design process methodology ("AT-ONE + (S)" method).



## 4.1. Actors

Actors are **all the people and stakeholders that take shape, define, and create the service**. In the Welcoming Programme (WP) the actors are participants (i.e. new migrants), trainers and language teachers, the service providers (Expat Relocation, IOM), the communication partner,<sup>24</sup> the IT-solutions provider, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Police and Border Guard Board (see figures Figure 4.2, Figure 4.3). Each of these categories are analysed in more detail below.

Although, according to research carried out by Civitta, all actors are of the opinion that their cooperation works well<sup>25</sup>, our research shows that the number of different actors involved is one of the weaknesses of the WP, as there is sometimes a lack of collaboration between the different stakeholders (see more in chapter 4.6.1). This may have a negative impact on the efficiency and sustainability of the programme (see more in chapters 5.3

<sup>24</sup> The communication partner was missing from mid-2017 to 2019 and when the research project started at the beginning of 2019.

<sup>25</sup> Civitta Eestis AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 56.; trainings of the WP answered to needs in the opinion of 87% of respondents (51% absolutely, 36% quite a lot), trainings answered to expectations in the opinion of 87% respondents (40% absolutely, 47% quite a lot).

and 5.4) and in turn, may hinder the most effective development of the programme as it increases the time required to obtain input from all different actors.

Figure 4.2. Actors of the Welcoming Programme through the user journey.

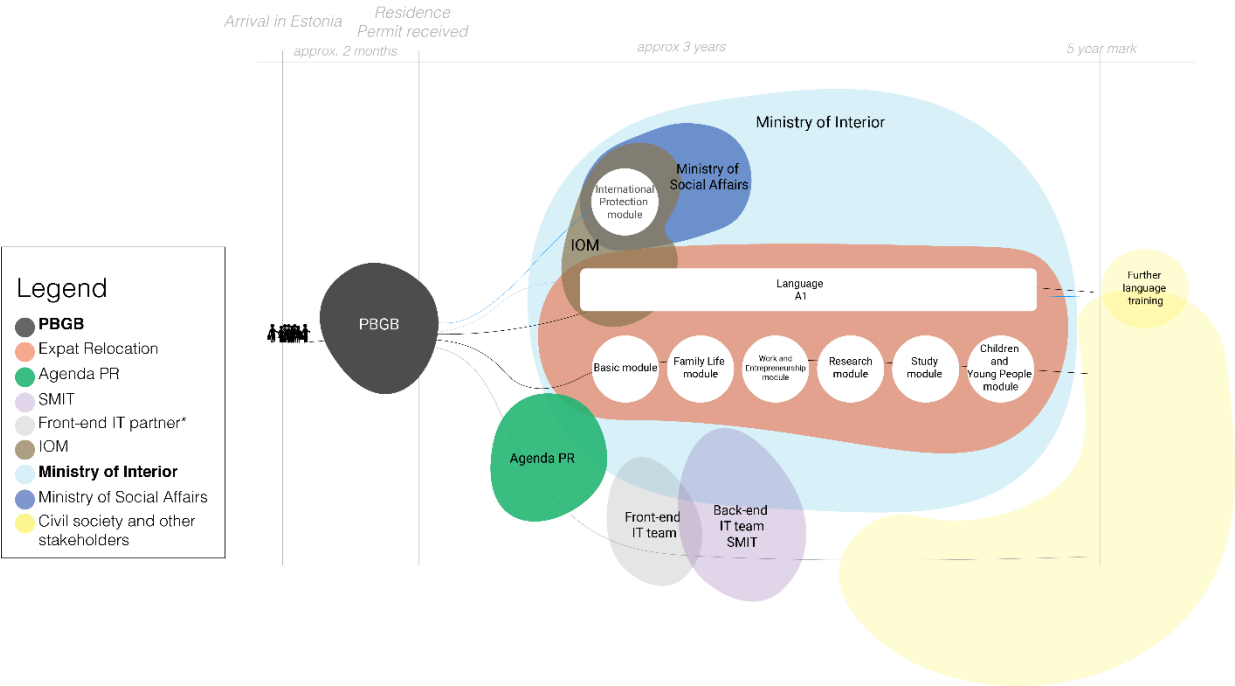
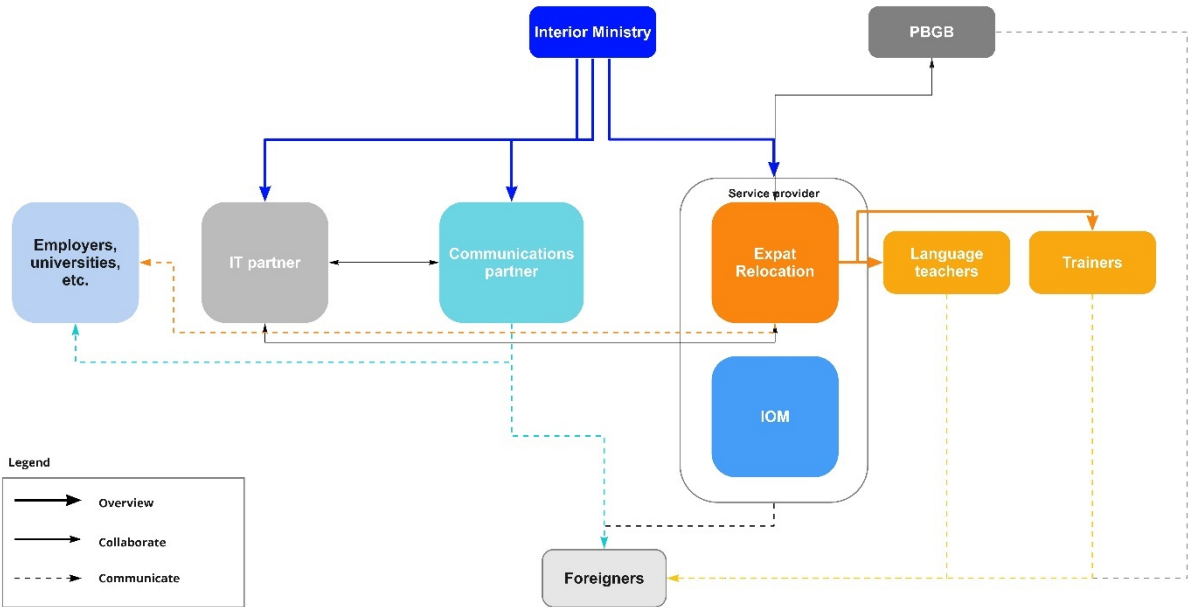


Figure 4.3. Different actors and their relations in the Welcoming Programme.



### 4.1.1. Participants

The participants of the programme are newly arrived migrants who have lived in Estonia for less than five years, have received enrolment by the Police and Border Guard Board<sup>26</sup> and register and attend the Welcoming Programme (see also chapter 3). Participants – as defined in this chapter - differ from the other new migrants or foreigners living in Estonia by the status of having taken part in at least one module of the programme.<sup>27</sup>

Usually, participants of the WP do not take all of the modules (see a more detailed overview on the participation statistics in chapter 3). Based on interviews, open answers of questionnaire, Civitta's mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the adaptation and integration measure<sup>28</sup> and the Praxis WIE report<sup>29</sup>, one of the pain points for participants has been that by the time they can attend the programme, they are already familiar with the topics. However, while we look results of our questionnaire, 85% of those who have arrived in this year have already attended some of the modules. The results from the online survey indicate that new migrants usually participate in the WP during their first year of arrival, and the most popular module is the Estonian language learning module.

The following subchapters give an overview on the types of participants through personas, show participants' engagement and interaction with the Welcoming Programme through user journeys, and describe the challenges and pain points connected to attending the Welcoming Programme.

#### 4.1.1.1. Personas

A persona, as defined in the service design methodology, is a compilation of user information based on a person's interests, needs, desires and behaviour. One persona combines information from different sources (interviews with different people, from the observations, secondary data, etc.) – this means, one persona does not illustrate one specific person, but combines typical characteristics of many people into one typical persona. For our compilation of personas, we combined information from both users as well as non-users of the Welcoming Programme.

**The compilation resulted in seven personas**, which represent the diverse group of foreigners that participate in the Welcoming Programme.<sup>30</sup> See the example of one persona in Figure 4.4 below, and the rest of the personas in Annex 2.

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<sup>26</sup> There are several types of migrants (short term visa, family members of diplomats, returnees) who are not eligible for the programme at the moment but need some kind of support to increase their potential for staying in Estonia and getting a positive image of Estonia (see chapter 4.5.3 and Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne.

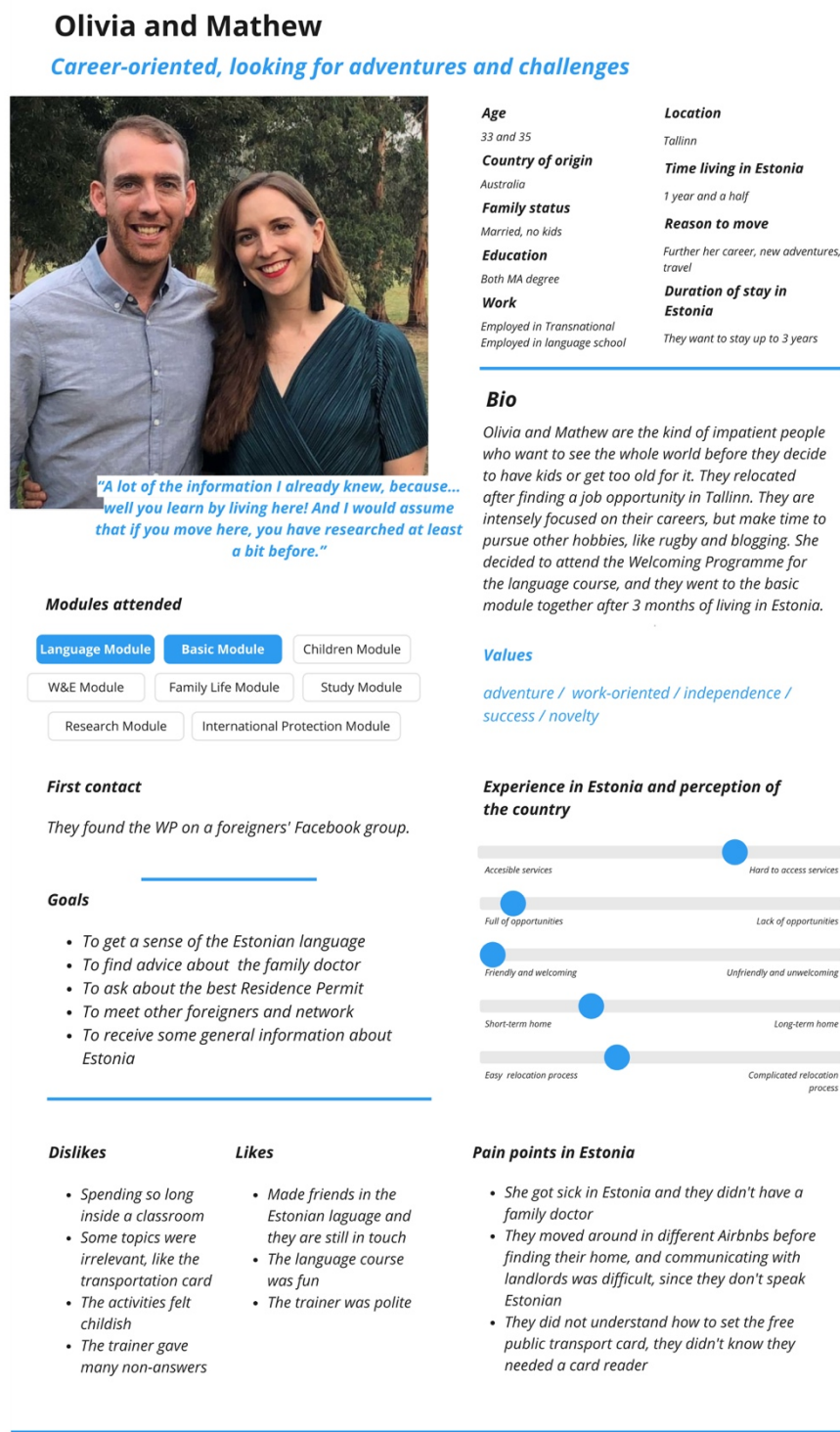
<sup>27</sup> It is important to point out that becoming a participant requires being aware of the programme, however, as our research shows, not all potential participants remember their enrolment by the Police and Border Guard Board (see more on chapter 4.1.1.3).

<sup>28</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne.

<sup>29</sup> Anniste, K., Masso, M. (2019). Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvärbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis.

<sup>30</sup> No persona has been created to reflect the participants of the International Protection module, as not enough information was gathered on this target group; however, the information from interviews with foreigners who fit in this category have been included in other personas.

**Figure 4.4.** Persona 1: Olivia and Mathew from Australia.



Personas help to understand the different target groups of the Welcoming Programme and thus also help to better develop, design and carry out the programme according to the needs or characteristics of a wide range of users.

#### 4.1.1.2. User journeys

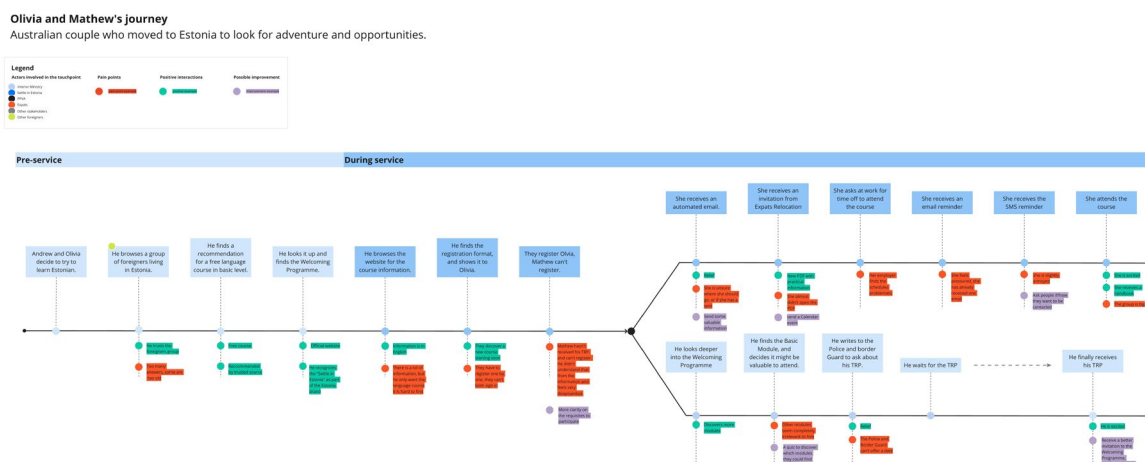
User journeys illustrate the engagement and interaction of users with the service, i.e. the new migrants' interaction with the Welcoming Programme. User journeys **visualise the series of actions undertaken by users (new migrants) when interacting with a service or product (the Welcoming Programme)**. User journeys create the visualisation of intangible elements that constitute the service and highlight other aspects of the service, such as so-called *pain-points* or *touchpoints*.

Pain-points are moments when the users experience a negative interaction, for example, when their needs and expectations are not met or when their desires are not addressed. Touchpoints are all the service encounters and artefact-based interactions the user has with the service (see more chapter 4.2).

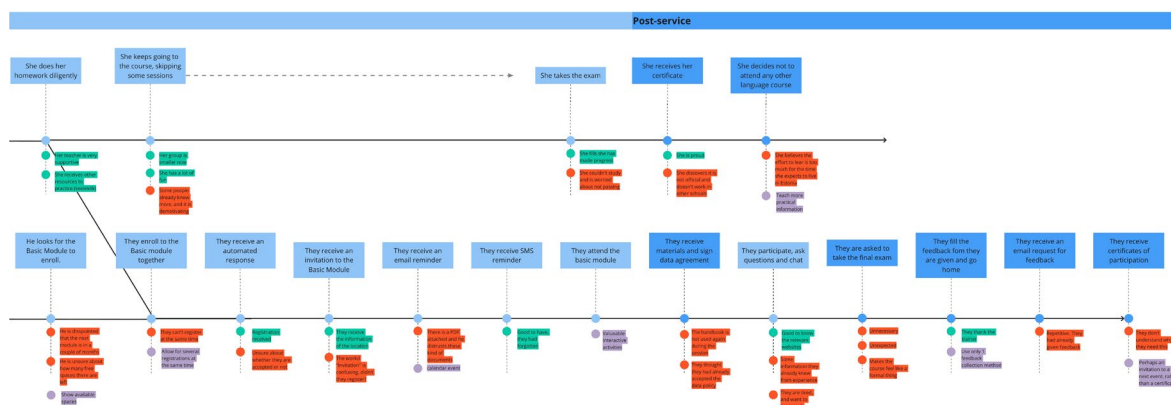
A user journey consists of three different stages: 1) pre-service, 2) during service and 3) post-service. User journeys illustrate the varied ways that participants approach, interact with, and leave the service. Every user journey also includes researchers' suggestions related to the service, which (if applied) could improve users' experience with the service.

Each of the seven personas (see chapter 4.1.1.1.) has a corresponding user journey. Every journey corresponds to their individual goals, knowledge, background, and behaviour (see one example in Figure 4.5.1, Figure 4.5.2. below, other user journeys are included in the Annex 3).

**Figure 4.5.1.** User journey 1: Olivia and Mathew from Australia (Part I).



**Figure 4.6.2.** User journey 1: Olivia and Mathew from Australia (Part II).



Creating user journeys helped us to provide a comparative picture of the differences in user interactions with the Welcoming Programme, thus providing us with better insight into the functioning of the WP as well as identifying issues (challenges and pain points) with the service.

#### 4.1.1.3. Challenges and pain points

Every persona and accompanying user journey generated a set of challenges and pain points regarding the Welcoming Programme.<sup>31</sup> The main issues are described below (and more detailed in following sub-chapters), differentiated between the stages of pre-service, during-service and post-service.<sup>32</sup> The focus and viewpoint here are mostly of the user and participant's – the person using the Welcoming Programme.

##### Pre-service

Before using the service, users face a variety of challenges. Based on the interviews, online survey, and other data, the main challenge is **a lack of awareness on the existence of the Welcoming Programme**. Although persons eligible for the programme receive an invitation to the programme from the PBGB when getting a residence permit, interviews show that many users did not recall knowing about the Welcoming Programme before they actively looked for it<sup>33</sup>. Also, the results from the online survey confirm this finding: 28% of respondents (n=884; persons who have registered to some of the modules of the Welcoming programme) believe that the awareness of the Welcoming Programme should be increased. Other studies also indicate the same phenomena: in one survey, 57% of newly arrived foreigners that have not attended the programme (n=280) did not know about the Welcoming programme;<sup>34</sup> whereas in the other survey, focusing mainly on employed new migrants, 73% (n=253) were aware about the programme<sup>35</sup>. Interestingly, higher-educated foreigners are more aware about the programme and its activities than other education groups.<sup>36</sup> These results indicate that there is a clear need to increase the awareness of the Welcoming Programme among the potential participants (as well as among the other stakeholders/organisations – see chapters 4.1.6, 4.1.8).<sup>37</sup>

Usually during this stage of pre-service, the foreigner, as a new arrival to Estonia, is also interacting with other organisations and services such as the PBGB, the local government, a family doctor, housing providers, educational institutions, an employer, public transport services, etc. This search for information and interaction with other stakeholders may increase the chances of the foreigner to find and interact with the Welcoming Programme, especially when **the first point of contact is properly and carefully designed and deployed**.

Another important aspect of foreigners' interactions with other stakeholders (services and organisations) relates to the experiences they have with them, and how those experiences prime them to perceive the WP. When positive experiences with stakeholders have been had, and enough information for settling in Estonia

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<sup>31</sup> Pain-points are moments when the users experience a negative interaction, for example, when their needs and expectations are not met or when their desires are not addressed.

<sup>32</sup> The "pre-service" is the stage before the user starts intentionally interacting with the Welcoming Programme, it ends when the user actively seeks to engage with the service, usually by contacting Expat Relocation, visiting the website, or attending the events and trainings. The "during-service" stage starts with the participant's active interaction and end when they go home after they finish a language course or training module, which are considered the core of the service. "Post-service" then encompasses the activities done after the core of the service, and it tends to be the shortest stage in the case of the WP.

<sup>33</sup> According to Civitta (2019) 51% of persons who attended the Welcoming Programme (n=170) received the information about the programme from the PBGB.

<sup>34</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 34.

<sup>35</sup> Anniste, K., Masso, M. 2019. Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis. P 34.

<sup>36</sup> Anniste, K., Masso, M. 2019. Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis. P 34.

<sup>37</sup> See more about awareness in section 4.5.3.

and establishing a life in Estonia has been received, participants might be more willing to trust the Welcoming Programme, but find it less relevant (meaning they may already feel they have the needed information).

While participants that have encountered many obstacles in interacting with other services and have not gained enough information about living and coping in Estonia, might be more sceptical of the Welcoming Programme, they may in turn, find the content and benefit of the Welcoming Programme more relevant. This poses a problem for foreigners that have encountered more obstacles in Estonia, and are thus prone to distrusting institutions and have feelings of rejection, since this might prime them to reject attending the Welcoming Programme altogether. However, by not attending, they also risk losing the informational benefits it provides.

### During-service

The first step towards interaction with the service generally comes from the participants themselves – by looking/searching for the information on a specific topic, mostly relating to the language courses. This is usually done through an internet search. Such a search generally leads to either: finding the Welcoming Programme’s website, contacting Expat Relocation directly (via email or telephone) and registering or attending an event directly without registering - as was observed by researchers in the Family Module in Tartu and confirmed by representatives of Expat Relocation. As the architecture of the (old) website does not facilitate finding information about the programme and registering<sup>38</sup>, the first step by the potential participant may not result in registering and attending the training (see more from chapter 4.2.1). Of course, many new foreigners also find the WP through other channels, including information given to them by employers, universities, the PBGB or other organisations (state agencies, NGOs, etc.) However, one clear pattern of how users reach the WP was described in the interviews as an internet search on a secondary topic (e.g. Estonian language courses, both in Russian as well as in English).

Following the decision to join the Welcoming Programme in any of its modules or courses, the participant receives a series of automated and non-automated communications. However, this communication is of varying quality, brand (i.e. from different persons/organisations), and content, which is quite often confusing to the participant.

Different back-office processes by the PBGB are made known to the foreigner who has no influence over these processes. This specific situation is described by the second-user journey (“Aldert’s journey”, see Annex 3). When the process of enrolment into the course is not clear (enrolment is not the same as ‘registration’ and is completed upon qualification or request) up to six emails can be received and exchanged between an interested foreigner and the service provider. This interaction unnecessarily utilises (wastes) the provider’s resources and needlessly involves the foreigner, as their intentions and involvement do not influence the processes of the PBGB.

The next problem that users face when interacting with the service is **a lack of suitable dates** or finding that the next courses are quite far in the future (e.g. taking place in 2-3 months’ time). This becomes specifically problematic when foreigners arrive by the end of the spring or beginning of the summer and are unable to attend any modules until September as there are usually no trainings in the summer (except the language courses, where some of the courses end in July). Similarly, and as depicted in the first user journey (Figure 4.4 “Olivia and Mathew’s journey”), when the reception of the ID-card is delayed by the PBGB, foreigners cannot register in the course as early as they would prefer to.

Thus, entering the Welcoming Programme modules as early as possible is important - both for the justification of the existence of the Welcoming Programme as well as for the foreigners themselves to get acquainted with

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<sup>38</sup> As of October 2019, there is a new website. As research was carried out before publishing the new website, the report covers the old version of the site if not otherwise mentioned.

Estonia as soon as possible – because the more of a delay between the arrival to Estonia and entering the service (attending the course), the more some portions of the information provided by the course becomes irrelevant (as it has already been learned through experience) and the less the new migrants may be motivated to participate in the modules in general. However, some feedback received on the trainings also hint that attending the training *too early* after the arrival to Estonia creates the situation where the participant is overwhelmed by the new information.

However, besides external factors hindering the participation in the WP, there are also internal (or participant-related) factors that hinder participation. Several sources expressed that after arrival there are so many questions and problems to deal with that there is no desire to attend the programme. Also, foreigners, as all others, have other activities and responsibilities that might interfere or prevent them from attending the courses and modules on the proposed times and dates. As noted during the interviews, when foreigners have other responsibilities and commitments they are either economically or emotionally more invested in, or they find more attractive, those will be prioritised over attending the Welcoming Programme.<sup>39</sup>

During the WP trainings and language courses, the main pain-points experienced by foreigners were the following (explained in more detail in chapter 4.3.1., as they refer mostly to the service delivery):

- the size of the groups (too big or too small);
- the difficult non-graded English language used in materials;
- the long sessions;
- traditional and inadequate facilities for training;
- the lack of practical answers to real-life problems;
- the difference presented by their own cultural reference and framework and understanding the information received.

The during-service stage usually concludes with the foreigner taking a test and providing feedback to the corresponding WP training or language module. However, according to classical service design principles, it can be argued that both activities provide little additional value to the user; although other stakeholders find them needed and relevant (and may be required by the funder, i.e. the European Commission).

The test, while it may provide information as to whether the information was understood, reinforces the perception of the trainings as traditional and outdated. In our interviews with the trainers, some reported that participants do not bother to take the test at all or do not take the test seriously. During observations, similar behaviour was detected. While it is important for trainers to be able to ensure and monitor that the information was properly delivered, there are several other methods to use “to test” acquired knowledge in a manner that will satisfy both parties (see chapter 4.2.4.4). An example of a successfully applied testing method was observed by researchers in two modules: the Basic module and the Work and Entrepreneurship module, where the trainer used an interactive polling app, and asked participants to use their phones to vote for an answer.

The feedback form likewise provides an issue in that it generally only provides numerical responses without an understanding of the reason behind them, as the grading scales (e.g. from 1-5) are not explained by participants. Similarly, there may be issues with participants not taking it seriously and/or not providing meaningful feedback through the form. For example, this kind of pattern was detected when going through the

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<sup>39</sup> It is also somewhat paradoxical that at the time the new migrants would need the WP modules the most (during the initial settling in to Estonia, during the first few months after the arrival), they may also have the least time to attend the WP, since there are many other urgent things to attend to (accommodation, getting to know the environment in general, i.e. shops, services, health-care, children, etc.)

paper feedback forms over several years (both Russian language and English language feedback forms) – most of the participants have scored the feedback questions with maximum grades without any variation in grading (e.g. 5-5-5-5-5) and without writing anything down in the open essay boxes; whereas those participants, who wrote down comments on what they liked and did not like about the training, graded the different question with varying scoring (e.g. 5-3-4-4-5; see also chapter 4.2.4.4).

While receiving feedback is relevant to improve the service, the timing and the format (pencil and paper; and if the feedback form is not returned at the end of the course, it is sent by e-mail) is somewhat questionable in its effect and efficiency (see more in chapter 4.2.4.4 and 5.3). In a few cases, in addition to the feedback asked immediately after the end of the module (general feedback about the training, which will be gathered for the service funder, the Ministry of the Interior), the service provider (Expat Relocation) has asked for additional feedback from some of the participants about month after attending the training (see following sub-section).

### Post-service

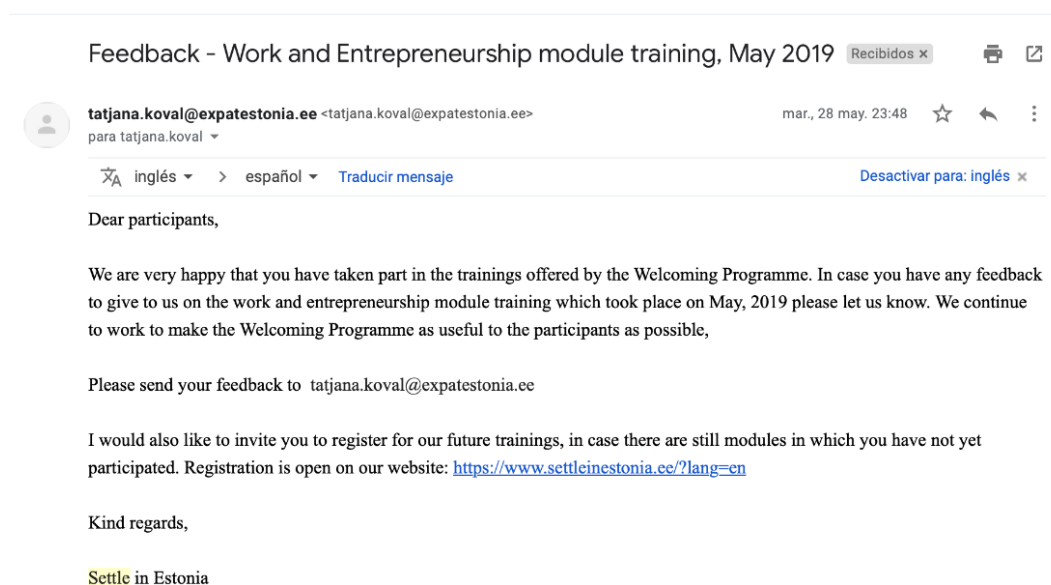
The post-service stage is the shortest stage in the case of the Welcoming Programme, and mostly comprises of the participant receiving a certificate of participation (see chapter 4.3.1)<sup>40</sup> and in some cases, a second request for the feedback (Figure 4.6). This is also the stage in which past participants may seek to recommend the course to other foreigners.

As mentioned, in some cases, similarly to the “during-service” stage, a request for feedback is part of the post-service stage. Contrary to the feedback of “during-service” the second request is an email sent by the service provider (Expat Relocation) after the training and on same day as sending the certificate (see Figure 4.5.1, Figure 4.5.2). This request for feedback is sent by Expat Relocation, using their own branded emails, but not the Settle in Estonia email address (i.e. [info@settleinestonia.ee](mailto:info@settleinestonia.ee)). The feedback Expat Relocation requests is for themselves, while the feedback requested during the module or course is on behalf of the Ministry of Interior. Requesting feedback twice from the same individuals is not a meaningful user interaction strategy if the questions and way in which the feedback is asked for are not well thought out, from the user’s perspective being asked for feedback once on behalf of a service should be enough. Also, as only open-answer general feedback is requested, one of the main aims of the email seems to be inviting users to attend other modules and therefore not all participants see this duplicative feedback request as an issue.

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<sup>40</sup> Starting from autumn 2019, certificates are issued on paper at the end of the lesson.

**Figure 4.7.** Feedback request by Expat Relocation.



The certificate and second request for feedback are problematic in that they are redundant touchpoints and in their current format provide minimal tangible value to participants. However, it is a good idea to include a request for feedback in some other format, e.g. a letter or invitation to some valuable activity or to other modules whereby giving feedback may be requirement for attending. Also, during the period of this research (2019), there were a few other similar studies being carried out that also gathered feedback from new migrants living in Estonia, including a survey on the Welcoming Programme in 2018; all of which may also increase confusion among new migrants. Another troubling pain-point in the post-service stage is **participants' inability to find relevant information on the topics that were covered during the session**. While past participants claimed they had received enough information from the WP module to conduct their daily activities, and 84% of respondents in the online survey (n=943) are in principle willing to recommended the programme to other foreigners, it was evident during interviews that they still had questions regarding the usage of services: for example, on family doctors, the payment of taxes, and the renewal of residence permits (see also chapter 4.5.2.).

This points to a bigger problem with the information delivery methods and trainings, or to an interest of foreigners in receiving clearer, more targeted and practical information; rather than simply being directed to relevant sources. Ultimately the decision on how relevant or irrelevant it is to provide specific information or general orientation for foreigners is a matter of the Welcoming Programme's objectives and purpose (see chapter 4.3.1).

Another pain-point relates to the overall branding or awareness of the WP in general among the foreigners living in Estonia. Our results from the interviews and other sources indicate that quite a few participants experience significant confusion in explaining or identifying exactly which service they took part in, i.e. the inability to recall the name of the course they participated in. **The Welcoming Programme is mistaken for the integration foundation (INSA), some Estonian language courses, or university-led language courses**, to name a few. Therefore, sometimes the information – good or bad – that is shared among the foreigners about the Welcoming Programme may not in fact relate to the Welcoming Programme per se, but to something else (some other service, course, training, etc.)

#### 4.1.2. Service providers

The modules of the Welcoming Programme are carried out by a few service providers. Until 2018, there were four service providers:

- Expat Relocation: The Basic Module, the Working and Entrepreneurship Module, the Family Life Module, the Children and Young People Module, and the Language training
- SA Archimedes: The Studying Module
- Estonian Research Council: The Research Module
- IOM Estonia: The International Protection Module

Starting from 2018, the Studying and Research modules are carried out by Expat Relocation. The main reason for this change is to decrease administrative burden, as the number of participants in these two modules has been rather low.<sup>41</sup>

According to the conditions of the qualification of the Welcoming Programme service provision public procurement, the service provider has to have experience in training newly-arrived migrants, adaptation programmes, counselling and/or offering support person services, from within the last three years. The team of the service provider also has to have language trainers who have at least two years of experience in teaching Estonian to persons with other mother languages and lecturers who have at least two years of experience in teaching or counselling persons with mother languages other than Estonian.

The service provider must have a project manager who has experience in carrying out trainings, seminars, workshops, counselling, and support services, etc., for foreigners, and who is able to speak in Estonian, English and Russian. The provider of the language trainings needs to have a licence issued by the Ministry of Education and Research to carry out language trainings, or needs proof of highly educated language trainers who have carried out language trainings for persons whose mother language is not Estonian. However, there are no requirements for service provider to have a background in andragogy (i.e. teaching of adults) or to provide this type of training to trainers.

The following subchapter describes the current service providers of the Welcoming Programme (Expat Relocation and IOM Estonia; previous service providers are not covered in this research).

##### Expat Relocation Estonia

During the evaluation period, the main service provider of the Welcoming Programme was Expat Relocation Estonia<sup>42</sup> (7 modules out of 8). Expat Relocation is a private company that engages with the topic of foreigner relocation in Estonia.

As a successful tenderer (twice), Expat Relocation has the following responsibilities within the Welcoming Programme: carrying out the necessary processes to register, attract, invite, train and retain foreigners (excluding people who have been granted international protection in Estonia, i.e. refugees), as well as the logistics behind every training and language course. To implement and deliver the service, the company has hired (subcontracted) personnel (thematic module trainers and Estonian language teachers), created tools and processes (how to send registry information to PBGB, databases of users, etc.), and worked with the Ministry of the Interior to structure the programme.

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<sup>41</sup> Monitoring report about the period of 01.08.2015-31.12.2018.

<sup>42</sup> Expat Relocation Estonia homepage.

During the time period covered by the research, it remains somewhat unclear to what extent Expat Relocation should or does relate to the other stakeholders in the service ecosystem: how they should collaborate with the communication partner, how they communicate and collaborate with the IT-partner or other organisations related to migration/integration/adaptation in Estonia (including IOM Estonia), and whether it is or should be their task and responsibility to deliver relevant information as well as lessons learned from the trainings to local governments, respective state agencies, etc. This **lack of clarity in the tasks and responsibilities between the main stakeholders and other actors seems to be applicable to all partners who deliver part of the service.**

The main challenges for Expat Relocation with regards to the Welcoming Programme are how to attract foreigners to the Welcoming Programme, and how to retain them, i.e. how to keep them participating in and/or attending the modules, to receive their payment. Other minor challenges are the issue of feedback – whether the recurring feedback given by the participants at the end of every module is sufficient and whether it provides enough information for meaningful and thorough service improvements (see more from chapters 4.1.1.3, 4.2.4.4, 5.3) – as well as the apparent grey areas of responsibility.

Attracting foreigners to the Welcoming Programme and retaining them while they are in service (i.e. the period of time during which they participate in the modules) is necessary in order for Expat Relocation to receive payment by the funder (Ministry of the Interior). It is relevant to point out that Expat Relocation is paid per participation event, not per participant attending the course.<sup>43</sup> Attracting foreigners and retaining them during the service provision seems to be the same task, but given the Welcoming Programme's structure, these tend to fall under different stakeholders: while for Expat Relocation finding foreigners to join the WP is crucial to provide the service, the responsibility or division of work regarding the recruitment has so far been somewhat unclear, i.e. it has mostly fallen to the communication's partner, although other stakeholders (including the ministry), have also engaged with this task in an ad hoc basis.

The best way to retain foreigners includes using and testing different strategies and methods to ensure that once the foreigner has registered to the programme (to a specific module), they attend the thematic module or language course. To this effect, Expat Relocation has deployed the reminder method, which encompasses **email and SMS reminders for foreigners to keep them from forgetting the modules they have registered to.** According to Expat Relocation, since the use of reminders in 2016 there has been a decrease in no-show events although according to statistical data available for researchers does not confirm that.

The feedback collected by Expat Relocation and the Interior Ministry provides little insight as to what could work better or what to change in the service to improve it (see chapter 4.2.4.4), which leaves it to Expat Relocation's discretion to make relevant changes in the service while detecting problems. The reminder system is one example of this - rather than detecting that foreigners would have liked to be reminded of the upcoming trainings, the problem was detected in attendance and the reminder system was deployed as a countermeasure. However, as our research shows, **higher importance should be put on collecting valuable and meaningful feedback** (see chapter 4.2.4.4, 5.2 and 5.3).

Another issue relates to the “grey areas of responsibility”. This term refers to the areas and aspects of the Welcoming Programme in which there seem to be a **confusion regarding responsibility, accountability and ownership.** In our research, we did not detect carefully designed or clear boundaries between some responsibilities and their responsible stakeholder; the interviews did not clarify each stakeholder's role in certain areas either. It remains unclear, for example, whether Expat Relocation should communicate the

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<sup>43</sup> According to the public procurement documents the price of the training that service provider receives, depends on the number of participants who finish the course. In the case of the language course at least 50% of the trainings have to be attended. The Ministry of Interior's perspective is that this model motivates carrying out trainings with good quality and to improve the trainings.

Welcoming Programme to local governments, or should the communications partner do it to reach more foreigners, etc.

According to the public procurement documents, the service provider should only “contribute to activities to find participants and increase target group’s knowledge about the programme”. Updating the training materials is also the responsibility of the service provider, but due to rights of access they are not able to upload them on their own to the website of settleinestonia.ee. Also, when changes are needed on the website, these need to be channelled through the MoI, which may be time consuming process.

Some of the overlapping responsibilities are difficult to navigate for all actors of the programme, and they pose a challenge for any service provider who needs to allocate resources to them with little clarity on their profitability.

### **IOM and the international protection module**

IOM Estonia is a non-profit organisation, a local branch (Tallinn office) of the International Organisation for Migration. IOM Estonia provides one module out of the eight. The only module Expat Relocation does not oversee is the International Protection (IP) module, which is the responsibility of IOM. IOM has carried out the module since the beginning of the WP.

The IP module is a markedly distinct type of module due to the various ways in which it differs from the other modules that the Welcoming Programme offers. Not only is the international protection module compulsory instead of elective in nature, the module is also composed of a number of sessions spread out over three days and aims to further the adaptation process of a patently different target group with its own special needs. Our research into the IP module has therefore been conducted as a discrete form of analysis, due to the specifics of its target group. See more on the IP module in chapter 6.

### **4.1.3. Trainers**

The modules of the Welcoming Programme can be divided into three meta-groups based on the structure and provider of the training:

1. basic and thematic modules – Expat Relocation;
2. language trainings – Expat Relocation;
3. International protection module – IOM Estonia.

As the International Protection module was not the focus of the report, it is only covered briefly and in a separate subchapter. Thus it is the trainers of the basic and thematic modules, and the language trainings that are looked at as actors in the following subchapters.

The trainers of the modules are usually independent contractors working under the service provider. According to the conditions for the qualification of public procurement, and project manager, the trainers also need to have experience in trainings, seminars, workshops, counselling, support services, etc., with a focus on foreigners (see also chapter 4.1.2). There are currently no requirements to have the background of andragogy (i.e. teaching adults) or to attend in follow-up trainings supporting teaching adults.

As the trainers and (language) teachers are the first and usually the only person the users (foreigners) encounter during the provision of service, they both – **trainers and teachers – play a crucial role in creating**

**a positive experience of the service.**<sup>44</sup> Also, they **detect possible areas for improvement of the programme.** Therefore, although the requirement for having a certificate or diploma is not necessarily needed, a theoretical background of andragogy and/or increasing skills and knowledge in this area will help to increase the quality of the programme. The quality of the programme will also increase if trainers must analyse the learning/training process as a) at least in some fields people's ability of self-evaluation is rather low in Estonia<sup>45</sup>; b) feedback questionnaires do not give valuable qualitative input to improve trainings; and c) interviews with participants of the research did not show that trainers analyse teaching processes systematically.

### Trainers of basic and thematic modules

In March 2019 there were 12 trainers for basic and thematic modules all together, four of whom were lecturers in more than one module. Four of the trainers carried out lectures in two languages: English and Russian.

The trainers of the basic and thematic modules are mostly independent contractors working under Expat Relocation who deliver the trainings to groups of foreigners. They are required to speak Estonian, Russian and/or English fluently, or proficiently. They are mostly local Estonian contractors, with experience in the areas related to the modules or in adult training. In the case of both the Study and Research modules (that was carried out by SA Archimedes and ETAG in 2015-2017), the trainers were hired before Expat Relocation oversaw those modules<sup>46</sup>, and Expat Relocation extended the offer to some of the trainers to remain with the WP.

The trainer's work is essential to the service as they deliver almost the entirety of the service's value in each session (up to eight hours). Trainers thus need to be prepared to deliver the value to the group regardless of the circumstances they encounter. This is challenging for several reasons.

Firstly, in many of the cases described in our interviews, the **trainers have not been aware of the foreigners' needs and desires prior to them entering the room where the trainings are held** (in some cases the trainers have also not seen the participants list beforehand, i.e. who is going to attend). While the registration format of the modules allows users to fill in extra information and possible questions about the training/content/etc., this is mostly left unfilled. There also does not seem to be any motivation or encouragement provided to fill this part out during the registration.

Thus, a needs assessment takes place at the beginning of each course, which – while being a positive method for 'ice-breaking' – may take unnecessary time away at the beginning of the course. Additionally, if the needs or questions identified by the participants are somewhat specific or unknown to the trainer, then they may be left unanswered during the training session (but these may, for example, later be replied to individually after the training by the trainer via e-mail). On the other hand, the needs identified during the registration vis-à-vis at the beginning of the training may differ (may have changed); and the people with the lack of digital skills may not be too prone to indicate their needs over the internet (however, we presume this will be rather uncommon or infrequent).

In these situations, the **trainers need to make a series of decisions regarding the schedule, relevance of topics, their own already existing presentation slides, rhythm of the training, energy of the group, etc.** A delicate balance needs to be achieved in these situations, so that all participants feel satisfied, and so that all

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<sup>44</sup> Besides attending the trainings, some past participants of the WP are also invited to and attend extracurricular activities related to the WP, for example: visits to the Estonian Unemployment Office, Parliament, social events, etc.

<sup>45</sup> See e.g. Balti Uuringute Instituut (2019) Vabatahtlikus tegevuses osalemise uuring 2018, Balti Uuringute Instituut (2018) Erasmus+ noortevaldkonna õpirändeprojektide mõju uuring, Balti Uuringute Instituut (2017) Noorsootõotajate koolitusvajaduse uuring.

<sup>46</sup> Until the year 2018, the Studying module was carried out by SA Archimedes and the Research module by the Estonian Research Council.

topics are covered. While some trainers directly ask participants what they expect to receive or learn from the module, our observation point out that this is not always the most effective solution – such is the case when participants arrive late and miss the opportunity to share their needs/questions/interests, or when the topics they are interested in are considered too personal to share (i.e. undergoing fertility treatments and the possibilities for funding, adopting a child, mental health related questions, etc.) In these cases, when trainers opt to not consider the group, participants might have a less fulfilling experience (see also chapter 4.5).

Secondly, in most of the cases the trainers are local Estonian nationals, who have not experienced being a foreigner in Estonia. The challenge from being a national comes from being able to understand the foreigner, their needs and the steps they go through when settling in Estonia. The trainer has to be experienced enough to switch between a mindset of understanding the Estonian system in general as well as viewing it from the perspective of someone who does not. While not being a systematic or recurring issue identified within our research on the Welcoming Programme, this challenge is important to be considered while continuing to carry out the WP. Moreover, this challenge is easy to overcome for trainers with more experience, both with foreigners and in adult training.

Thirdly, the challenge trainers quite often face is the volume of information they need to understand and be able to correctly deliver to foreigners. The thematic module's curricula compiles information from many different sources, government bodies, organisations, and NGOs. Moreover, the modules need to be regularly updated to use only the most recent and valid information. For trainers, this means not only keeping up with all the changes but also understanding them (also from the viewpoint or perspective of the foreigner), including informing the service provider about the changes. Updating the training documents takes place twice a year, which gives trainers sufficient time to re-acquaint themselves with the materials and information.

Fourthly, trainers need to be up to date with the information that participants have particular interest in learning. During our observations, we noticed that some participants had more focused and specific questions that required specialised knowledge in a certain topic (i.e. how to bring their parents to Estonia, how to start a restaurant, where/how to adopt a child, etc.). These questions can be answered superficially by the trainer or redirected to another source. The challenge for the trainer then becomes being able to balance between having enough information without becoming an expert or specialist in every topic covered during the trainings.

For example, in one observed module a guest-expert was invited to talk about a specific topic. This practice could very well be implemented more evenly, but it raises the question of how to find and train these (external) speakers, or how to structure the modules and programme to accommodate for different types of speakers and trainers.

The fifth challenge, identified from interviews with the trainers themselves, is the need for trainers to evolve in their practice, to receive feedback about their training/teaching, and to provide feedback to the service provider. Two important factors affect the trainers' professional development: the feedback received from service providers and participants, and the lack of practice. Usually, there are biannual meetings (review sessions) that take place between the trainers, where methodologies, problems, advice and information is exchanged in order to improve their practice. A representative of Expat Relocation mentioned that in cases of concrete and negative feedback for lecturers, the feedback and potential modifications are discussed personally. Also, trainings are visited by the service provider to give feedback to trainers. However, as a) these review sessions tend to not be mandatory, but rather voluntary; b) not all trainers have equally participated in them; and c) there may not be a direct need to visit all courses nor personally discuss received feedback, some trainers may lack the feedback to improve their competences. At the same time several trainers pointed out that they have given feedback to the service provider on the training materials and therefore the basis for two-way feedback exists. There also seems to be somewhat of an imbalance between the amount of trainings each trainer carries out, which may lead to the aggregation of experience in a few trainers, and the lack of experiences of those trainers who only carry out a few trainings in a year. However, this challenge is

hypothetical as our information gathering, including among the trainers themselves, did not bring out fundamental issues in this regard.

### Language teachers

In March 2019 there were 19 language teachers all together, seven of them taught Estonian according to needs based on English or Russian language.

Language teachers are the trainers of the most successful module of the Welcoming Programme: the language module. The current group of language teachers is formed of independent teachers hired by Expat Relocation to both develop and implement the courses. Along with trainers of thematic modules, they provide a human face to the service, and foreigners have the most exposure to language teachers. **Language teachers give the students the tools necessary to gain a basic understanding of Estonian.** However, our observations and interviews identified several challenges that language teachers face to deliver the most valuable language teaching.

Our research shows that **language proficiency and exposure to the language differs from student to student**, which impacts their participation and progress during the training. Since the time period to participate in the Welcoming Programme is the first five years the foreigner lives in Estonia, it is possible that a foreigner that only arrived three months ago and a foreigner who has been living in Estonia for four years are in the same class. The levels of exposure of these two foreigners differ entirely and levelling the students to be able to deliver language is an important task for language teachers.

Another aspect that is challenging for language teachers is the **general lack of a common native language between students**, and a lack of a common cultural framework of reference. While groups of participants might share either English or Russian language, not all of them will be proficient to the same level. This impacts the work done by the language teachers because on occasion, they might need to refer to another language to be able to teach or explain Estonian.

Also, a **lack of accountability from students** can impact the motivation and work of language teachers. The Welcoming Programme is free, there is no official exam at the end of the course, and there are no long-lasting repercussions for students who do not attend or cancel the course other than not learning. Our observations, interviews and focus groups showed that students might stop attending or skip several sessions without notifying the teacher. The language teacher is then performing a balancing act, between progressing with the group and the class, integrating students who are lagging, and motivating students to keep attending.

The issues and solutions regarding the language teaching module in general and language teachers in specifics are described in more detail in chapters 4.4.2 and 5.

#### 4.1.4. Communications partner

The Welcoming Programme began in 2015 with what is known as the “soft launch principle” and there was no broader communication carried out at the very beginning. In 2016, the communication plan was compiled, and the introduction of the programme through different partners of the ministry, print media and radio also began. In 2017, a partner was procured to implement the communication strategy and introduce the programme in Estonian, English and Russian. In 2018 a Facebook page was created for the programme by the ministry. As these activities increased the number of participants and knowledge about the programme, it was understood that there was a need to continue with communication activities. In summer 2019, a new communication

partner, Agenda Public Relations<sup>47</sup>, was selected to work with the communication related aspects of the programme.<sup>48</sup> The impact of not having a communication strategy from the beginning of the programme nor a communications partner has clearly had an impact on the (low) number of participants, as well as on the first point of entry of the WP – the website – where the most recent information is from the year 2017. It is the communication partner’s task to successfully advertise and communicate the existence of the Welcoming Programme to the possible end-users, and to develop advertising materials to this extent.

Our findings indicate that the **communication partner will need to overcome the lack of awareness and communication activities during the period of 2017-2019 to ensure the continued functioning and sustainability of the programme**. One of the challenges is the creation of a common brand, brand strategy and communication strategy, as a strong brand supports communicating the programme. This is also important for the participants to know whose activities they have been taking part in (whether the WP or some other programme/training), so the spread of information among the foreigners themselves will also be more valid.

#### 4.1.5. IT-partner

The role of the IT partner is to maintain, develop and improve the Welcoming Programme’s website ([settleinestonia.ee](http://settleinestonia.ee)). The biggest issue so far regarding the website and its development is the editing of events, changing dates, and updating information of modules when cancelled, etc. Another challenge is the maintenance and development of the user database. As the participants’ pool increases and more data is collected, this data needs to be aligned with the appropriate security measures determined by the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Also, the collected data should be of high quality to enable those analysing it to get input to develop the programme (see more from chapter 3.1).

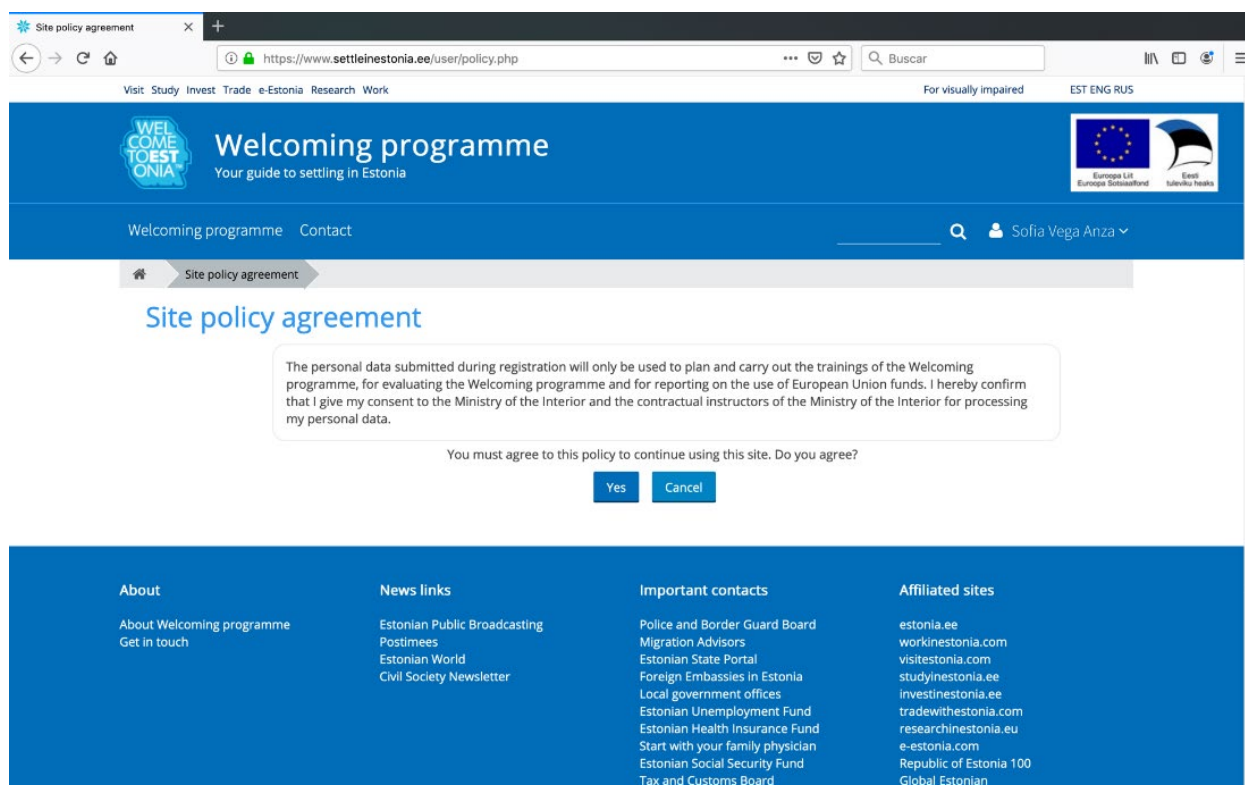
The former website showed a “site policy agreement” (Figure 4.7) when users registered and created a profile, but it did not inform users who register to the course without a profile, of any data processing activities (Figure 4.8). Further analysis needs to be done to assess whether the service (website and the data underlying the users-registration) is GDPR compliant; preliminary findings indicate it might not be.

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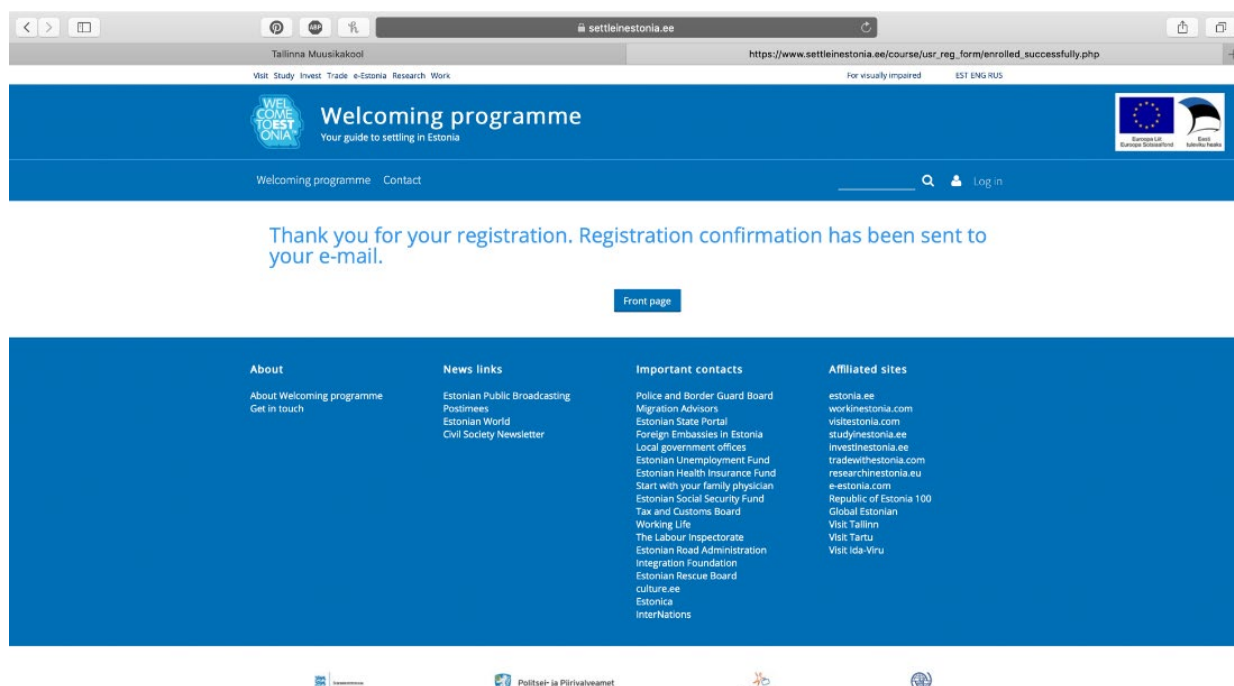
<sup>47</sup> Website of the communications partner, Agenda Public Relations homepage - [agendapr.ee/en](http://agendapr.ee/en).

<sup>48</sup> Monitoring report about the period 01.08.2014-31.12.2018; Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vaahindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne.; discussions with representatives of the Ministry of Interior.

**Figure 4.8.** Site policy agreement in the Welcoming Programme's website



**Figure 4.9.** Confirmation of registration to a course.



#### 4.1.6. Police and Border Guard Board

The Police and Border Guard Board (PBGB) plays a crucial role in the implementation of the service. Among other databases, the PBGB also manages the country's database of migrants, newly arrived or otherwise. They

are thus responsible for enrolling<sup>49</sup> the foreigners into the Welcoming Programme, after determining whether they are eligible to participate. The work by the Police and Border Guard Board in this area is, as reported during interviews, is rather manual, where the officer goes through the foreigner's database to count the period of time a foreigner has been living in Estonia, up to the number of days. According to the monitoring report of the programme (2014-2018) there has been a plan to automate this process for years, but it has been delayed due to several technical reasons.

Our research shows there are three paths to be enrolled in the Welcoming Programme by the Police and Border Guard:

1. automatically upon the issuance of the ID-card;
2. per request by the service provider (Expat Relocation) after a foreigner has registered to the WP, and
3. per direct request from the foreigner, via phone or e-mail.

The Police and Border Guard Board also plays a role in being the first point of contact for foreigners to learn about the existence of the service (the Welcoming Programme). In most of the cases, foreigners receive information about the WP while getting their ID-card at the PBGB office bureaus. However, as our observations and interviews indicate, in most of the cases the foreigner is handed an informational leaflet (A4 document) about the WP along with their ID-card, but no further explanation about the WP is given. Moreover, although the PBGB is the first point of contact about the WP, our interviews also show that not all departments of the PBGB and, for example, not all web-constables are aware of the Welcoming Programme. Also, according to a few interviews with the experts, other interviews, and observations at the local bureaus, **the Police and Border Guard Board does not consider itself as being a facilitator to the recruiting or informing of foreigners about the Welcoming Programme.**<sup>50</sup> One of the related challenges is also the fact that several interviewed persons mentioned that some people are afraid of the PBGB and governmental institutions *per se*, and therefore they may not trust or dare to take part in a programme that is recommended by the PBGB. Also, lack of ability to speak foreign languages was brought up by several interviewed persons.

#### 4.1.7. Ministry of Interior

The Ministry of the Interior is the government body that commissioned and oversees the implementation of the Welcoming Programme. Inside the ministry, the team that handles the Welcoming Programme is comprised of four individuals with different roles and responsibilities. The team's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Applying for and allocating funds for the development of the Welcoming Programme;
- Documenting and reporting the use of funds;
- Drafting and publishing tenders for the procurement of services related to the Welcoming Programme;
- Overseeing the performance of the service providers, as well as their compliance to the contract;
- Collecting feedback from participants regarding the Welcoming Programme, translating it when necessary and compiling it, and making preliminary statistical overviews;

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<sup>49</sup> It is important to clarify that enrolment and registration are two different processes. The first one is done by the Police and Border Guard Board, without need for consent from the foreigner, while the second one is a participant-initiated action.

<sup>50</sup> This also applies to local municipalities, where (for example) EU citizens register their residency before getting in touch with the PBGB.

- Developing the programme's structure and format, selection of the content, and determining the programme's objectives and purpose.

The main challenges for the ministry are as follows: the analysis of the feedback given by the participants (and other stakeholders/partners) and the subsequent implementation of the changes to the programme, and finding partners to co-implement the programme related activities (including communication and IT-development).

The current feedback analysis mostly depends on one individual, who digitizes (inputs) all the physical paper feedback forms, collected from participants at the end of the trainings, into a dataset. This dataset provides some indication to the ministry about the status of the programme and possible areas for improvement; however, interviews with the stakeholders indicate that the data set is large and going through it takes a considerable amount of time and effort.

There are several direct partners of the Welcoming Programme as it would be difficult to have one partner who could provide the full lifecycle (trainings, communication, IT-development, handbooks, cooperation etc.) of the programme as it is in its current state. Also, from 2017 to June 2019, there was no communication partner responsible for the sustainable and coherent communication of the WP.

#### 4.1.8. Other actors: employers, universities, civil society organisations and others

In general – both the ministry as well as the service providers (mainly Expat Relocation) – and all the other actors who are not directly involved in the implementation of the Welcoming Programme, are encouraged to disseminate information about the WP to foreigners, and/or forward or recommend foreigners to use the service as well as to use the materials that have been created by the WP in their own work whenever necessary and relevant. In many cases these actors are aware of the programme and engage with it actively (including companies, universities, non-profit organisations and other), by sending their staff to the WP or by inviting WP language courses into the organisation. In some cases, the actors have developed their own systems (or subcontract it, such as [for example] onboarding sessions by external experts) to support foreigners, and the Welcoming Programme as a general service is not seen as the main tool to support the adaptation or settling-in of foreigners. However, in a large number of cases, there is also a **lack of knowledge about the programme** among these actors. Based on interviews, one of the reasons for the lack of knowledge is that while initially there was a lack of services and information suitable for foreigners, after developing their own materials, there was no need to look for different services as they eventually developed their own support systems.

As different parties have valuable experiences in helping the settlement of foreigners, it is **important to increase cooperation and share the knowledge about the Welcoming Programme among a wide range of different actors**. Although there is an informal cooperation network run by the ministry in three cities, Tallinn, Tartu, and Narva, targeted to all actors who engage with foreigners and are interested in cooperation as well as lesson-learning, only a small amount of potential organisations take part in the work of this network (see more about this in I part of the research report).

## 4.2. Touchpoints

The term “touchpoints” refers to the moments and artefacts through which the user has contact with the (intangible) service. Touchpoints are thus elements that evidence the service and with which the user has contact or interaction while using the WP (e.g. website, handbooks, videos, printed communication, brand etc). Touchpoints can be created by human-human interaction, human-artefact interaction, human-human-artefact interaction, etc. They are crucial elements to deliver the service, and they are used to create a rhythm to guide and support the user experience.

There are many touchpoints that are part of the service and they vary in format, channels used, and purpose. In our research, the touchpoints range from artefact<sup>51</sup>-based, such as training materials and slides, to human-based, such as the first point of contact in the Police and Border Guard Board. All touchpoints detected by the researchers during interviews, surveys, observations and the service safari have been considered for analysis.

However, the main touchpoints, considered crucial to the Welcoming Programme, are analysed in greater depth than the rest (see Figure 4.9 and Annex 4 Figure 9 Diagram showing the artefact touchpoints of the service).<sup>52</sup>

**Figure 4.10.** Simplified overview of most important touchpoints that were looked in depth in the current research.



To any service, the first point of contact is of the utmost importance and relevance, as it usually marks the start of the users' interaction with the service, and eventually sets the tone and form of the interaction. In the case of the Welcoming Programme, the first point of contact is the **invitation letter sent by the Police and Border Guard Board** (includes also the information about the WP) when a residence permit or ID-card is issued to the foreigner. To the users, however, this first point of contact is not very memorable nor attractive, as indicated by the interviews with the foreigners and in the survey results (see chapter 4.1.1.3. and 4.5.3 about the awareness of the existence of the programme).

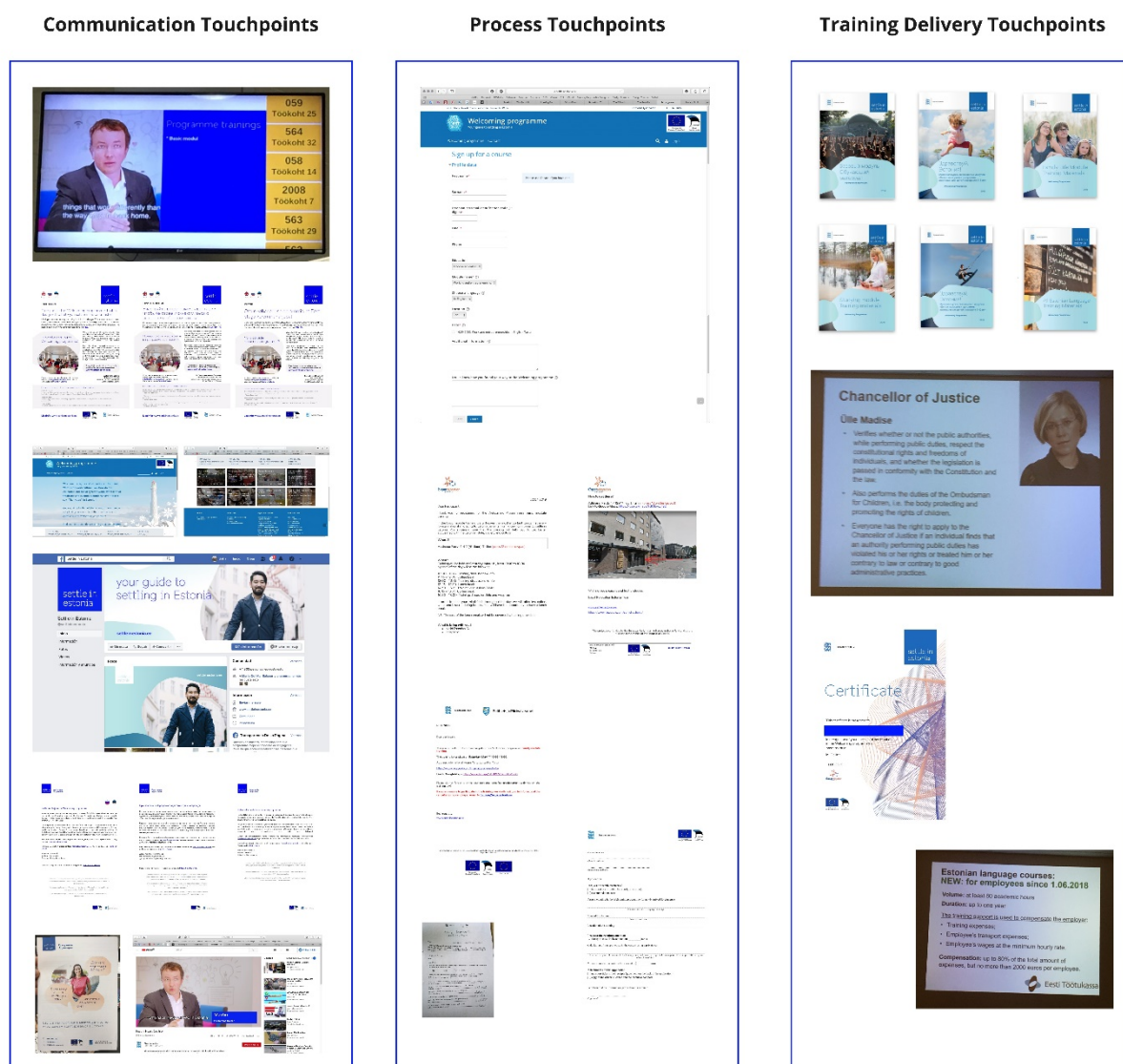
The second important touchpoint of the service is the **Welcoming Programme's website**, which is used to provide information and is the platform through which participants register to the modules and courses. The third touchpoint is the service moment itself (i.e. the core activity where the value is passed to the participants), which are the **trainings**. The trainings utilise **participants' handbooks** and methodological or **training materials**. Handbooks are the medium through which much of the value is delivered to foreigners (including *after* participating in the trainings, i.e. during the post-service period).

The Welcoming Programme's touchpoints can also be divided, based on their purpose, into three main categories: 1) communication touchpoints, 2) process touchpoints, and 3) training delivery touchpoints (Figure 4.10).

<sup>51</sup> Any object made by human beings, especially with a view to subsequent use.

<sup>52</sup> Descriptions of touchpoints in the international protection module are not covered in this chapter unless stated otherwise.

**Figure 4.11.** Diagram showing several touchpoints captured.



**Communication touchpoints** are printed brochures/leaflets, informational videos (both online and offline, at the PBGB service bureaus), the website and Facebook page of the WP, and advertisements about the Welcoming Programme found in other stakeholder's websites. However, from the perspective of the end-user (foreigners and potential participants in the WP), some of these touchpoints are misplaced, their content is aimed at the general public and does not seem to speak directly to foreigners, and many times they are not seen by foreigners at all (see chapter 4.2.4.4 for example on the videos). On the positive side, most of the communication touchpoints are updated regularly (with exception of the website, see chapter 4.2.2) and employ the same brand - Settle in Estonia.

**Process touchpoints** are ones that support any processes related to the service, such as the website (registration), the feedback forms, the emails with information about the courses, the emails requesting feedback, and the formats to request the reimbursement of costs from attending. These are not ignored by participants, as they need to interact with them to use the service, but we found inconsistencies and redundancies in them too. Unlike the first set of touchpoints, **process touchpoints use different brands and styles**, mostly depending on the stakeholder responsible for their implementation.

**Training delivery touchpoints** include the participants' handbooks, the slides, the materials given during the sessions, and the physical space used for trainings, etc. In these, the main findings point to a focus in content without a focus in form. This refers to the labour that has gone into compiling and presenting a large amount of information, as much as possible, sometimes without consideration as to how the information is presented. This includes, for example, non-graded language in materials, spelling mistakes, and a lack of infographics or other easily comprehensible visualisations.

All these touchpoints are described more in depth in the following subchapters.

#### 4.2.1. Police and Border Guard Board service points

The Police and Border Guard Board (PBGB) service points are not considered by the service providers as a major part of the service journey, which is a problematic assumption, since the PBGB is a point of convergence for foreigners who wish to settle in the country.

The PBGB is the sole service point that is visited by all possible participants of the Welcoming Programme, since it is the only entity that can issue ID-cards, and all participants of the Welcoming Programme need to have one to register to the WP. This confluence of all possible participants at one point makes the PBGB the ideal place to create the 'First Point of Contact' of the service: the place where the service providers first approach the participants to get them to use the service.

However, our research, including service safari explorations, indicate that this service point is under-used and under-designed. The only indications of the Welcoming Programme in the PBGB service point are a series of videos shown on screens, the occasional brochure on a clerk's desk, and an A4 document with information on the WP when receiving an ID-card (see also chapter 4.1.6). Our observations as well as interviews indicate that a bureau officer's substantial or comprehensive interaction with the foreigners with regards to the WP is almost non-existent – the officers are not sharing information regarding the Welcoming Programme, either because of a lack of language skills, a lack of knowledge, or a lack of task assignment by their superior officials.

#### 4.2.2. Website

The website for the Welcoming Programme is located at [settleinestonia.ee](https://settleinestonia.ee). The creation of the website aimed to serve several goals: to provide multilingual information about migration and support services for foreigners to get the needed information about living in Estonia; to create a channel to register to the trainings as well as to get information about the programme, including training materials; and also, to enable a data exchange platform with the PBGB and private service providers to get information about persons attending in trainings and to check whether people are eligible for the programme.<sup>53</sup>

The website is the main touchpoint for the two most important activities of the WP: 1) providing the information about the programme and its contents and 2) being the platform through which participants can register to the course.

It should be noted that the importance of the website cannot be underestimated. For example, 70% of foreign workers working in Estonia have looked at information about working and living in Estonia by conducting a

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<sup>53</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 48-51.

Google search.<sup>54</sup> Yet, only 20% of newly arrived immigrants in Estonia have heard about the website and landed on the website.<sup>55</sup>

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance for the website of the programme to be one of the first results while searching about living or working in Estonia. This is also confirmed by other recent studies conducted in Estonia in this regard.<sup>56</sup> More importantly, the website needs to be easily navigated and the information should be understandable to people with different backgrounds (including cultural, linguistic, etc.). As the research was carried out based on the old webpage and the new webpage was published after the end of main information gathering, in October 2019, a more specific analysis of the old webpage is readable in the appendixes (Annex 5) as it may not be accurate anymore. However, as the website is a tool meant both for the participants and the service providers, and it acts as an informational medium and as a practical tool for registering, it is a very important touchpoint and more stress should be put on updating and analysing its impact on target groups.

### 4.2.3. Handbooks

There are currently 23 different participants' handbooks that complement the 7 different modules of the Welcoming Programme:<sup>57</sup>

- 2 for the Basic Module (ENG/RUS)
- 2 for Work & Entrepreneurship (ENG/RUS)
- 2 for Study Module (ENG/RUS)
- 2 for Research Module (ENG/RUS)
- 2 for Family Life Module (ENG/RUS)
- 2 for Language training Module (ENG/RUS)
- 3 for International Protection Module (ENG/RUS/ARAB)
- 8 for the Children's Modules (4 ENG / 4 RUS)

Although the recommendations below generally apply to all WP handbooks, the specific examples used are taken from the "Basic Module" (2018) handbook if not otherwise mentioned. The handbooks are generally looked over annually and updated when necessary. However, our research has noted several challenges related to the handbooks (see also chapter 4.2.3.2).<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Anniste, K., Masso, M. 2019. Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis. P 29.

<sup>55</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 50.

<sup>56</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne.; Anniste, K., Masso, M. 2019. Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis.

<sup>57</sup> Participants' handbooks can be seen at <https://www.settleinestonia.ee/#moodulid> while choosing the module ("sign up") and clicking on "training materials". Although people may not know or have the courage to experiment with "sign up" to see more information about the module, on old webpage it was much more complicated to reach to training materials as different menus in different panels had to be used. It must also be noted that updated editions of the various handbooks have come into circulation. However, at least some of the trainers have continued to use and hand out older editions of the handbooks. Settle in Estonia webpage. Modules of the programme.

<sup>58</sup> Focus was put on handbooks that were uploaded to the webpage of [settleinestonia.ee](https://www.settleinestonia.ee) by spring 2019 when researchers started compiling interview questions and observation sheets and when they started going through handbooks. It is known that service providers modified existing handbooks in parallel with the research. Therefore, some comments about the handbooks may not be appropriate by the time this report is published. To support modifications of training materials, researchers shared their preliminary results with the Ministry and service provider during the research.

Handbooks should be handed over to the participants at the beginning of every module. However, our observations have identified that, in some cases, the trainers forgot to share these at the beginning of the module, and instead handed them over after someone took pictures of the presentation slides; or when someone asked whether it is possible to receive the slides later on.

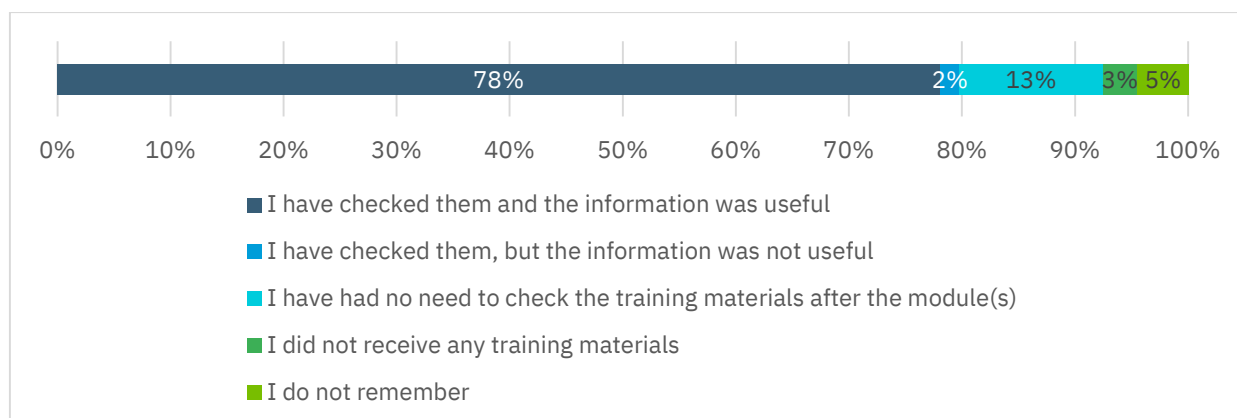
Although handbooks include several links that may be more comfortable to open using an internet version of the handbook, based on our observations, the trainers usually did not refer to the electronic version of the handbook. This explains why just 40% of respondents (n=942) to our survey among the participants of the WP were aware that the training materials of all modules are also available online.<sup>59</sup>

According to experts and trainers, the handbooks contain most of the relevant information given by trainer to participants during the training, as well as other information related to the topic that might not be mentioned. As such, they are large, comprehensive handbooks that try to compile all relevant information (that is also available online in the websites of the respective institutions/organisations) in one physical place.

**Selecting topics and editing the content for each topic must be done with special attention** to keep the information balanced. While much of the information used on the handbooks can be found online from the different sources available, a simple copy-paste of information is not the best method to compile the

The practical or interactive use of the handbooks during the training modules varies per each trainer's style and techniques, making them unnecessary in some trainings but indispensable in others. Whichever way the trainer decides to use the handbook, it is the main source of information the participants will keep after the trainings, making them **invaluable elements to increase foreigners' knowledge of the topic**. This was indicated at the interviews as well as confirmed by the survey results; 78% of the survey respondents have checked the materials *after* the training and found these to be useful (Figure 4.11).<sup>60</sup>

**Figure 4.12.** Have you checked the training materials after the completion of the module(s)? (n=844)



Although handbooks have come to be seen as very valuable to trainers and participants, there are several issues related to the handbooks that reduce their value, usability, and attractiveness. The design of the handbooks, the structure, the readability, their overall quality, and other elements are highlighted and analysed below. In sum, the materials should be developed to support the chosen training method, increase the

<sup>59</sup> 47% of respondents were not aware and 12% were not sure whether they were aware about training materials being available online (n=942).

<sup>60</sup> As persons could attend several modules and feedback was given in general, not for a module's specific materials, it is not possible to say very concretely which module's materials are most valuable even after the training. However, 82-90% of persons who attended the Research, Family or Study modules as well, marked that they checked the materials after the training and these were useful, the lowest satisfaction was by persons who attended (also) the Basic module – 67% of participants thought that the materials were useful.

consistency of the brand, and enhance the delivery of information. In the majority of the cases, and in the context of the WP, the content is more important when compared to the visual attractiveness; however, it is important to pay attention to the fact that the materials can be perceived by many participants as low quality and carelessly designed due to several issues, including the visual style and design, which several users described as “clumsy” and “uninviting”. This, in turn may decrease their trustworthiness and eventual usage by the participants.

## Format

Although the handbooks serve as an important and valuable source of information for the participants, it is questionable whether the current format fully satisfies its purpose. The handbooks are **not practical to be physically carried around** (in terms of size/dimensions), they cannot neatly be placed in a bookcase, and give an **impression of stuffiness/strictness**.

The **materials on the website are not designed for a digital format**. As of 2019, the handbooks published online are the digitalised versions of the printed ones. The digital versions are readable only through Issuu,<sup>61</sup> thus the size of the text depends on concrete handbook and is very uncomfortable to read, especially from the smaller screens as the user needs to zoom and move the page all the time. An example of a document designed for a digital format is one that contains clickable links in the text (instead of QR-codes) – but only some of the WP handbooks have clickable links. Thus, as not all handbooks have QR codes either, it is not possible to copy links from the online (Issuu.com) versions, and as such it is time-consuming and uncomfortable for the user to utilise a link.<sup>62</sup>

There is a **lack of visual hierarchy/clarity** and it is **difficult to navigate within the handbook**. Handbooks are visually overwhelming, with most of the pages covered in text, thus making them daunting to read. While there is a visual hierarchy used to distinguish the chapters from subchapters, some of the titles of the subchapters do not give a correct overview of the information that is covered there. Keywords are not always highlighted inside the text or based on the same logic (sometimes important keywords and organisations are in bold, sometimes not). A number of different practices are used in the design, for example, at the end of chapters and while using column breaks. For those users who wish to quickly scan through the handbook, finding the appropriate chapter or sections is complicated, given that all chapters and sections have a similar visual style and appearance and little to no images are used as reference. The colour coding in all chapters is the colour blue, so the colour is also not indicative of the topic or section.

Thus, more attention should be paid on the **readability** of the handbooks. For example including an index at the end of the handbooks would greatly increase a reader’s ability to find information about a certain topic (the table of contents at the beginning of the handbook is of some help to access information about a topic, but, for example, social insurance might be covered under studying, working, and family, a distinction that may not be distinguishable in the table of contents). Also, improving the typography, e.g. through using **bold**, *italics*, or underlining text, could also significantly boost a reader’s reading experience. In addition, researchers and newly arrived migrants have noticed the need for the use of shorter sentences. Shorter sentences would help increase the understandability of the text for those whose mother tongue is not the one used in the handbook. Also, to improve navigating services, **all important terms should be also in Estonian** in brackets (for example; e.g. kindergarten (lasteae), Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (Töötukassa)).

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<sup>61</sup> The Ministry of the Interior’s profile on the web-based publishing platform Issuu. Issuu homepage.

<sup>62</sup> In physical handbooks, using properly functioning QR-codes as well as listing the URL’s of the websites (with titles or explanations, so that it is easy to understand what kind of information is on the link) somewhere in the handbooks for those who do not feel inclined to use the QR-codes, will increase the user-friendliness of materials. Relevant weblinks can be added, for example, next to the QR-codes in the handbooks.

The handbooks would benefit from a better balance of visual information and readable information presented together. Images, diagrams, charts, and other visual elements are used throughout the handbooks, and they provide some visual relief and direction. However, using a picture just to have something colourful cannot be the aim in itself (e.g. p. 9 in the research module's handbook). Visuals should help to the reader to understand the presented information. Our interviews and observations indicate that foreigners want to know not only what they can do now to access the services, but to also be prepared and understand the next steps in using them. In this way, an infographic can provide an overview of the steps undertaken and tasks to be done and may provide certainty and increase understanding.<sup>63</sup>

For example, using one-page overviews at the end/beginning of sections in order to give readers a quick overview of the crucial information covered in them. Carefully designed and relevant infographics would be a valuable addition to the handbooks, as they provide a visual guide to processes, systems and relationships that, when read in text, may become overwhelming. Infographics could be used specifically to describe processes that the foreigner will take part of, such as receiving an ID-card, opening a bank account, or enrolling with a family doctor. Infographics help to represent important and/or complex bits of information in a more visual and more easily digestible way. Checklists or short questionnaires similar to the ones used at the beginning of the International Protection handbook or at the end of the trainings help the reader to understand why this information is important and to determine whether they have grasped the gist of the relevant section.

Another way of presenting information could be combining all the information into one single handbook. As of now, each module has its own separate handbook, that addresses the topics covered in the module (e.g. working, studying etc.), providing an initial overview of the information to be covered. However, this type of handbook would be very voluminous. All in all, the type or format of the handbook depends ultimately on the method and form of the trainings (or WP in general).

#### 4.2.3.1. Structure and content

Even though the information in the handbooks is rather logically presented and most relevant information is included and covered, there is a **need to harmonise the information between the chapters and between the handbooks**. A better classification of information would greatly improve the structure of the handbooks.

Some topics are not covered in the most **logical order** or under the most **logical heading** in the handbook. For example, information about the costs of living in Estonia are included under the *Banking Services* section (p. 31 of the Basic Module handbook), despite the fact that this type of information has very little to do with the banking. Another example relates to information about Estonia's food culture (p. 51 of the Basic Module handbook): this information falls under the *Living conditions in Estonia* section.<sup>64</sup> In the Studying Module handbook, the information about short-term courses provided by the universities are under *Quality of higher education*, instead of, for example, in the sub-heading *Other possibilities for self-development*; also hobby education and youth work are included under vocational education, which is not the best location for either of these topics.

Also important is **uniformity, and appropriately structured information**. In the Basic Module handbook, section 2.10 (p. 48), the information is correctly provided, but is presented rather randomly. For example, only information about ETV+ and the fact that it is a "Russian TV channel" (not a Russian-language channel) is marked in bold. This means that the reader's attention is drawn to this particular snippet of information, while information about the other (and larger) TV-channels is obscured. A similar case is in the newspaper section

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<sup>63</sup> Such as the one used on p. 37 of the participants' handbook that explains what one has to do in the case of a traffic accident. Nonetheless, this infographic also contains one of the more pernicious typos that can be found in the handbook: "*Call 122 and behave according to the instructions received*".

<sup>64</sup> It is worth considering moving this type of information to the section on 'Estonian culture'.

(p. 49), where information about 'foreign-language media in Estonia' and 'Russian newspapers in Estonia' (not Russian-language newspapers) is presented in a clear and reader-friendly way by the usage of bulleted lists. However, a reader would be left struggling to find information about Estonia's "four daily nationwide newspapers", which is tucked away in a paragraph preceding these two bulleted lists. The Studying and Other modules' handbooks also include several keywords and names of organisations that sometimes are in bold and sometimes not.

**Information provided in the handbooks should be less detailed in some sections, yet more comprehensive in other sections.** For example, information about the Estonian political system ('Fundamental Principles of the Estonian state') in the Basic Module handbook (pp. 9-14) aims to give the reader a concise overview of the workings of the Estonian state and its main bodies. Whilst the reader learns, amongst other things, about the President of the Republic, the Governmental Structure of the Republic and the section about the Estonian parliament does not have its own subheading. Moreover, the participants' handbook gives no information about the current Estonian President, the Prime Minister, or the political parties represented in parliament. However, a list of the (former) Estonian members of the European parliament can be found on p. 14 of the handbook, which gives the reader less value and bears little relevance to his/her life in Estonia.<sup>65</sup>

Another example of this is in the section on Estonia's history (Basic module, pp. 8-9) and in the sections on 'Cultural characteristics', 'Diversity and equality', and 'Communication culture' of Estonia (pp. 54-55). The history section provides an extremely succinct overview by trying to chronologically summarise the whole history of Estonia in one page. Although the links provided in the history section are valuable, the section itself is at times difficult to follow due to its succinctness. This especially applies to the events that took place in 1918. The culture and diversity sections offer a very useful yet slightly too extensive overview (that is also less appealing due to the absence of appropriate typography). Both sections can consequently be improved upon by striking the delicate balance between providing too little and too much information.

**A lack of necessary information** occurs in several handbooks. For example, the Studying handbook does not include that eesti.ee is the place to check someone's former education if the person has studied in Estonia, or that doctoral-schools are one of support "services" (chapter 5). In the Basic module handbook, there is, for example, no information included that for some specialised doctors (e.g. *silmaarst, naha- ja suguhaiguste arst, günekoloog, psühhiaater*), there is no need for a referral from the general practitioner. Also, according to one psychologist, much higher attention should be put on finding possibilities to spend one's spare time (incl. volunteering) so that all persons will find something suitable as this will decrease risks of mental health and support creating networks and adaptation.

In some cases, the information is there, but **not represented in the best way**. For example, in the Basic module handbook more focus should be put on which kind of emergency situations require attending the EMO and which are for a family doctor, to avoid overloading emergency rooms. In the Working and Entrepreneurship handbook, volunteering is included as a way to get (local) work experience and as a possibility to get to work at specific organisations – but it does not mention that it is also a valuable possibility for networking or personal or social contributions that can increase one's own feeling of being valuable.<sup>66</sup> In the International Protection handbook, it is stressed that it is hard to open one's own business in Estonia, although it would be more reasonable to provide participants with all the necessary information of where to start and encourage them.

Our interviews with newly arrived migrants and past-users of the WP indicate the **need for more practical information**, as the information in the current handbooks is primarily intended to be of help to new residents

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<sup>65</sup> It would make more sense to provide more information about the Estonian parliamentary system and the current parliamentary organisation in Estonia while scrapping a list of the current Estonian representatives in the EP.

<sup>66</sup> Käger, M., Lauring, M., Pertšjonok, A., Kaldur, K., Nahkur, O. (2019). Vabatahtlikus tegevuses osalemise uuring 2018. Balti Uuringute Instituut.

of Estonia. For example, finding a family doctor (GP) is regularly deemed to be one of the most troublesome and frustrating aspects while arriving to Estonia; and the seriousness of this being a complicated (or even perceived as a complicated) process is compounded by the fact that family doctors are often the first point of entry for most foreigners when they are trying to access health care in Estonia. While the section on family doctors in the basic module handbook (pp. 33-34) is comprehensive, it falls short on the practical side of things. Readers are referred to the Health Board's website, but the information on the website still does not help foreigners find an (English-speaking) family doctor with whom they can subsequently register. Although this problem is now well-recognised by the service providers and readily acknowledged by the responsible bodies, the handbook should sketch a more realistic overview of the problems that foreigners might encounter when trying to find and register with a family doctor, as well as describe the steps one can take to ameliorate these difficulties. One attempt to have a more practical handbook has been done in some other module's handbooks by having questions on the border of the page that the reader should think about in terms of the differences in his/her home country and in Estonia. Our view is that these questions should be more focused to the situation in Estonia: and encourage readers to try to find needed information.

Although the different stakeholders, including trainers, mentioned that materials are updated regularly, our analysis shows that there is a **need for more frequent updating** or creating materials that do not need to be updated constantly, as topical information easily becomes outdated (although the handbook of Studying module is from the year 2018, it still includes information about the year 2015). Sometimes it is even a question of whether it is needed, e.g. the names of the ministers and representatives of the European Commission<sup>67</sup>.

**Using the handbooks as manuals or workbooks and updating the information with participants during the session.** An example of this would be to have an exercise where the participants and trainer talk about the current Estonian government and write down the name of the President, the name of the PM, the main political parties in power, etc. This could ease the need to update certain information as frequently as it would need to be otherwise, however not all the information could be covered during the training session.

#### 4.2.3.2. Language

The language of the handbooks is not graded, which means it is used **assuming a high-level of language proficiency**. For many participants, Russian and English are the native languages. However, for many others these could be their second or third language. Encountering and having to process long texts and legal jargon can be daunting and negatively impacts upon the intelligibility and accessibility of the handbooks. Cases in which legal jargon and exceptionally long sentences are used include: *"If less than two years have expired from the previous occasion when an identity document, residence permit, or the right of residence was applied for and fingerprints were captured, you can also apply for registration of the right of permanent residence by post (it is not possible to apply by post or email on behalf of a child younger than one year)"* from the Basic module handbook, page 18; or the constant referral to the foreigner as an alien *"Third-country nationals are aliens that are citizens of a state other than a EU or EEA member state or the Swiss confederation"* on page 15 of the Basic module handbook, *"a long-term residence permit for a third-country national can be applied for if the alien: [...]"* from page 19, in the same handbook. Sometimes it is just a copy-paste of existing information online.

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<sup>67</sup> Starting from autumn 2019, the names of the representatives of European Commission are not in the handbooks.

From document analysis and interviews it also came out several times that materials contain numerous spelling mistakes. There are also problems with the use of conjunctions (if, but, yet, when, however, etc.) It is important that these are used correctly in order to avoid confusion.

Therefore, it is recommended to shorten and simplify sentences so that less-educated persons can understand what has been said. In cases where different laws have been mentioned, it may be reasonable to add the name of the regulation and a link to more information in the footnotes, not to the text, as this also helps to simplify the text.

#### 4.2.4. Teaching materials

Teaching materials consists of the following materials:

- Methodological materials that support trainers in choosing methodologies and tools for trainings;
- Slides with the most important information about the topic; trainers receive a template of slides with the most important information and can add information that seems to be relevant or needed in their opinion;
- Videos are used during trainings to share information about the topic;
- Interactive apps, card readers and other artefacts are used during the session by the trainer to convey information or engage participants;
- Tests and feedback questionnaires that are used at the end of the training.

Methodological materials and some of the videos are publicly available on the website of the Welcoming Programme. In the case of the old website these were not easily findable as the page used different menu logics (see also Annex 5.)

##### 4.2.4.1. Methodological materials and trainings

Trainers are generally satisfied with the support Expat Relocation provides with the methodological materials. However, based on the desktop research, interviews and observations, we conclude that methodological materials are primarily a “soft”, supportive or conspectus-kind of materials, that mainly serve to remind where attention should be placed during the trainings.

Although participants of the survey that have attended some of the WP modules were rather satisfied with a trainer’s teaching style (only 14% of participants in the WP modules (n=893) stated that a trainer’s teaching style needs improvement), qualitative resources showed several weak points. Not all trainers have an (contemporary) adult training background and based on our interviews, there may be somewhat of a lack of knowledge about training people from different cultural backgrounds. Moreover, some trainers in our interviews did not feel that there are any remarkable differences in the training of children vs adults, meaning that the responsibilities and value given by the trainer should be addressed more often during the training of the trainers. Also, the amount of slides and the (sometimes large) amount of information on the slides can be improved (see below in the following subchapter).

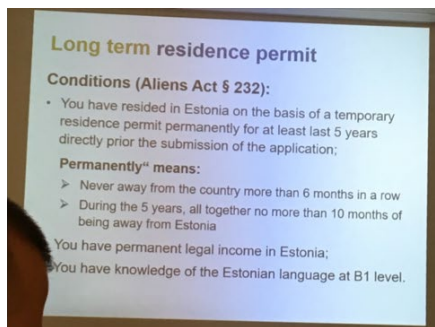
Some trainers have just a few annual WP module trainings to be carried out, and as such, may not be overly motivated to take self-learning initiatives in this area (e.g. on the cultural differences etc.) to become a better trainer. However, as most of the trainers have at least some level of teaching experience and the feedback for the Welcoming Programme in general is high, this implies that the current situation also regarding the methodology and/or teacher’s preparation is good.

#### 4.2.4.2. Slides

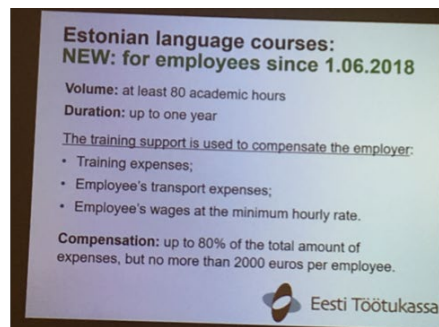
Our observations and interviews indicate a lack of consistency and visual alignment in the slides with other touchpoints and materials. The slides used in the trainings have been developed by different stakeholders/trainers/experts during different stages of the existence of the Welcoming Programme, which also explains why the materials differ visually from other touchpoints. For example, slides of the Study and Research modules are developed independently by trainers of former service providers and these have been purchased later by Expat Relocation. In the other modules, slides have been developed jointly (Ministry of Interior and the service provider). This approach to the creation of slides has an impact on how they are perceived by the participants. As with some other materials, our observations and interviews with the user indicate that in some modules, and by some trainers, the slides are perceived by the participants as carelessly designed, disorganised and overwhelming.

Another issue with the slides is their intensive usage, done in an effort to provide participants with a large amount of text and information. During the trainings, slides are always used, even during the interactive activities proposed and carried out by trainers. While the information is relevant, the slides are crammed with text, making them hard to read and distracting participants' attention from the trainer and, overall, requiring extensive time to understand the content they provide. Examples of slides that provide too much text are illustrated in Figure 4.12<sup>68</sup> As with other materials, some information on the slides is presented in legal jargon (see slides 1, 3 and 4 on Figure 4.12), long sentences are used (slide 4) and different elements are highlighted or prioritised, increasing the difficulty of reading the slides (slide 2). In these four examples, the amount of information given on a single slide is considerable, and requires time to read, process and understand.

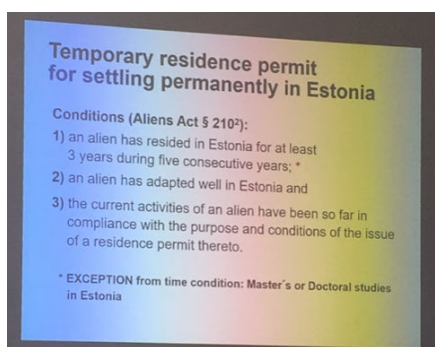
**Figure 4.13.** Examples of slides from the trainings



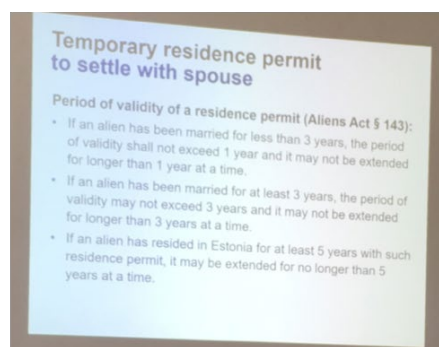
**1 Slide from Basic module**  
image by researcher



**2 Slide from Work & Entrepreneurship module**  
image by researcher



**3 Slide from Family module**  
image by researcher

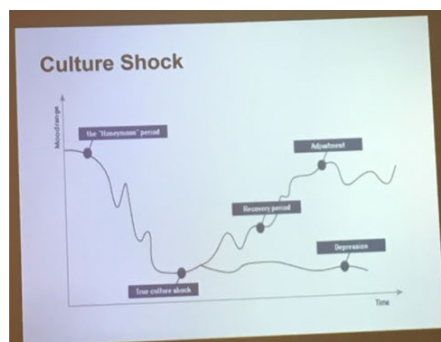


**4 Slide from Family module**  
image by researcher

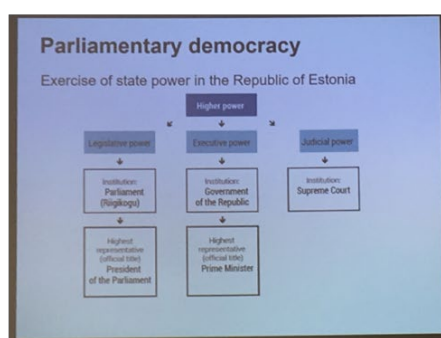
<sup>68</sup> The colours in these pictures differ from colours in real-life. These photographs were taken by the researcher from the projection in a real-life setting, thus the colour discrepancy.

However, not all slides are problematic from a readability standpoint. During the same trainings, trainers presented diagrams or visuals to convey information in a better manner (Figure 4.13).

**Figure 4.14.** Examples of slides from the trainings



**5 Slide from Basic module**  
image by researcher



**6 Slide from Work & Entrepreneurship module**  
image by researcher

All in all, if the focus of the WP trainings is to carry out interactive informational sessions, the importance of slides should be reduced, and the way the slides present information should be reconsidered or improved. All trainers should be able to use the slides with the same levels of ease and confidence, and the information and structure needs to be fully understood by the trainers so they can maximise the impact of this tool of presentation. A positive aspect is that there is a possibility for trainers to be able to make modifications to the slides to align them to their own personal style. Slides, like the handbooks, are important touchpoints that can help fortify the identity of the Welcoming Programme, deliver value and engage participants. As with participants' handbooks, the slides should be modified in line with the coherent and mutual service logic and structure.

#### 4.2.4.3. Videos

Several specially commissioned videos for the Welcoming Programme are used during the trainings in specific modules. Most of these are available on the webpage of Welcoming Programme and on the YouTube account of the Interior Ministry (Figure 4.14).<sup>69</sup> Another set of videos appearing to be part of the Welcoming Programme's modules are on the accounts of the former service providers, the Archimedes Foundation<sup>70</sup> (videos for the Study Module; Figure 4.15) and Estonian Research Council<sup>71</sup> (videos for the Research module; Figure 4.16).

These videos are a mix of the Welcoming Programme's promotional material, older videos targeted to the public, and short informational videos on specific topics. Videos on specific topics have also been used during training sessions. As with all other touchpoints, the videos differ in quality, brand, content, tone of voice, and intention.

<sup>69</sup> More videos: Youtube.com. Siseministeerium. Videos.

<sup>70</sup> Archimedes Foundation's YouTube videos: Youtube.com. Sihtasutus Archimedes. Videos.

<sup>71</sup> Eesti Teadusagentuur YouTube videos: Youtube.com. Eesti Teadusagentuur. Videos.

Figure 4.15. Screenshot of the Interior Ministry's YouTube video page.

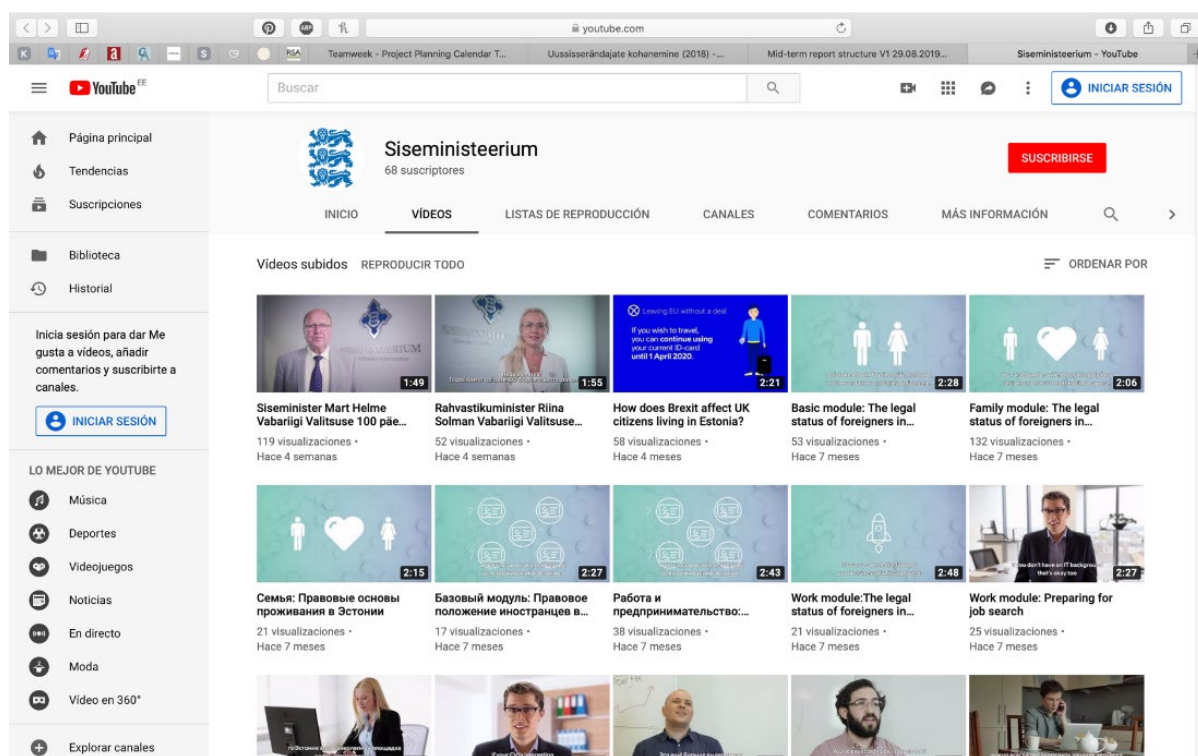
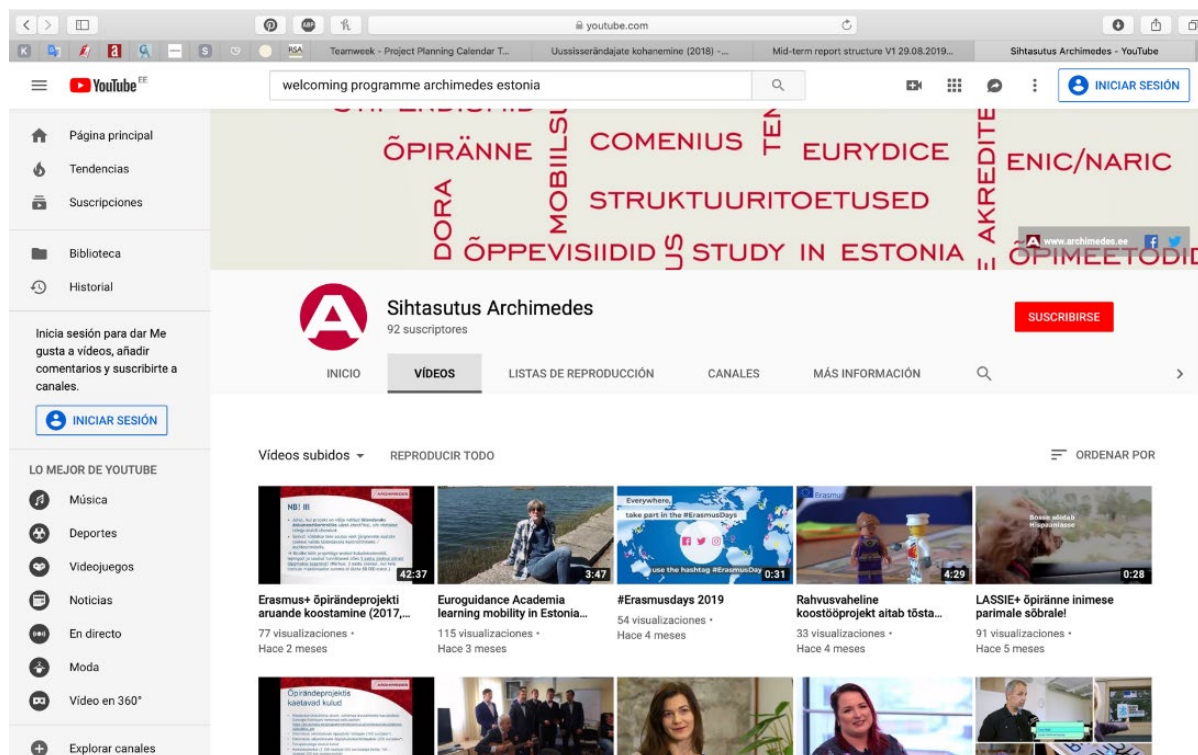
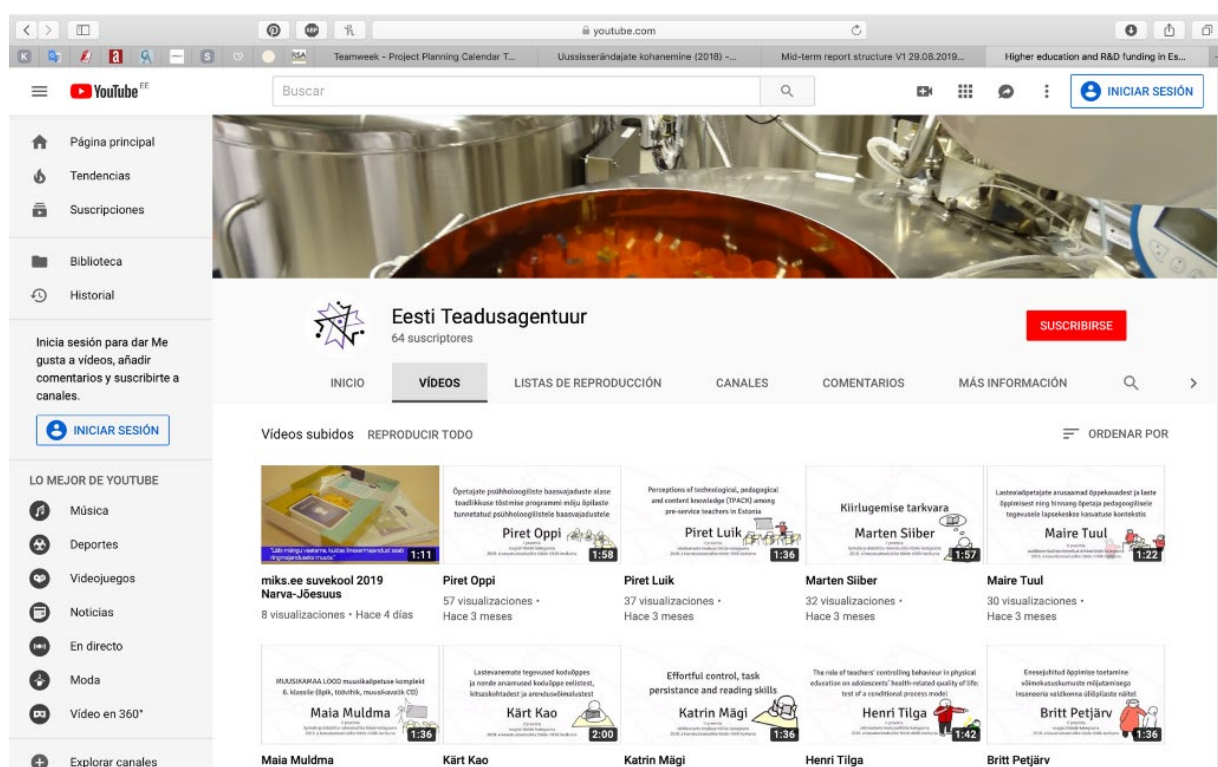


Figure 4.16. Screenshot of Archimedes Foundation's YouTube videos page.



**Figure 4.17.** Screenshot of Eesti Teadusagentuur's YouTube video page.



The videos are used during the trainings in order to convey certain relevant information in a concise way and support the trainers in changing the rhythm and pace of a session, allowing participants and trainers to have a “pit-stop”, or (as described by trainers in our interviews) a moment to rest. Some trainers also pointed to the possibility of having discussions after looking at videos during a training, stressing, in this regard, the value of common viewing. While these positive aspects are relevant, the videos may not provide as much value as they could.

For example, most of the videos cover quite a “dry” and general overview of different systems, e.g. the educational system, and therefore do not provide a good basis for an interactive follow-up discussion. On the other hand, experts, trainers and participants indicate that instead of a general overview, the foreigners need practical, actionable information that can guide and direct them in their daily activities: for example, how to use the ID-card, how to find a family doctor, how to find information about kindergartens or schools and apply, etc.<sup>72</sup> The video format can be used to convey a large amount of information in a short time, edited for clarity, and can be re-watched by participants as many times as desired (also at home or at work). Sharing stories about other migrants is also valuable, as were indicated by some interviewees. Therefore, although current videos may be valuable in changing the rhythm of the session, additional videos should also be used to support the content of the trainings and settling-in to Estonia.

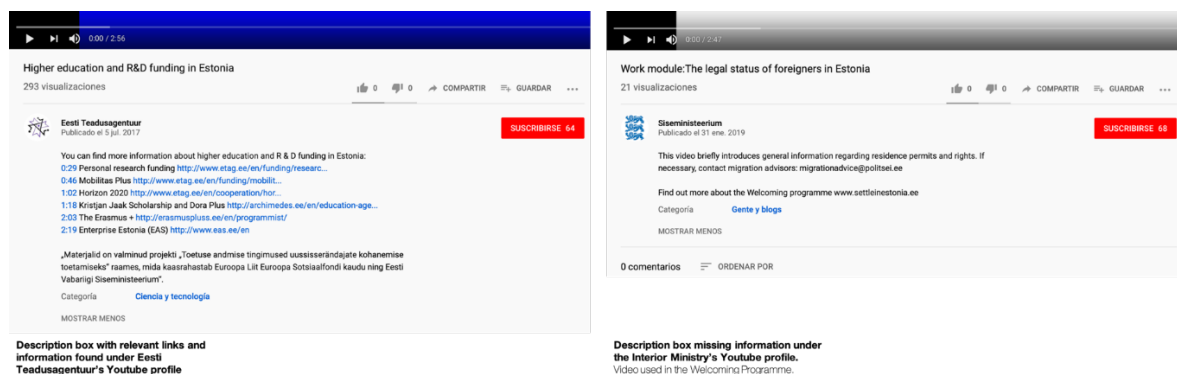
Videos only being available through YouTube, or under other different accounts creates a lack of accessibility for foreigners to view them again in the most convenient manner. Moreover, some videos under the Studying and Research modules provide no additional information as to where to find the materials, including not being linked to on the website of the WP.

<sup>72</sup> In Anniste, K., Masso, M. (2019) a need for videos about registering as a citizen of Tallinn, using free public transport, and signing documents digitally was brought up. Anniste, K., Masso, M. 2019. Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis.

The currently available videos have a potential that is not being used well enough, i.e. the videos should be used as another format to deliver the value offer of the Welcoming Programme. The functionality of YouTube, such as adding relevant links and information in the description boxes of videos (including in the layer over the video), may have enormous additional value to provide foreigners with additional directions and guidance about the topic being addressed in the video.

An example of videos using the description box to convey information, compared to one that did not utilise the opportunity, is depicted on **Figure 4.17**.

**Figure 4.18.** Comparative screenshots of a description box in one of Eesti Teadusagentuur videos and one video uploaded by the Interior Ministry for the Welcoming Programme



Not all videos have subtitles, most lack subtitles in other (translated) languages, some videos are available only in Russian, and some only in English. Also, in some videos the pronunciation of Estonian words is somewhat unclear and in the case of a few Studying module videos, the lip-sync between the video and the sound is somewhat skewed.

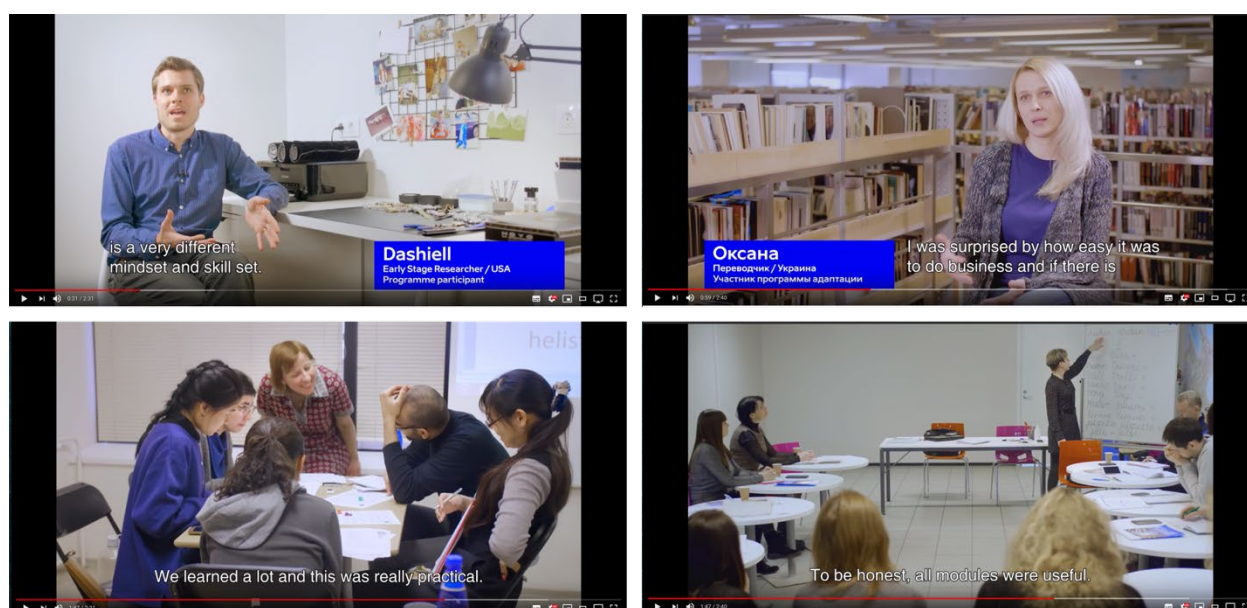
## Advertising-promotional videos

Next to the videos that support the introduction of different topics to foreigners, there are also several videos that advertise or promote the Welcoming Programme. Some are published in social media channels, and some at the PBGB service bureaus. The ones at the PBGB service bureaus are an interesting example of a mis-used opportunity to invite foreigners to join the Welcoming Programme. This comes down to two aspects: first, the language and the presentation of the WP is alienating and seems to be addressed to the general population; and secondly, the videos are constantly interrupted by the queue-turns from the PBGB services shown on the screen. However, in general, the videos are visually attractive.

Examples of alienating language that seems not to be directed at foreigners include: “So the Programme will answer these questions, for these people, will explain how life works here in Estonia, and does that in a friendly, fun, warm atmosphere, where a person can not only get information, but also share their own experience”, or “the programme is available for people who, for some reason, have moved to Estonia”.

Two advertising-promotional videos in the PBGB exist: one in English and one in Russian. The video in English depicts much more interactive scenes of students laughing, talking to each other and sitting in a contemporary teaching setting. The video in Russian shows a much more traditional learning environment, less interaction between participants and more images of the city (see **Figure 4.18**).

**Figure 4.19.** Comparative images of the Welcoming Programme videos in English and Russian



**Still images of the videos about the WP**  
Left: English video  
Right: Russian video

Overall, videos are a good opportunity to reach foreigners in the PBGB service points, and can be tailored to better send an inviting and welcoming message.

#### 4.2.4.4. Tests, interactive apps and other materials

During trainings several other methods and materials are used to change the rhythm of trainings, embed the new knowledge, and get feedback to develop the modules. The current subchapter provides an overview of the tests, interactive engagement, feedback forms, printed communications, and brand of the programme.

### Tests

All Welcoming Programme modules carry out a test/exam at the end of the training session to provide the opportunity for trainers to convey important information to participants and ensure that topics have been clearly understood. While the intent of these tests is relevant, as this helps to determine whether the participants have understood and can recall all the valuable information, there are few challenges regarding the format of the test.

The main challenge relates to an issue when the participants are not able to answer all the questions in the test, whether due to not fully understanding the question's phrasing or its meaning, or when the topic has not been covered during the training. Although not a recurring issue during our observations, this happened during a few observations and we noticed a frustration among some participants and a sense of "missing out" on relevant information.

If the purpose of the test is to identify the level of understanding participants have on the topics presented or to get feedback on whether some of the topics need better coverage, having a test at the end of the training, when participants are tired and time has usually run out, might not be the ideal course of action. In our interviews, experts and trainers somewhat agreed with this issue and commented that case studies – for example, as group work – would also work well to identify whether participants have understood the content or how to solve possible situations. Thus, having one or two exercises, games or interactive case studies during the session, after each topic is presented, might provide more time for trainers to address concerns, confusing

topics or unanswered questions. Moreover, a few participants noted in the interviews that a classical test/exam at the very end of the training session is too formal or traditional a way of providing feedback, which goes against the idea of interactive, modern training sessions. Also, in at least one of our observations, the filled-out tests were never checked at the end of the training.

In the Language modules, the testing of participants at the end of the course had a higher value. This creates an incentive to the participants to contribute more to the learning and helps them to assess whether they have improved their level of Estonian. However, as noted in some interviews, it would be good to receive certified proof of having reached a specific level or target, not merely a document that gives proof of attending a course.

### **Interactive engagement**

In two modules observed by researchers, an interactive app/website was used by the trainer at the beginning of the session to engage participants in a “poll” game. The app itself was a live quiz platform in which participants were quizzed about their knowledge of Estonia. The participants accessed the platform through their mobile devices, and the game proved to be a success, and a fun, engaging activity. This is a good example of using interactive and modern technologies to provide value to participants. If the aim of tests (thematical modules) is to identify the understanding of a topic, testing could be done in this fashion after each topic or thematical area, instead of resorting to a final paper-based exam of the entire module.

### **Other materials and artefacts to engage participants**

During some observations it was seen that other materials and artefacts were used to engage participants, and provide information or support the activities of the Welcoming Programme. In addition to showing videos, questions were asked on written post-it notes, and internships were looked for in groups via the internet. One good example is also the awarding of ID-card readers to the participants, which seemed to surprise the participants in a positive way and provided additional value. These types of materials should be used more during the training sessions to engage participants, and in order to generate more interactive possibilities - an example could be to teach participants how to sign documents digitally and asking them to sign their attendance to the course.

## Feedback forms

Feedback forms are key tools for the improvement and assessment of any service. In the Welcoming Programme, there are two possibilities for the participants to deliver feedback (see also chapter 4.1.1.3, “during-service”): one through the physical feedback form at the end of the training (**Figure 4.19**; if person does not hand in the feedback form at the end of the course, he/she also receives it via email) and the second one through email, directly via Expat Relocation (**Figure 4.6**).

**Figure 4.20.** Printed feedback form from the Basic module

**Basic Module Feedback form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ City of training: ☐ Tallinn ☐ Tartu ☐ Narva

**Thank you for participating in the training!**  
We kindly ask you to answer the following questions. Your evaluation and comments will help us improve the quality and effectiveness of the trainings in the future.

**PERSONAL DETAILS**  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**FEEDBACK**

1. Has your practical informedness and knowledge about Estonian state, society, and culture improved as a result of participating in the training?  
☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ I DON'T KNOW

2. Your evaluation of reaching the learning objectives of the training. As a result of the training you:  
Please circle the suitable answer choice: 5 - fully achieved, 4 - mostly achieved, 3 - partially achieved, 2 - mostly not achieved, 1 - not at all achieved

know the requirements concerning your residence permit and know where to find additional information about these \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

know with your rights and obligations respective of your legal status \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

are familiar with the Estonian civil society \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

know how to act in case of emergency \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

know how to use digital identification documents \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

know where to find information on health care and health insurance issues \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

know the most important traffic and road safety rules in Estonia \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

are familiar with the cultural traits and behaviour of Estonians and ways to mitigate the effects of culture shock \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

are familiar with the services offered to newly arrived foreigners settling in Estonia and know where to find relevant additional information \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1

3. Your evaluation of the instructor:  
Please circle the suitable answer choice: 5 - very satisfied, 4 - satisfied, 3 - generally satisfied, 2 - not really satisfied, 1 - not satisfied at all  
Name of the instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1  
Comments \_\_\_\_\_

4. Your evaluation:  
Please circle the suitable answer choice: 5 - very satisfied, 4 - satisfied, 3 - generally satisfied, 2 - not really satisfied, 1 - not satisfied at all  
Of study materials \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1  
Of schedule \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1  
Of general structure of the training \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1  
Of practical organization of the training \_\_\_\_\_ 5 4 3 2 1  
Comment \_\_\_\_\_

5. In what way are you planning to use the knowledge acquired from the training?  
☐ In employment  
☐ In acquiring education  
☐ By sharing with family/friends/relatives  
☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Additional comments/suggestions/recommendations \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your feedback!**

Follow us on Facebook:

### Feedback form

Given to participants after a day of training

The feedback form asks participants to assess what level of knowledge they have achieved on specific topics. Although the question two is relevant to see participants' view in their development, the phrasing of the question might generate information that is not necessarily useful in determining effectiveness for the training: firstly, because foreigners have different reference frameworks, and secondly, if they did not have any information about the topic before the module, they might rate their knowledge as the highest possible, effectively not being able to determine what they do not know.

The evaluation of the instructor or trainer is very general and seems to be valuable only if the participant adds comments or additional information, otherwise it might only provide relevant or interesting information when a trainer is on the either extreme side of the grading spectrum.

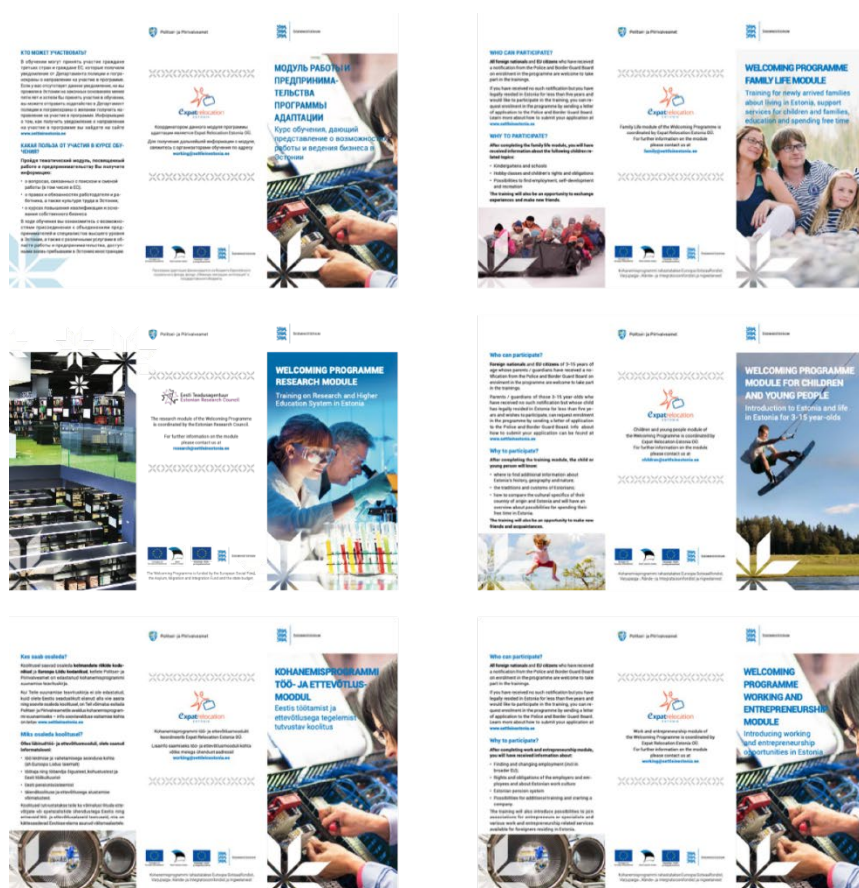
Question number four requires participants to evaluate the materials, schedule, structure, and organisation of the training on a scale. Space is given for comments, but while reviewing the filled in feedback forms over the years, the handwritten feedback is given only seldomly (in these cases, the feedback is mostly valuable for the better implementation of the training).

One major question regarding the feedback is the issue of to what extent the overall results can be used for the evaluation or development of the programme (incl. to train trainers). In most cases in our interviews and other observations (including the review of the feedback lists), the participants are grateful for the free training offered to them in good will by the Estonian state, so one may argue that the influence of the feeling of gratitude might create somewhat overinflated positive results. However, this hypothesis needs further research. Also, as the grading scales are usually not explained by participants, the grades do not provide input to develop trainings or support trainers in their development (see chapter 4.1.1.3 “During-service”).

## Printed communications

Over the years, there have been different versions of the printed communication materials about the Welcoming Programme (more on that in chapter 4.3.2). Both the previous versions and the latest versions of the brochures/leaflets are analysed here. The previous version is included as they are still in circulation and handed out, for example, at the PBGB offices (spring 2019, in Tartu), and they are shown on the Welcoming Programme’s website, thus still being available to different actors.

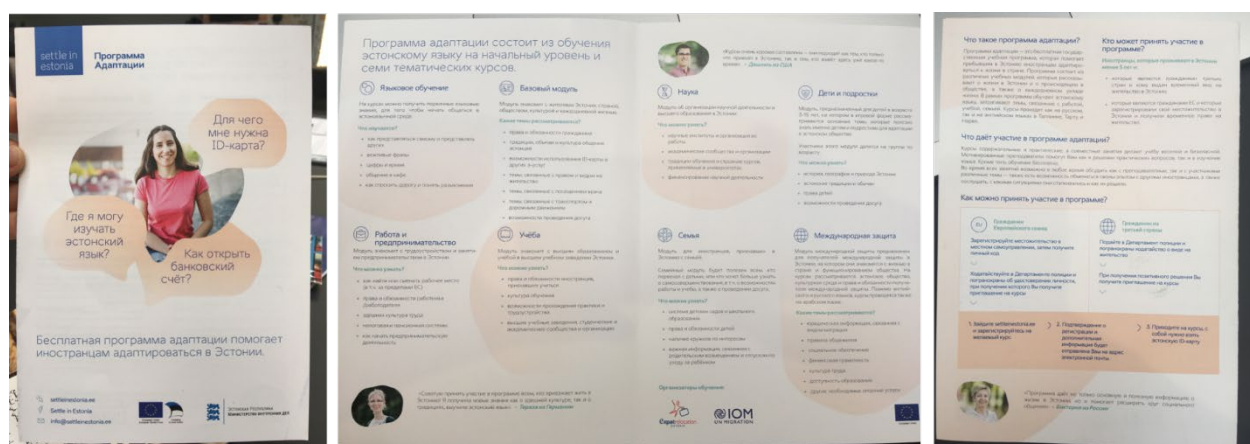
**Figure 4.21.** Available online brochures show the old versions, where each module had one brochure.



**Old brochures of the Welcoming Programme**  
Different modules are represented here.

The latest version of the brochures that researchers saw during the research (**Figure 4.21**), contrary to the previous version (**Figure 4.20**), is **considerably more efficient in the delivery of information**; and contains an overview of the Welcoming Programme, its modules, and information on how to take part. The new brochures are branded with the new Brand Estonia, making them more contemporary and in line with the perception foreigners have of the country.

**Figure 4.22.** New brochure of the Welcoming Programme. This picture depicts the Russian version.



#### New brochures of the Welcoming Programme

The modules and the benefits are shown on a double spread when the brochure is opened. The back slide shows who can attend and how.

The brochures are available in Russian, English, and Arabic. The layout is easy to read and comprehensible, with a minor issue of contrast, i.e. the colour of the text (e.g. bright green) and the colour of the background fading into each other; also the font size should be increased for better reading of the text. Content-wise, information on the length of the training module should be included (eight hours).

To our knowledge and observations, only a few of the new brochures are in circulation, thus we recommend positioning them in key locations, such as the Police and Border Guard Board service points (and to hand them out to ID-card applicants together with the more official looking A4 document on the Welcoming Programme). Also, the brochures on the website of the Welcoming Programme should be updated.

## Brand

A brand can be understood as the systematic use of values and concepts to define and differentiate goods or services in the market. The brand is usually expressed through visual identity, communications, qualities of the good or service, etc. A brand expresses the identity of a good or service to differentiate it and make it memorable in the eyes of the consumer/user, and as such, it is important that its usage is consistent. A brand should always be developed in alignment with the product/service.

Thus, the brand of the Welcoming Programme is a major touchpoint because of its importance, although in this case it is more of a series of concepts and values related to the WP that are expressed through tangible artefacts.

During the research period, a usage of both the old and new brands of Estonia for the Welcoming Programme were observed (e.g. the old “Welcome to Estonia” brand in the website and the new “Brand Estonia” on the leaflets/brochures). In most cases, only the visual identity elements are used, and the rest of the elements of the brand are not. Also, in many touchpoints, the brands of the service providers are used, creating confusion for participants who interact with many overlapping identities of the WP.

Therefore, there does not seem to be a single, separate brand for the Welcoming Programme. The creation of this kind of brand is a necessity, as it would provide a solid platform to share the value offer with possible participants and for communication activities. This will also help to strengthen the identity of the WP and differentiate it from the other services that support settling-in, adaptation, or integration, as well as increase the relatability of the service for participants, and give a sense of cohesion and intent to the WP.

## 4.3. Value offer

The value offer refers to the intangible value being exchanged between the service provider and the consumer (user). According to the aim of the Welcoming Programme, the values exchanged should support the migration and subsequent integration of migrants through the delivery of information on the functioning of the state and society, daily life, working, studying, and family matters, and by facilitating the acquisition of the Estonian language.

The modules of the WP seem to support the integration purpose of the programme, as they provide relevant information for participants. However, it is less clear how the WP supports migration. Based on interviews with participants, trainers, and experts, besides the officially declared value, additional elements of value were identified, such as, for example, belonging, social connection, and a feeling of inclusion.

Our research indicates that the value offer has not been fully articulated (see more on that below), thus it has organically evolved into the current Welcoming Programme, without a series of guiding decisions to support it. It should be paid in mind that the lack of cohesion during the service delivery leads to a disjointed effort to deliver value, or to a weak delivery of the value.

One way of assessing the value of a service is to give it a price tag - how much the users would be willing pay for the service? In the case of the Welcoming Programme, none of the interviewed participants from whom this was asked (n=8), were sure they would pay for the Programme, except for the language course.

In the following subchapters, the value of trainings is discussed in greater detail.

### 4.3.1. Service delivery

Delivering a value is the core activity of the Welcoming Programme. The delivery of the value is done by carrying out the service, and in the Welcoming Programme, by carrying out the trainings and the language courses. This is supported by some other activities, such as communications and logistics. To be able to deliver the service's value to users, several elements are crucial to be taken into account including, in particular, (a) the accessibility and (b) the content.

If the trainings provide value but are difficult to access, the potential impact of the trainings is lower than expected. In a survey carried out in 2019 among foreign workers in Estonia, only 44% respondents were satisfied with the accessibility of the WP, whereby Russian-speaking persons were more satisfied than the others.<sup>73</sup> Similar results were apparent in our online survey among the participants of the WP, and the main reasons for dissatisfaction with the WP included: insufficient communication, unsuitable time schedule and locations of the trainings; and the length of the training (too short or long to attend or to cover topics in sufficient depth) (see more in chapter 4.5.1.3).

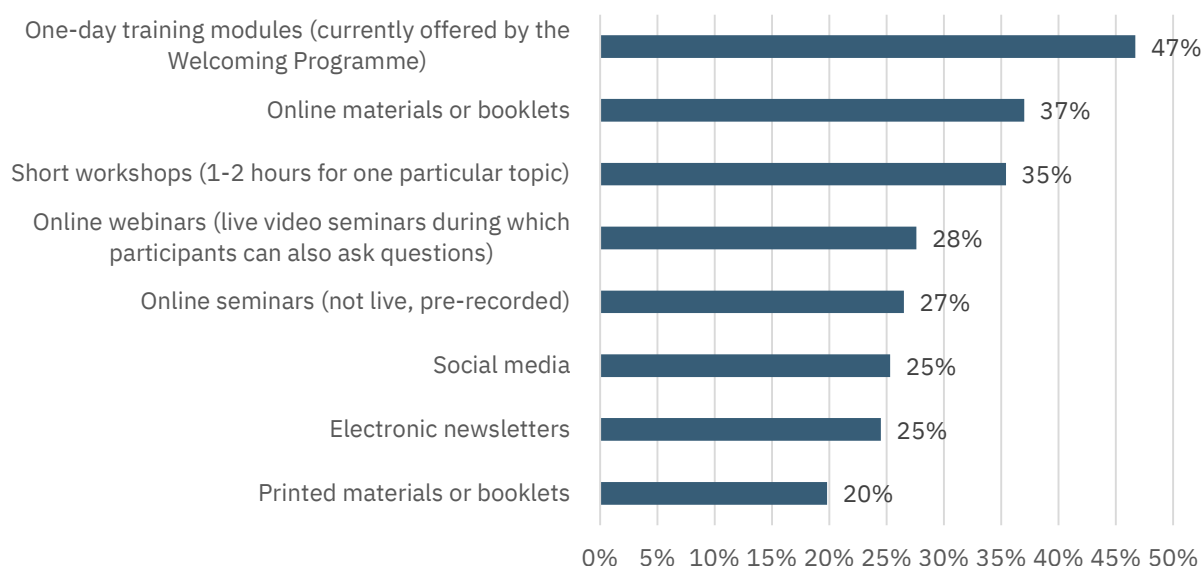
The service is usually delivered to the participants in the format of one-day trainings (8 hours; with the exception of language trainings, and the 3-day International Protection module), depending on the situation and especially on the number of participants, the modules can also be shorter. The results from our survey among the participants of the WP show that the one-day training module is the most convenient option the participants prefer (Figure 4.22), but this is still only preferred by less than half of the respondents. The results indicate that there seems to be a need for a more diverse set of trainings offered to the participants, including short sessions of workshops or online/offline seminars. Thus, it should be further discussed among the relevant stakeholders as to whether the Welcoming Programme should become a broader programme that not only

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<sup>73</sup> Anniste, K., Masso, M. 2019. Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis. P 37.

offers one-day training modules, but also provides information and/or training via a number of additional formats.

**Figure 4.23.** Upon arriving in Estonia, what would be the best way to get information about Estonia? (n=942; respondents could only choose up to three choices)



Different delivery forms carry different types of value. **When assessing which format should be used to deliver the service, it is important to start with defining what the value being delivered is.** If the value is ‘information’, a digital platform with the information available in several languages could suffice. If the value is to create a strong ‘social network’, then a group training might be preferred. Conversely, when the ideal is to integrate or adapt foreigners as quickly and efficiently as possible into Estonian society, a more practical approach with trainings with specific contexts and based on personalised needs would provide better value.

Several forms of delivery can co-exist to deliver the value or deliver different aspects of the value. The Welcoming Programme already has different value delivery formats: thematic trainings and language courses, and a few extracurricular activities. While we consider many of these possible new or additional delivery forms valuable and relevant to explore, they differ vastly from the current structure of the service, which would mean a complete overhaul and reorganisation of both the programme and the contracts drawn for it.

Value offer is also connected to the certificates. A certificate is received via e-mail some weeks after attending a module<sup>74</sup>. The value of the certificate was put into question by some of the participants in the interviews, since obtaining this is not a reflection of the amount of information acquired, new skills learned, or even outstanding participation. It also does not provide access to another module (i.e. there are no different difficulty levels, nor requirements to attend one module to attend in another module, e.g. attending the basic Family Module to attend the advance Family Module or attending A1 level Estonian to attend A2 level Estonian) nor does it have a curricular value. The current value of the certificate is for participants to feel pleased that they attended the module, especially the Language module, or sometimes to remember which module they took part in. The certificate, while sent by Expat Relocation, has the identity and branding of the programme.

The following subchapter covers the thematic modules in more detail, however these are also covered under other chapters of the report. Information about the language courses and the International Protection module is in chapters 5 and 6 as a slightly different analytical framework was used.

<sup>74</sup> Starting from autumn 2019, certificates are issued on paper at the end of the lesson.

## Thematic modules

As can be seen in chapter 4.5.2., the thematical modules have received high feedback from the participants. One of the reasons for that may be that they cover all of the promised topics and therefore fulfil the learning objectives. At least, as the learning objectives are rather basic, the research did not find any reasons to state the opposite. However, depending on the possibility to compile groups based on participants' backgrounds and needs (see chapter 4.4.1), the chosen training methods, teaching style, and training environment, the value of the trainings can be higher.

Our research shows that some participants were not able to manage certain topics that were covered during the training, by themselves (see chapter 4.5.2). However, although trainers and participants did not see this as problematic, researchers noticed that fulfilling learning objectives also depends on the participants' commitment during the training. Although the ability to concentrate also depends on training methods, learning and the teaching environment, dealing with other "personal things" during the training (e.g. being on the internet, arriving late or leaving early) may have had an effect on reaching learning objectives in full extent.

## Training methods

The main issues related to the current training method are (a) the matching of participant's needs and expectations with the content delivered and (b) the interaction or interactivity of the participants during the training.

Our interviews as well as observations indicate that some trainings are too theoretical, i.e. too dependent on lecture-style sessions, and/or lacking enough interactivity with the participants. In some cases, the level of trainer-participant and participant-participant interaction fell rather short, with almost no dynamic or meaningful interaction between the participants. For example, there were instances of asking participants at the trainings to read independently from the handbook for around ten minutes or reading text slide-by-slide from the presentation.

Although some of the trainers make concerted efforts to have more interactivity in the modules, for example, by incorporating more group exercises, some of the interviewed trainers were of the opinion that as there is a large amount of information to be delivered to the participants, it is not possible to add much (more) interactivity.

Therefore, increasing the two-way flow of information between the trainer and the participants by incorporating or moving towards more engaging and interactive teaching methods is necessary. As having more interactive methods takes more time, possibilities to decrease the amount of information covered or to increase the length of the trainings should also be considered (although the latter – increasing the length of the trainings – should not be used too extensively due to the already long training sessions). For instance, the more handbooks can be read independently (i.e. not during the training), the higher the value the training can shift towards interactive sessions. As the interactivity also depends on the person/trainer, our observations indicate that some trainers' capabilities to carry out interactive trainings is somewhat limited and should be trained/developed.

Another aspect related to service delivery is the identification of, or the assessment of, the needs of the participants, especially prior to the training. Usually, the trainer is unaware of the information that participants would like to obtain from the particular module, or which questions they would like to see answered. Although these goals or wishes are typically identified at the beginning of each training session, our observations and interviews with participants indicate that trainers quite often make too little effort to get a better understanding of the participants' individual needs – while in some cases it is done very thoroughly, in some cases we noticed only a superficial needs assessment. The consequence of this is that some of the trainings will be insufficiently

tailored to the needs of the participants. This negatively impacts one of the biggest selling points of the Welcoming Programme: its flexibility and ability to cater to the particular needs of the participants.

Our interviews with trainers showed that although having some additional prior information about the topics of interest may help deliver a more participant-needs tailored training session, in some cases participant questions may be too specific for the trainer to be able to answer them. Also, although there is an option during registration to write down specific needs or questions prior to the training, most participants do not use this option (more research on the reasons for this is needed). It also seems to be the view of trainers that the most relevant questions arise during the training, not before it, when the participants become acquainted with the information. Therefore, a good balance should be found with regard to the assessment of needs prior and during the training. In order for all relevant questions to be identified and properly answered (even if questions arise after the training), and managed in an acceptable way (i.e. so the training does not only focus on the needs or questions of a few participants).

### Teaching and learning environment

Teaching and learning environments may influence the impact and value of the training. The teaching and learning environment has not always proven to be well-equipped. This has been the case for a number of reasons, including:

- Seating arrangements: Some of the modules were taught in rooms with a traditional (classroom) seating layout, which makes it more difficult to foster an interactive teaching environment;
- Lighting: Well-lit classrooms for the duration of the module have not always been the case, which typically had a negative effect on the teaching environment;
- Accessibility: During our observations, some rooms were difficult to find (despite the instructions given) and/or not accessible to people with disabilities;
- Children: In some cases, the trainers have said explicitly that the trainings or language courses cannot be attended with children, in other cases children have been allowed and/or provided with other extracurricular activities during the training (a good example of this is during the international protection modules). In many cases, there was a lack of materials, activities, and equipment for children. All in all, a standardised approach should be taken and implemented by all trainers/courses in regard to the allowance of children in the trainings.

The rooms in which the modules are taught need to be well-suited, well-equipped, and easily accessible to increase attendance and interactivity. Although the semi-shoe seating arrangement does allow for more trainer-participant and participant-participant interaction, it is worth considering teaching the modules in a circle, in clusters, or even in free-self organisation, to maximise user participation and interactivity. Other arrangements can be suggested, although the most important characteristic could be that seating-arrangements respond to the needs of the trainers and the participants, as well as the training moment (i.e. the trainer should be able to use the opportunities of the room for his/her specific training session). A flexible environment that allows seating (or standing) arrangements to be modified could be better suited to interactivity.

## 4.4. Needs

Any service that is designed, developed, and implemented should consider the needs of its users. The needs provide cues and guidance for the service provider to implement the service, the value offer and the delivery methods.

There are usually two types of needs: 1) expressed needs, as stated explicitly or implicitly by the actors, and 2) latent needs, as identified by the researchers and/or other stakeholders. Needs can also be classified by the type of solution they require: emotional needs, value needs, information needs, needs connected to other actors, etc.

Due to the specific research design and research questions of our report, most of the needs identified and analysed are done so from the perspective of the user (a participant of the WP). The needs of other stakeholders are covered in slightly less detail, with the main focus of bringing attention to the need to increase stakeholders' knowledge on their target users and audience.

#### 4.4.1. Participants

The participants' group is the most varied group of all actors in the Welcoming Programme. This makes addressing their needs a challenging task for service design and implementation. The needs of the participants were gathered from the observations, interviews, and secondary-data analysis, as well as from the safari exploration. The needs can be grouped into main three categories:

1. Value needs: Referring to the value offer of the WP (the content);
2. Information needs: The form, quantity and quality of the content of the WP;
3. Emotional needs: The feelings and thoughts related to (participation in) the WP.

Furthermore, these three categories can be analysed according to the service stage, i.e. what are the needs and how do they differ in pre-service, during-service, and post-service (see **Figure 4.23**).

**Figure 4.24.** Needs statements by stage of service

|  | Pre-service stage   | During service  | Post-service stage   |
|--|---|---|--|
| Value needs<br>(content)               | "I need to know what is the value of taking this course." | "I need information that relates to my personal life situation"                             | "I need to know how to use the information I learned"                |
| Information needs<br>(form of content) | "I need to understand how to take part of the Programme"  | "I need to be able to understand the language of training, and be able to trust the source" | "I need to be able to recall or access the information I need"       |
| Emotional needs                        | "I need to feel wanted and welcome in the country"        | "I need to feel included and validated"   | "I need to feel part of society, and more confident in my knowledge" |

**In the pre-service stage**, the user needs sufficient and relevant information about the Welcoming Programme to make decisions and take action. This means information about what the WP is and offers (*Does it relate to my personal or family needs?*), information on the format of the WP (*Is the method suitable for me and my needs?*), and information on the practicalities (*Can I attend with my children? Are the transportation cost reimbursed?*). The information shared about the Welcoming Programme and its trainings at this stage should be trustworthy, and should highlight the value and benefits of attending, as all this information supports decision-making regarding the attendance of the potential participant (i.e. the foreigner). As brought out in

chapter 4.3.1, interviews and observations showed that shorter and more specific trainings, and faster access to trainings, will help answer target groups' needs in a better way (a variety of methods to receive the information is needed).

The emotional needs during the pre-service stage refer to the perception of being welcome in Estonia and thus being able to participate in the programme without concern or hesitation. Information, such as (for example) who is part of the target group, and the diversity of participants' and their experiences, could and should be highlighted to reinforce the perception of inclusivity.

**In the during-service stage**, the needs of the participants change, since they have made the decision to take part in the programme and participate in trainings (whether in thematic modules or language courses). Value wise, the participants at this stage need information they can relate to and apply in their everyday life in Estonia. This means the information received should correspond to their practical needs outside the Welcoming Programme, this is also important as participants may not know what they do not know or need to know during their life in Estonia.<sup>75</sup>

However, as our research shows, some needs are not covered by this kind of standardised system of topics. For example, people who go to the training just after arriving to Estonia have different informational needs compared to those who have lived in Estonia for some time already and persons who have already participated some of the modules may find some topics repetitive; additionally, child adoption programmes in Estonia, the LGBTQI community, options to volunteer, etc., may not be interesting or important topics for everyone. Even in the case of the language courses there are different needs and expectations: some participants indicated that they would like the courses to be more applicable to everyday life (for example, how to speak with a child's teacher, and with friends or family, language skills for applying for a job, etc.). Thus, the assessment of the needs of the participants and identifying and managing their expectations at this stage is important. Our observations and interviews also point out that participants need to feel that they are not alone in their experience and that they do not face obstacles that no one has faced before. Interviews show that participants also wish to hear (real-life) experiences of people in similar situations in Estonia. There is also a common need for the usage of different methods during the training by the trainer so that it is easier to concentrate and take part in activities until the end of the training.

In terms of content, participants need to be able to understand how the content is presented, this includes being able to understand the language. Our research shows a few issues in this regard, as the language used in the handbooks is not always clear and unambiguous language or graded language.

Emotional needs also require special attention as well as an individual focus, because participants wish to feel included and validated during the trainings. Socialising and sharing experiences are not included explicitly as an aim of the programme, but based on our research, they are among the most important reasons participants attend the trainings. However, this kind of social element is too often overlooked by trainers (and service provider). Although participants usually exchange their contact details at the end of the modules, which is also encouraged by the trainer, more could be done to foster a sociable environment. For example, during our observations there were several cases where participants were very keen to share tips and relevant information on a wide-ranging number of topics with the other participants, but due to a lack of any coherent system of how and where to include this kind of information sharing between the participants, this social element of the trainings is not fully utilised.

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<sup>75</sup> Attention should also be paid to the issue that the more that needs are identified by the foreigner before/prior to the training him/herself, the more these must be addressed during the training, because of the set expectations of the foreigner to the training.

**In the post-service stage**, participants' needs change again. Here, the main issue is whether the participant is able to apply the information or skills learned to different situations in Estonia, and whether he/she has an improved feeling of capacity. Informational needs in this stage refer mostly to being able to recall and access the information. This, however, is a challenge for the Welcoming Programme because, at several points, the participants are referred to websites or other sources that are in Estonian<sup>76</sup> (see also the pain-points in chapter 4.1.1.) This directly conflicts with participants' needs to act independently and/or access information without guidance. Facilitating this kind of assistance during the training can be one of the advantages or innovative focuses of the WP, which would allow it to distinguish itself from other similar services. However, this requires a complete rethinking of both the content as well as the schedule of the trainings, including identifying the needs and topics that are applicable/useful/interesting to all attending participants.

As was seen, there may be a need to contact the service provider(s) during all of the stages. Some of the trainers have encouraged foreigners to contact Expat Relocation if needed, however, the only contact that people have is [info@settleinestonia.ee](mailto:info@settleinestonia.ee). Nonetheless, several foreigners expressed their grievances in the context of a lack of communication as people have not received answers to the questions they have sent to the WP. As pointed out, this may be very problematic in cases where information about the trainings and venues is not received.

#### 4.4.2. Trainers

There are several issues and needs that have been identified by the trainers and our other interviews and observations.

The aim of the training and the Welcoming Programme: some trainers expressed a confusion over the general aim of the trainings, as well as with the Welcoming Programme and its relation to the method of carrying out the trainings. If the aim of the WP is to support the foreigner's adaptation in Estonia by mostly letting them to choose what topics are most important for them, then in its current form there is a strong overlap between the content of different modules. In some modules, there are many topics covered during the trainings, whereas the same information may repeat in the others. As this is done in a differing degree of detail, a confusion arises among both the trainers as well as among the participants as to what the aim of training is.

Information shared prior to the trainings: some trainers expressed a strong need to receive information from the service provider before the training regarding the composition of the group, including the participants questions and expectations (if expressed). This would help trainers to better prepare for the training, especially in terms of which topics should or should not be emphasised or given more detail to manage with the time. Most trainers are, however, of the opinion that foreigners may not know what they do not know, and thus some important topics may be left uncovered if only the topics asked/identified by the participants themselves are covered during the trainings.

Support by the service provider: one of the biggest expressed (and mostly satisfied) needs of the trainers is having the information, tools, methods, resources, and qualifications to carry out the training. This includes support by the service provider (i.e. Expat Relocation in the case of thematic modules and language trainings). In general, this support is provided, through personal advice, materials, trainings, supervision sessions and other activities.<sup>77</sup> The service provider also informs trainers on the changes to the topics of the modules, though at least two trainers found that this should be done more often. Our observations and interviews also indicate

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<sup>76</sup> E.g. Riigi Teataja has different information in English and in Estonian, but nothing in Russian; the webpage about volunteering (<https://vabatahtlikud.ee>) is currently just in Estonian – English and Russian versions should be published soon. Vabatahtlike Värav homepage.

<sup>77</sup> None of the interviewed trainers mentioned the need or desire to receive training before teaching. All found that they are familiar with the topic and teaching methods. It has also been possible to go through the materials, to ask questions from the service provider, and to visit the trainings of other trainers. Some of the trainers mentioned that a representative of the service provider attended their first training and gave feedback to improve the training.

that one of the overlying needs is having information and resources to deal with disruptive behaviour, interruptions, unexpected circumstances, unplanned situations, sensitive topics, and especially, avoiding inappropriate comments by the trainers (e.g. sexist comments or opinions on the political climate in Estonia, on minority groups, etc.; see also chapter 4.5.2.).

Training experience and further trainings: not all trainers have had prior experience in training foreigners (or similar target groups). Also, not all trainers have been able to attend the co- and supervision training sessions organised by the service provider. Although some trainers have visited each other's trainings and shared experiences with each other, this is not a common method of sharing experience and usually, other trainers have visited the trainings of one of the chief trainers by the service provider. The need to communicate with the other trainers, to share their experiences and improve techniques and practices was seen relevant to trainers. It was also seen that there is a need for more frequent and longer sessions to share experiences between trainers and increase their competences in the field.

Feedback to the trainers: all participants of the trainings generally give feedback on the training as well as on the trainer. However, as described also in chapter 4.2.4.4., the feedback forms have somewhat questionable value to the trainers, firstly because handwritten comments and feedback is only given seldomly and secondly, the numerical scale feedback does not help to identify or pinpoint where the trainer can improve (expect giving the service provider information how the trainer is doing in general or on average compared to other trainers). A few trainers mentioned that they do not go through the feedback forms themselves but send these directly to service provider.

Language course specifics: the needs of language teachers are partly similar and overlapping with the trainers of thematical modules. However, more than other trainers, the language teachers mention technical problems while carrying out the courses (e.g. while using Keeleklikk; or when using computers/projectors) and the need to arrange or modify classroom settings that are prepared prior to the course. Trainers of thematical modules mostly did not mention a dissatisfaction with classrooms, although our observations indicate that for more interactive trainings, a better seating arrangement would be necessary in some cases. Language trainers have a bigger workload and the number of classes given through the programme has a remarkable influence on accepting other works. Interviews and focus groups showed also that language teachers would prefer more stable and regular working hours, a stable work environment, and a job security. One more aspect that may have an influence on getting experienced, quality language teachers, is the fact that the Welcoming Programme's language course is not a school of its own, and thus might be less well-known to other professionals in the field and might not increase the value of a teachers' resume as much as they would prefer. Therefore, based on interviews, some of the trainers may not apply to be a language teacher of the Welcoming Programme as they have a need to be able to say where they work, which must also be a recognised institution by others in their field.

#### **4.4.3. Expat Relocation (service provider)**

The main need of the service provider is to receive relevant and detailed information about their role in the Welcoming Programme and within the Estonian adaptation/integration policy in general, i.e. the goals and the expected results set to them. This kind of information, together with sufficient and regular support by the ministry, will help the service provider to implement and develop the service, especially in cases where there are other similar services.

Thus, a common understanding and good communication with the other stakeholders on how the WP and other services relate to each other help to achieve common goals in adaptation Estonia and integration of foreigners. This includes getting regular feedback on the delivery, not only from the participants or from the ministry, but also from the other stakeholders in the Estonian migration ecosystem system (other major state agencies and

employers, universities, NGOs). The tools to provide the quality of trainings is another major need for the service provider and for ensuring the quality of the trainings and the capabilities of the trainers.

#### 4.4.4. Ministry of the Interior

The main Welcoming Programme related need of the Ministry of the Interior is to have a functioning programme that provides value to foreigners and Estonian society. Additional needs related to the service delivery can be summarised as follows:

- To receive information from service providers regarding the state of the service, problems, participation, relevant updates, and so forth;
- To assess the impact of the Welcoming Programme both with the target group as well as among Estonian society;
- To find and manage suitable service providers who can implement the various aims and elements of the Welcoming Programme;
- To align the service providers under one coherent goal, mission, and structure through the structuring of tenders;
- To analyse and understand user feedback, their experience of service, and the impact of the Programme for Estonian society;
- To assess the performance of the service providers.

Several of these needs are connected to the aim of the programme and some to the different roles of actors. Therefore, the aim of the programme should be clear, measurable and understandable to all actors as well as to the ministry itself.

### 4.5. Experience

In the service-design ATONE-S methodology, the aspect of *experience* refers to the dynamic inter-relationships between people and their environment, which shapes the way people perceive situations and make decisions.<sup>78,79</sup> People here are defined as individuals with diverse personalities, with rational/irrational behaviours, and with desires, motivations, and values that guide them.

In the framework of the Welcoming Programme, experience is analysed through two main aspects:

- 1) Desirability: the desire and motivations of the target group to join or not join the WP
- 2) Pleasurability, usability (accessibility) and utility: the aspects that can enhance the desirability of the experience, which (in many cases) are interconnected or overlap, including the decision to drop out of the WP or not join in the first place.

In general, it was seen that the experiences of English and Russian speaking foreigners are slightly different as, depending on field and geographical location, one of these languages may be more commonly used and more information may also be available in internet.

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<sup>78</sup> Wright, Peter & Wallace, Jayne & McCarthy, John. (2008). Aesthetics and experience-centered design.. ACM Trans. Comput.-Hum. Interact.. 15. 10.1145/1460355.1460360.

<sup>79</sup> Goleman, D., & Sutherland, S. (1996). Emotional intelligence – why it can matter more than IQ. Nature, 379(6560), 34–35.

### 4.5.1. Desirability

Desirability refers to how attractive the service is perceived to be from the perspective of the target users. Desirability is comprised of all the other factors analysed in this section (pleasurability, utility and usability), including the user's motivation to join the service. Desirability and motivation to join are one of the key aspects to be considered with regards to the Welcoming Programme, as the statistics of attendance indicates that about half of those who have registered for the training, attend, and only 14.7% of potential participants attend the Welcoming Programme (see chapter 3.1).

#### Desire and motivation to join

Desire and motivation to join play an important role in any service as they guide the decision to take part and influence the expectations and behaviour of users. Our research identified a number of motivations to join the Welcoming Programme<sup>80</sup>:

- Learn more about living in and life in Estonia;
- To better adapt/integrate to Estonia;
- Learn Estonian;
- Make life easier;
- Meet other people.

The motivations and desires to join can also be categorised into positive, neutral, or negative, depending on the emotion or experience they stem from.

Positive motivations refer to those that come from a positive feeling, thought, life situation, or encounter. In this category, there are motivations such as “it was highly recommended” or “I was excited to learn Estonian”.

Neutral motivations refer to those that are not associated with either a negative or positive feeling, thought, experience, or encounter. This category includes reasons such as “why not” or “because it was free”.

Negative motivations to join include motivations that come from an unpleasant, disturbing or uncomfortable experience or situation, or from a negative feeling. This category includes motivations such as “I felt excluded”, “I struggled to find a job”, “I can't find friends”, etc.

It is important to highlight that all, **positive, neutral, and negative, motivations to join achieve the same result of the foreigner taking part in the course.** The origin of motivations is, thus, related to the participants' expectations towards the programme, so their previous experiences might also positively or negatively affect their perception and experience of the service.

The motivation to join seems to also depend on the time spent in Estonia. Our results indicate that most differences take place before and after the second year of living in Estonia. Between the second and fifth year of living in Estonia, most motivations to join the WP remained similar. This might point to the organic adaptation of the immigrant, and less need and desire to join the programme after the two-year mark.

In the first year of arrival, the motivations to join can be both very specific and unspecific, with motivations such as “having free time” or “excitement to be starting a new life chapter” (Figure 4.24) It seems that the

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<sup>80</sup> Although in Civitta research the needs of participants were not looked at in detailed, receiving information for adapting is received but socialising needs are unmet. Also, a desire for sharing experiences was brought out. Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. PP 46, 56.

more time has passed from the foreigner's arrival to the attendance of the course, the more motivations or desires to join became much more specific and related to life-changing situations.

**Figure 4.25.** Motivation to join the Welcoming Programme.

| 2 years after arrival       |  |  | 5 year mark   |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Positive motivations</b> | Excitement to be starting a new life chapter                                 | Programme being recommended by a trusted person                            | Wanting deeper information about a relevant topic in their life   |
|                             | Novelty  | Desire to learn anything   | Recently learned about the Programme  |
|                             | Working towards the new life idea  | Meet other foreigners and socialize  | Access new opportunities  |
| <b>Neutral motivations</b>  | Curiosity  | Wanting to be part of the cool community that speaks Estonian              | Want to advance professionally and acquire new language skills to do so   |
|                             | Because the programme is free  | Desire to establish/bring a new company to Estonia and need advice         | To network  |
|                             |  | Feeling of civic duty or responsibility                                    | Life situation changes that require new direction, information and advice (a marriage, new business, new legal reason to stay in Estonia, etc.) |
| <b>Negative motivations</b> | Need help with the TRP   | Belief this will positively impact further requests to stay in the country | Why not?  |
|                             | Not finding relevant information for daily activities through other channels | Lack of other activities   | Feeling rejected because of the lack of language  |
|                             | Need help, guidance or advice with settling in                               | Feeling lost   | Concerns (political climate, immigration status, changes in systems, etc.)  |
|                             |  | Feeling overwhelmed and incapable of understanding the system              | Problems understanding any system (work, education, etc.)   |
|                             |  | Need help with housing and registration                                    | To find solutions for a specific problem that can't be found online   |
|                             |  | Feeling responsible to learn the language                                  | Still feeling not fully adapted not integrated  |
|                             |  | Wanting to have access to the social spheres reserved to Estonian speakers | Wanting help to meet Estonians  |
|                             |  | Need help with family doctor   |   |

For the most recent arrivals (considered to be in Estonia for less than two years) and the already settled (more than two years) arrivals, the positive, neutral, and negative motivations to join the Welcoming Programme are as seen in Table 4.1 (see also **Figure 4.25**):

**Table 4.1.** Positive, neutral, and negative motivations to join the Welcoming Programme

|                             | Most recent arrivals (less than 2 years in Estonia)   | Settled arrivals (2 to 5 years living in Estonia)  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Positive motivations</b> | <p><b>1)</b> Desire to take steps towards an ideal or desired living situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> Wanting to be part of the community that speaks Estonian. This is presented and perceived as being part of a special group of individuals, and as a “badge of honour”;</li> <li><b>b)</b> Excitement to be starting a new life chapter;</li> <li><b>c)</b> Novelty of the experience and their living situation;</li> <li><b>d)</b> Working towards the new life idea they have. Here, the Welcoming Programme is perceived as a support or aid into creating the desired living situation.</li> </ul> <p><b>2)</b> Desire to establish or bring a new company to Estonia. Particularly, need for advice and guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> Desire to socialise;</li> <li><b>b)</b> Meet other foreigners and socialise, find friends;</li> <li><b>c)</b> Programme being recommended by a trusted source;</li> <li><b>d)</b> Wanting to be part of something (a community), a desire to belong;</li> <li><b>e)</b> Want to have activities during the long winter, particularly for foreigners not accustomed to northern winters;</li> <li><b>f)</b> Wanting to integrate to Estonian society and considering the Welcoming Programme an entry point.</li> </ul> | <p><b>3)</b> Desire to take steps towards an ideal or desired living situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> Having recently learned about the WP and wanting to make the most of the opportunities given to migrants;</li> <li><b>b)</b> To access new opportunities offered by the government;</li> <li><b>c)</b> Want to advance professionally and acquire the skills to do so (language, entrepreneurial knowledge, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><b>4)</b> Desire to access a broader and deeper range of information on a relevant topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> Want more comprehensive information about a relevant topic in their life (i.e. a child’s schooling, applying for a loan, etc.);</li> <li><b>b)</b> Life situation changes that require a new directions, information, and advice (i.e. a marriage, new business venture, new legal reason to stay in Estonia, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><b>5)</b> Foreigners’ desire to socialise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> To network with other foreigners;</li> <li><b>b)</b> To meet other (local) people and make new friends.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Neutral motivations</b>  | <p><b>6)</b> Desire to occupy oneself with activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> Lack of other activities to take part of, having free time;</li> <li><b>b)</b> Desire to learn anything;</li> <li><b>c)</b> Being bored and wanting to do something.</li> </ul> <p><b>7)</b> Desire to take advantage of presented opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> Because the programme is free. In this case, many respondents replied with the question “why not?” when asked why they had joined. It seems to be that a free service is enticing and inviting;</li> <li><b>b)</b> Curiosity regarding the Welcoming Programme.</li> </ul> <p><b>8)</b> Desire to comply with civic duties and responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> A feeling of civic duty or responsibility. Feeling it is respectful to adapt and disrespectful not to even try;</li> <li><b>b)</b> To comply with perceived expectations from the government or civic society;</li> <li><b>c)</b> Belief that this will positively impact further requests to stay in the country. To show interest in integrating in front of authorities.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>9)</b> Desire to take advantage of presented opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> So-called “Why not?” aspect.</li> </ul>   |

|                             |   |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Negative motivations</b> | <p><b>10)</b> Desire to receive help with other services, processes and during settling-in activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Need for help with the temporary residence permit (for non-EU citizens that are subject to the migration quota);</li> <li>b) Need for help with family doctor (GP) registration;</li> <li>c) Not finding the relevant information needed for daily activities through other channels, such as: children's education, employment, driving in Estonia, and so forth;</li> <li>d) Need for help, guidance or advice when settling in. Here topics like housing, registering a place of residence, and understanding how to open a bank account were mentioned by interviewees;</li> <li>e) Feeling lost, overwhelmed and incapable of understanding the social and service systems and structures in Estonia. Examples of this include not being able to find friends, not being able to find a job, not knowing who to turn to for support, and so forth;</li> <li>f) No other place to turn to for help.</li> </ul> | <p><b>12)</b> Desire to adapt and access opportunities perceived as eligible/accessible solely for Estonians.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Feeling rejected because of the lack of language;</li> <li>b) Still feeling not fully adapted nor integrated and looking for options to be part of society.</li> </ul>   |
|                             | <p><b>11)</b> Desire to adapt and access opportunities perceived as solely for Estonians.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Feeling responsible for learning the language, particularly feeling that they don't deserve to be treated the same as nationals unless they speak the language;</li> <li>b) Wanting to have access to the social spheres reserved for Estonian speakers, and the feeling of being excluded from social groups and opportunities because of the lack of language.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>13)</b> Desire to receive help with other services, processes and settling-in activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Problems understanding systems because of the language or differences from their home country reference (i.e. educational system, employment, etc.);</li> <li>b) To find a solution for a specific problem that can't be found online and for which they have little to no knowledge.</li> </ul> <p><b>14)</b> Desire to belong and feel safe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Concerns (i.e. political climate, residency status, changes in law or other systems, etc.)</li> </ul> |

**Figure 4.26. Categorisation of new-migrants' motivations to join the WP**

|                                     | Soon after arrival   |   |  | 2 years after arrival  |  | 5 years after arrival          |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Positive motivations to join</b> | Desire to take steps towards an ideal or desired living situation                |   | Desire to establish an enterprise in Estonia.                              | Desire to take steps towards an ideal or desired living situation                | Desire to access a broader and deeper range of information on a relevant topic | Desire to socialize            |
| <b>Neutral motivations to join</b>  | Desire to occupy oneself with activities   | Desire to take advantage of presented opportunities | Desire to comply with civic duties and responsibilities                    | Desire to take advantage of presented opportunities                              |  |                                |
| <b>Negative motivations to join</b> | Desire to receive help with other services, processes and settling-in activities |   | Desire to adapt and access opportunities perceived as solely for Estonians | Desire to receive help with other services, processes and settling-in activities | Desire to adapt and access opportunities perceived as solely for Estonians     | Desire to belong and feel safe |

Our results thus indicate that the first two years of residence/life in Estonia have an important impact on the motivations and desires to join the WP. During the first two years, the motivations/desires are more general and more numerous; after this period of time, the amount decreases but becomes more specific, being also somewhat dependent on the foreigner's previous experience or life in Estonia (see also the Figure 4.24)

#### 4.5.2. Usability (accessibility), utility and pleasurability

Usability, utility and pleasurability are elements that shape the desirability of a service or product. In this section we analyse the Welcoming Programme through these aspects. Usability refers to the ease of use of the service, and the degree to which learning how to use it is understood by the users. Accessibility is related to usability as it refers to the level of entry barriers the user experiences before the first entry, and in their later interaction with the service. Accessibility also refers to how much consideration has been put/implemented/designed into the service for users with different needs and abilities.

Utility differs from usability as it refers to the usefulness of the service, rather than the ease of use.

Pleasurability refers to the design of the service evoking positive emotions in the users as they interact with it. This is the most abstract of the three aspects to identify and analyse and, from the analytical standpoint, remains relatively subjective.

##### Usability (accessibility)

Several aspects may have a negative impact on the usability of the Welcoming Programme and therefore deter participants from joining, such as a lack of clarity in the enrolment, difficulties in the registration process and in navigating in website, difficulties in understanding the language of the materials and trainings, the lack of information regarding the Programme and its trainings (incl. when to look for new trainings, time schedule of training), etc. However, several other aspects that have an impact on the usability were identified in our research and deserve special attention:

- The website being the only source of information and for registration. While having the processes of informing users and registering centralised in a single website is operationally more efficient, not all users may not understand it in a similar way, nor able to access it. For example, visually impaired individuals, people with no access to a computer, and/or people who have less knowledge regarding digital products (i.e. low digital literacy skills) may not perceive or sense the usability of the Welcoming Programme to the maximum degree because of problems while accessing it.
- Lack of resources other than the participants' handbook. Users only have access to one type of source (written text) to review the information received, which might be problematic for people with reading difficulties or lower levels of literacy (including English language skills; this is presumably not the case of Russian language materials as most of the people attending it are mostly fluent in that). Other method of delivering information are suggested in this report, for example, video tutorials and online webinars. Other formats to deliver the service could be also used to address different types of learners and reach a broader audience, not just to diversify the methods and tools used during the training.
- Trainings requiring physical attendance. This requirement (see also chapter 4.4.1.) creates obstacles to some potential participants due to their personal work/life schedules, children or geographical distance (including living in cities other than Tallinn, Tartu, Narva) that impede attendance. Other obstacles, however, should also be considered, such as lack of accessibility for people in wheelchairs, people suffering from health issues that prevent them from attending, etc. In such cases, varied training formats could also increase assistance and broaden the participant pool.
- Language. While the WP is offered in three languages, the question of how proficient participants are and how confident they feel in the language of the teaching has not been thoroughly assessed ex-ante or ex-post of the WP trainings.

Most of the usability issues raised here can be addressed by understanding different ways of learning, understanding, and relating to the world, and implementing this information into the format and structure of the trainings.

## Utility

The utility of the Welcoming Programme refers mainly to the quality of the information and how useful it is for participants to take part in the WP versus not taking part of it. The average grade for the programme by participants has been very high: 4.66 in a 5 point scale, whereby the grade for topics covered during every module has been at least 4.2.<sup>81</sup> However, based on the structure of feedback forms, open answers and expert opinions, the grades cannot always be taken as given as there is still some room for interpretation possibilities that should be considered (see also chapter 4.2.4.4).

Based on our web survey among the participants of the WP, three main aspects were frequently mentioned in open ended answers by respondents as being the most valuable in taking part in the Welcoming Programme<sup>82</sup>:

1. Learning more about a variety of different aspects related to Estonia;
2. Gaining a basic understanding of the Estonian language;
3. Meeting other foreigners.

As one of the aims of the programme is to increase the how informed a participant is, as well as their knowledge about Estonia, it can be considered a good result that 96% of respondents (n=844) have indicated that their practical informedness and knowledge about the Estonian state, society and culture has improved at least slightly, and 78% have felt remarkable improvement in knowledge (**Figure 4.26**).

The impact of the programme on participants' knowledge can be considered high, based on the feedback questionnaires completed by the participants at the end of every module (89% participants agreed that their informedness and knowledge has been improved). Also, 93% of respondents of the Praxis WIE questionnaire who have taken part in some of the modules (n=99<sup>83</sup>) indicate satisfaction with the programme<sup>84</sup>, and 91% of respondents to Civitta's survey who have attended the programme (n=170) indicate that trainings answered to their needs and expectations.<sup>85</sup>

Moreover, another way of assessing the service can be analysed based on whether participants recommend the service to other users: our online survey results indicate that 86% (n=844) have recommended the programme to someone else.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Siseministeerium, Kodakondsus- ja rändepoliitika osakond. (2019). Kohanemisprogrammis osalejate tagasiside september 2015-detsember 2018.

<sup>82</sup> The same categories also arose in the research carried out by Civitta in 2019 (Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne).

<sup>83</sup> Based on calculations the n in Figure 24 of Civitta's report should be 99 not 253 as they say that they had 253 responses and 39% of them attended the WP.

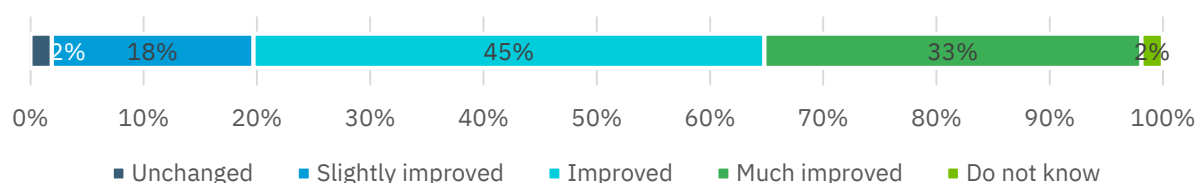
<sup>84</sup> Anniste, K., Masso, M. 2019. Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis. P 34.

<sup>85</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 30, 45.; trainings of the WP answered to needs in the opinion of 87% of respondents (51% absolutely, 36% quite a lot), trainings answered to expectations in the opinion of 87% respondents (40% absolutely, 47% quite a lot).

<sup>86</sup> 63% of persons who have not attended the programme, have recommended it to someone else (n=89). Just 10-26% of those who have not recommended the programme to someone else (n=154, incl. those who have not participated), have pointed out that something has to be changed in the programme. However, several respondents specified that they did not

Therefore, based on the participants' own feedback, the programme is considered useful and beneficial.

**Figure 4.27.** "To what extent has your practical informedness and knowledge about the Estonian state, society, and culture improved as a result of participating in the Welcoming Programme?" (n=844)



It is important to note, however, that the quantitative results from different surveys contrast somewhat with what was identified and discussed in our in-depth interviews and focus groups, observations or open-ended responses of our online survey questionnaire. During interviews, the participants of the Welcoming Programme describe situations of being unable to undertake certain actions or procedures – such as the renewal of the residence permit, the registration to the family doctor or the payment of taxes – which they considered to be information given/received from the WP. These findings point to a possible need to deliver more practical and applicable information that can be used by participants to make better and more informed decisions. This suggestion and need was also brought out by some experts, as well as respondents to the online survey. Of course, there may be many individual or situation-specific issues that hinder the completion of some activities despite the information given during the Welcoming Programme.

From the perspective of those who have not taken part in the programme, the usability of the WP remained somewhat unclear. First of all, foreigners may not know what they do not know about the new country in order to settle in successfully, thus attending the programme does not seem to be valuable enough to commit in cases where the timing or location are not so comfortable or having free time is valued more highly than going to the training.

### Pleasurability

Observations and interviews show that participants do not always receive a pleasurable experience from the trainings. There have been a number of occasions on which sensitive topics were dealt with in an offhand or careless way. Sexist comments made by both participants as well as trainers have occasionally been observed by our own researcher. One of the topics that has been a regular talking point during the observed modules is the tense political climate in Estonia (in the spring-summer observations of 2019). With participants frequently expressing their concerns related to this topic, the trainers have occasionally failed to alleviate them. Some of the observers have also heard callous comments being made about women and other minority groups.

The comments given during the interviews with trainers note that there have been no difficulties in addressing sensitive topics, indicating that there may not be a full understanding that some of the examples mentioned in the classroom may have been sensitive for someone. Therefore, more stress should be put on increasing the awareness of trainers on how to address or discuss potentially sensitive topics.

On the other hand, participants were observed to engage with each other in a friendly manner, by offering support and advice to each other and even exchanging contacts for further socialisation. During trainings, some participants were observed to joke with each other, start side conversations and try to connect and get to know other participants. Coupled with the finding of participants' desire and need to socialise and create a healthy

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have someone to recommend the programme to. In the case of the IP module, a smaller percentage had recommended the module (probably as there are not many persons to recommend the module to) and they were a bit more critical about the need to change the programme (10 pp less than those who find that there is no need for changes).

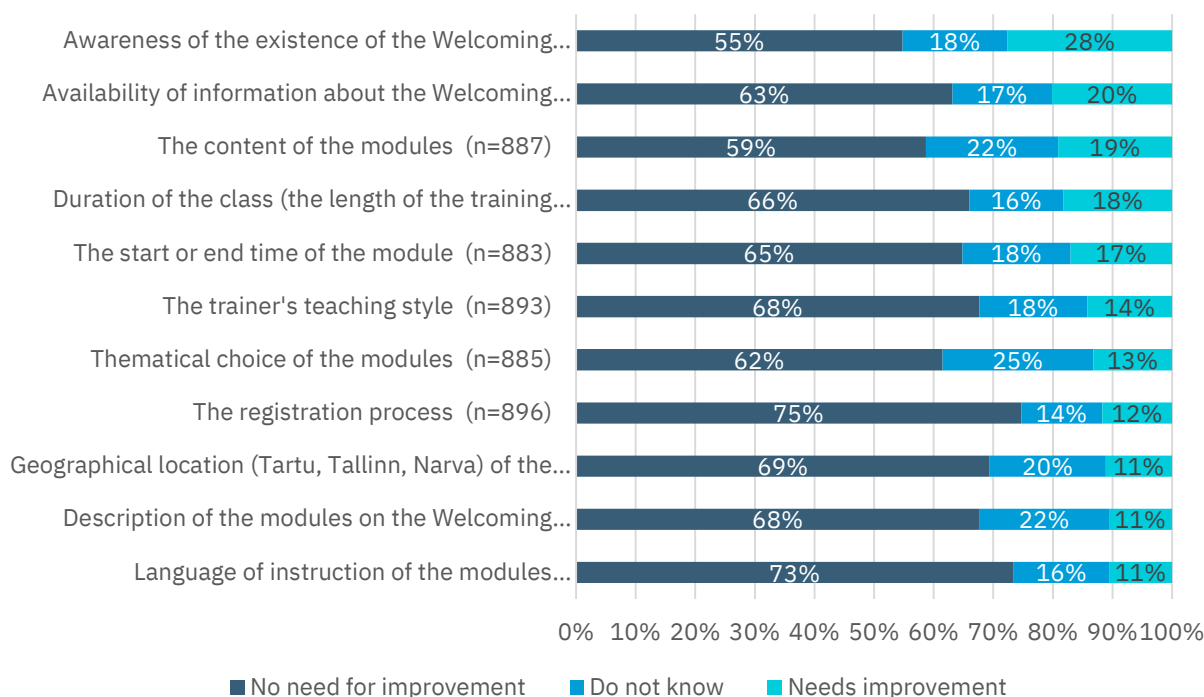
social network, we conclude that the socialising aspect is one of the most pleasurable aspects of the Welcoming Programme.

Another interesting finding connected to pleasurability that researchers observed during the service safari, was the reaction the participants had while getting to know that their knowledge will be validated by the trainer or by other participants. For some participants, this translated into a visible reaction of being pleased with oneself. While the observations were covert, and it is hard to know the full reason behind participants behaviours during observations, it still holds true that in activities when the participants discovered something new or arrived at a correct conclusion, some delighted surprise and laughter or smiles were displayed.

### 4.5.3. Reasons to drop out or not to join

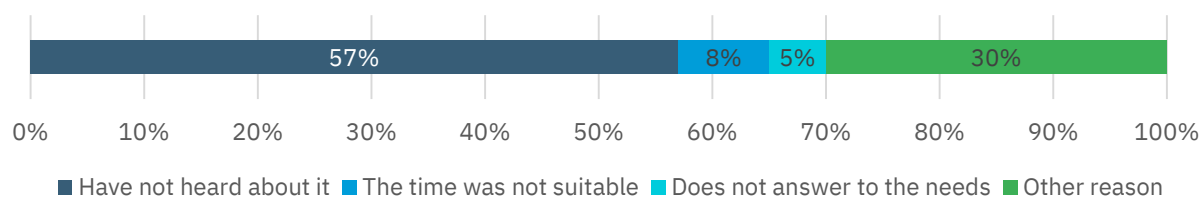
Our findings have identified three main reasons why newly-arrived migrants do not attend the programme: 1) miscommunication about the Welcoming Programme and a general lack of awareness of it, 2) conflicting lifestyles and schedules and general accessibility, and 3) the perceived irrelevance of the programme (see also Figure 4.27). This confirms, therefore, the results from the Civitta research<sup>87</sup> (see also Figure 4.28 and Figure 4.29).

**Figure 4.28.** "Please specify if there are any aspects that could be improved in the Welcoming Programme?"

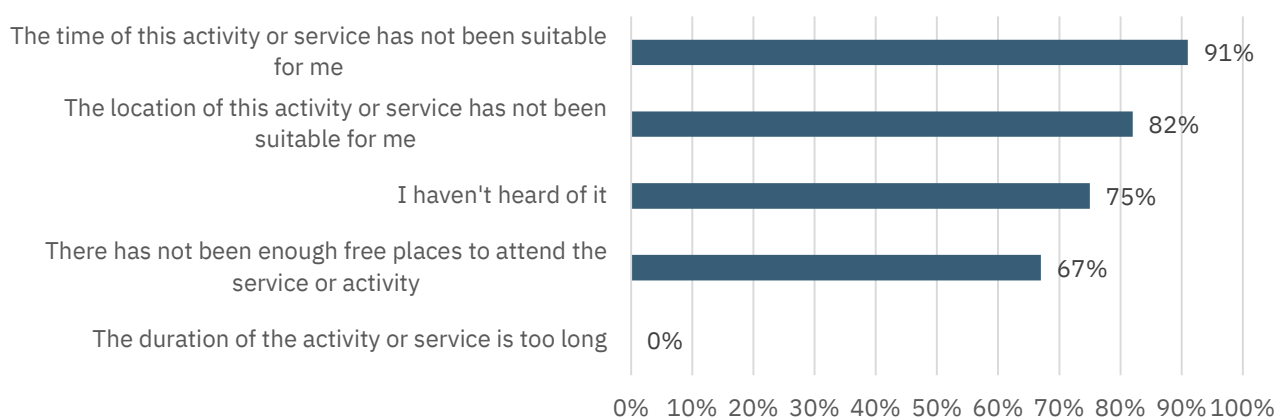


<sup>87</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 31, 47.

**Figure 4.29.** Main reasons why newly arrived migrants have not attended the Welcoming Programme (n=280; Civitta 2019)



**Figure 4.30.** Reasons not to join in the opinion of those newly arrived migrants who see that Welcoming Programme is important for them or who are interested in attending the programme (n=280), Civitta<sup>88</sup>



A miscommunication of the Welcoming Programme refers to participants interpreting the Welcoming Programme in a different way than its stakeholders' intend it to be interpreted. Some non-participants reported learning about the Welcoming Programme after their participation eligibility period has passed and a lack of understanding the Welcoming Programme's schedules, costs, structure, and requisites.<sup>89</sup>

Miscommunication is therefore also connected with a lack of awareness about the programme and confirms the need to examine current communication activities (see also chapter 4.2, 4.3.2). Just a little over half of respondents to our online survey (55%, n=884; respondents were persons who had registered to some of the modules) found that there is no need for the improvement of the awareness of the existence of the programme, yet 75% of respondents to Civitta's questionnaire who perceived that this kind of programme is important, did not know about the programme.<sup>90</sup> In the WiE survey, 66% of respondents had not used the [settleinestonia.ee](http://settleinestonia.ee) webpage and 80% of them had not heard about the WP<sup>91</sup>, thus indicating serious problems in the communication.

Moreover, besides the direct target group (newly arrived migrants) of the programme, our research also indicates problems in awareness within different organisations that are active in the field of newly arrived

<sup>88</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahendamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 31.

<sup>89</sup> See also Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahendamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 56.

<sup>90</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahendamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 31.

<sup>91</sup> Anniste, K., Masso, M. (2019). Work in Estonia sihtrühmade välisvõrbamise protsessi kogemuse ja rahulolu uuringud 2019. Tallinn: Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis.

foreigners or migrants in general, e.g. Police and Border Guard Board officers, local government employees, unions and employers, who theoretically should know about the programme (see also chapter 4.1).

Conflicting lifestyle and accessibility problems were mentioned by most of the non-participants as a reason for not joining the Welcoming Programme. Reasons included the lack of scheduling flexibility, the perceived lack of opportunities for parents to bring their children to the modules or language course, conflict of schedules with other activities, living too far from the course (geographical location of trainings), lack of available places for trainings, and a general lack of free time (see also chapters 4.4.1 and 4.5.2).

In our online survey, one of the most common answers for not attending related to the eligibility to participate due to visa-related issues<sup>92</sup> or due to holding Estonian citizenship. Inconvenient class scheduling was reported in our online survey as the first and main reason for cancelling the attendance in the language course.<sup>93</sup>

The last category of reasons not to join included foreigners' belief that the relevant information for living in Estonia can be found elsewhere: that it can be acquired by experiences, or has already been acquired, the belief that it is enough for one member of the family to attend and collect the relevant information for everyone, and, lastly, finding the format of the Welcoming Programme unattractive and scholarly (see also chapter 4.5.1).

The reasons for leaving a thematic module or dropping out of the language training can be grouped into two main categories, which are also one of the main reasons not to attend the programme at all: Welcoming Programme not meeting the participants' expectations and conflicting schedules.<sup>94</sup>

The expectations relate to the expected content, format, and perceived results of the Welcoming Programme and the real service and the experience. In this group are the foreigner's perceived irrelevance of the topics learned and taught, disappointment with the quality and utility of materials and the answers to questions provided by the trainers, a lack of practical answers to specific questions and, in the case of the language module, a lack of usable, practical information to relate to Estonians (i.e. one interviewee reported learning the patterns of fabric, but not being able to discuss football matches with Estonian acquaintances), too slow or too fast coverage of topics and lastly, not finding relevant acquaintances or social contacts (see also chapter 4.4.1, 4.5).

Conflicting schedules, including a lack of time to participate in long training days (thematic modules), and a lack of constant availability (language modules)<sup>95</sup>, e.g. schedules that conflicted with the proposed dates of thematic modules or language groups, lack of language courses in certain city/ language<sup>96</sup>. Long thematic modules and tiredness are one of the main reasons to leave before the foreseen ending time or not to attending another module. Few interviewees also mentioned some breaks being unnecessary or unwarrantedly long, and

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<sup>92</sup> Research showed that there have been several cases where persons have used short-term visa with a hope to extend it or change it to long-term visa. Therefore, by the time person receives long-term visa, he/she may have lived in Estonia so long that he/she does not see the programme valuable anymore.

<sup>93</sup> 35% of those who cancelled/stopped attending the language course, marked that they cancelled due to inconvenient class scheduling. 53% mentioned other reasons whereby based on open answers most of the answers referred to scheduling conflicts that arose from changing personal circumstances. Therefore, it is unclear whether respondents who indicated that they cancelled/stopped attending the course due to "inconvenient class scheduling" did so because the classes were inconveniently scheduled from the beginning, or were no longer scheduled conveniently at some point in time due to changing personal circumstances. Also, based on an analysis of the answers it is questionable whether respondents thought about failing to complete or cancelling the language course.

<sup>94</sup> Based on monitoring statistics 15% of language module participants drop out of the language course. As all persons who arrive to the training of thematic module, are read as fully attended, there is no statistics about leaving earlier or arriving late.

<sup>95</sup> See also Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 32.

<sup>96</sup> According to representative of Expat Relocation they are ready to carry out more trainings if there is a need and enough participants. Unfortunately, it is not well enough communicated that potential participants should notify them if they do not find suitable training for themselves to have an overview what kind of trainings, where and in which language are needed.

information provided being at times too specific and irrelevant to the participants. For example, educating people about the financial perks attached to giving birth to triplets when none of the participants have triplets might be seen as a quirky digression, but becomes unproductive when the type of information discussed does not always match the specific needs of the respective participants.

These findings have led to some participants' decisions to drop out of the language course or to leave a thematic module. However, it is possible that other participants had the same experiences but decided to stay in the courses and modules until the end.

## 4.6. Structure

The ATONE method does not include the use of structure when analysing service design and development. However, as the Welcoming Programme has a complex organisational structure supporting it, we decided to include this additional element into our research analytical framework. Some of the elements identified here have also been mentioned in some other research made previously about the WP.

### 4.6.1. Compartmentalisation of the service

The Welcoming Programme is implemented by several actors and stakeholders who share tasks, responsibilities, information and “ownership” of the programme. This responds to the need to find competent partners in each area, who can provide parts of the service to their best capabilities and with acceptable quality. This compartmentalisation of a service is common in both public and private services and organisations, who share a central directing body and take on varied tasks of the service.

However, the structure of the WP presents several challenges, particularly in the areas of interruption or overlapping of processes, which affect sustainability and efficiency, the complexity of dividing tasks efficiently, the challenge of developing a set of shared resources, the increased need for constant communication between the providers, and the need for a strong guiding leadership.

#### Interruption or overlapping of processes

Different organisations oversee different aspects of the Welcoming Programme. Although this does not necessarily need to negatively impact upon the workings of the WP, this organisation method creates certain risks. One such risk is that an unsuccessful tender process leaves nobody in charge of one specific segment of the programme (e.g. implementation, communication, IT-development). This occurred when the tender process to find a new partner to take over the WP's communications and strategy proved to be unsuccessful. In addition, this segmented organisational structure gives rise to a responsibility on the part of the differing parties to cooperate closely to ensure the smooth operation of the WP.

#### Complexity of task division or assignment

The Welcoming Programme relies on the smooth cooperation of all service providers and partners to function. Contracts are drafted and agreed upon by the Ministry of Interior with each of the parties that successfully complete the tender process to deliver any element of the service. Partners that operate under this structure are direct service providers (Expat Relocation, IOM), the communication partner (Agenda PR) and the IT partner. These contracts divide and share the responsibilities and tasks of each of the service providers. While it might seem straightforward to distribute the tasks to each provider according to their specialisation, our research shows that in some occasions, the responsibilities overlap between different providers. Such is the case of inviting foreigners to the Welcoming Programme, which is, in part, a responsibility of communications partner, to raise awareness and call on foreigners, and, in part, a responsibility of direct service providers, as stated in their contract. The overlapping of tasks in itself is not a problem but, as also brought out in chapter

4.1, can generate some confusion between providers if not clarified and increase the complexity of evaluating their performance.

### **Shared resources**

Shared resources refer to a set of elements that could be owned by the Welcoming Programme and that any service provider could access to improve their delivery of the service. Some examples of shared resources include information about participants, collected feedback, information about the performance of advertisements (communication), tools to be used during the trainings, a common brand, know-how about communicating with foreigners, etc. However, as of now, the Welcoming Programme's providers own their unique know-how, tools and information, and if they no longer provide the service or are replaced, then another provider brings in a new set of resources. Thus, almost no systematic transfer of shared resources or knowledge takes place between different WP stakeholders. The rotation of providers is expected and is part of the nature of procurements in the public sector, but shared resources could ensure a smoother transition when this occurs.

### **Strong guiding leadership and a common goal**

Different actors by different service providers and stakeholders of the Welcoming Programme are not colleagues, even if they work together for the same service. They have their own colleagues, offices, office culture and tools; however, they are expected to align their work and collaborate for the benefit of the programme. Communication between stakeholders is of the utmost importance to ensure a timely detection of risks and problems, and to implement changes and guide the programme. Aligning all stakeholders under a common goal or service requires leadership that is aware of the challenges each provider/stakeholder faces, and a clear direction of where the group's efforts and resources should be employed. For the Welcoming Programme, the central direction is provided by the Ministry of the Interior, although plenty of freedom and flexibility are given to service providers (including trainers and language teachers) to carry out their activities as they see fit.

## **4.6.2. Time of possible participation in the service versus relevance**

Newly arrived foreigners who qualify for the Welcoming Programme can participate during their first five years in the country. However, according to questionnaire and interviews participants tend to take part in the Welcoming Programme fairly early after arrival rather than later<sup>97</sup>. The information provided during the modules also seems directed at newer immigrants, as it offers relevant pointers into settling, access to services, normalisation of daily living activities, etc. However, by the time foreigners attend some of the modules, the information may no longer be as relevant since they have acquired this information elsewhere, usually by experience. Although learning through experience is good, it is time consuming and may give several negative experiences. Therefore it is possible, through the modules, to accelerate the learning process, avoid learning from negative experiences, and to increase the certainty that foreigners know all they need to know (there is a "trap" in learning by experience as people cannot know what they do not know).

This situation raises the question of the relevance of the Welcoming Programme for those newly arrived migrants who have different levels of knowledge and experience in the country. It also raises the question as to whether more detailed profiling should be done of participants to provide the information they need, or whether different services should be provided for the "newest of the new" and for the "not-so-new of the new" (e.g. already settled-in new-migrants).

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<sup>97</sup> There is lack of high-quality statistics about participants' arrival times.

More than a problem, this behaviour seems to be an opportunity for the development of different services for migrants, or for the expansion of services provided under the current format of the Welcoming Programme.

### 4.6.3. Objectives, aim, purpose

The purpose of the Welcoming Programme is to support migration and the integration of foreigners by providing them with information on the topics of state, family matters, work and studying, as well as providing opportunities to start acquiring the language. In this regard, the Programme covers most of the topics that it aims and claims to.

However, there are some issues with this kind of agenda or goal setting, especially in practice. First of all, there is a question of the programme serving as an informational helpdesk for several other services that foreigners have problems or complications interacting with. Many foreigners attend the programme modules with the expectation of receiving help with other services, such as the PBGB, EMTA, Töötukassa, and even the family doctor (GP) system. In this regard, there is a spillover of tasks from service to service, and the Welcoming Programme is left to provide and answer for much more information than its purpose originally states it should.

Within the perspective of integration and adaptation, while the official purpose of the programme is to provide “information leading to integration” (KP määrus), the question is whether more or different activities could support integration (as well), not only the provision of information. Therefore, it is left somewhat vague – to all kinds of different stakeholders, including the foreigners themselves – whether the WP is a full-fledged integration/adaptation course (or a programme that helps migrants fully integrate into Estonian society), a settle-in Estonia programme (that supports migrants during their first few months/years in Estonia when it comes to sorting out all sorts of practical matters), or a collection of informational helpdesks (with the main purpose of the programme being one of troubleshooting; i.e. the possibility to ask questions about certain topics)?

### Processes

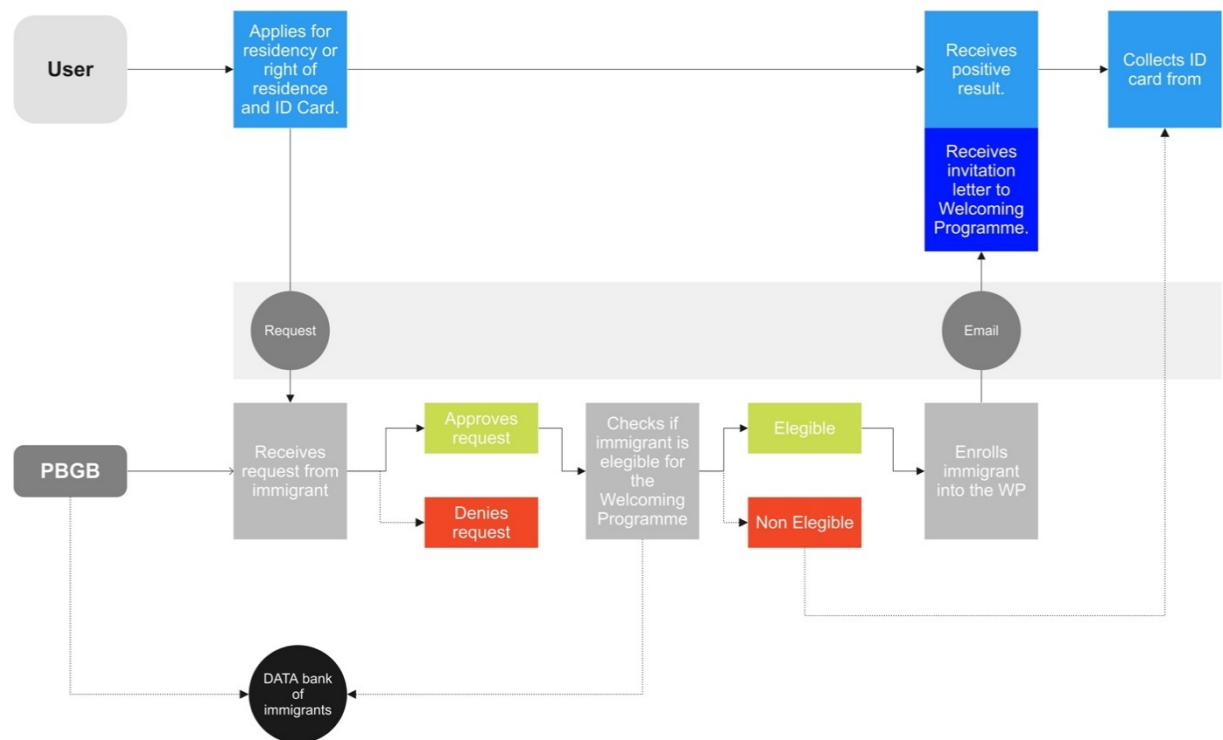
There are several key processes in the Welcoming Programme that are shared by service providers and are noticeably complex. The first one is the enrolment process carried out by the PBGB. The second one is the registration process, in which migrants sign themselves up to attend the programme. The third one is collecting feedback from the participants who attended the programme. These are the processes that were identified as being not as efficient, clear or valuable in their current state.

### Enrolment

The enrolment (not to be confused with the registration) process is carried out by the PBGB when a foreigner is eligible to participate in the Welcoming Programme, by nature of their length of stay in the country, the legal basis of the stay, etc. Enrolment is done automatically and not necessarily at foreigners' request, as can be seen in **Figure 4.30**.

The use of the term “enrolment” to describe the process causes confusion, because it alludes to the foreigner taking part in the programme, which is not the case. In the Welcoming Programme, the enrolment process is the inclusion of the foreigner into a database of eligible people that can become participants of the programme. When participants are enrolled, they receive an invitation letter to the Welcoming Programme, sent usually by email, along with a notification of the issuance of an ID-card and acceptance of residence. In previous years, participants were only communicated of their “enrolment”, but now they only receive an invitation to attend.

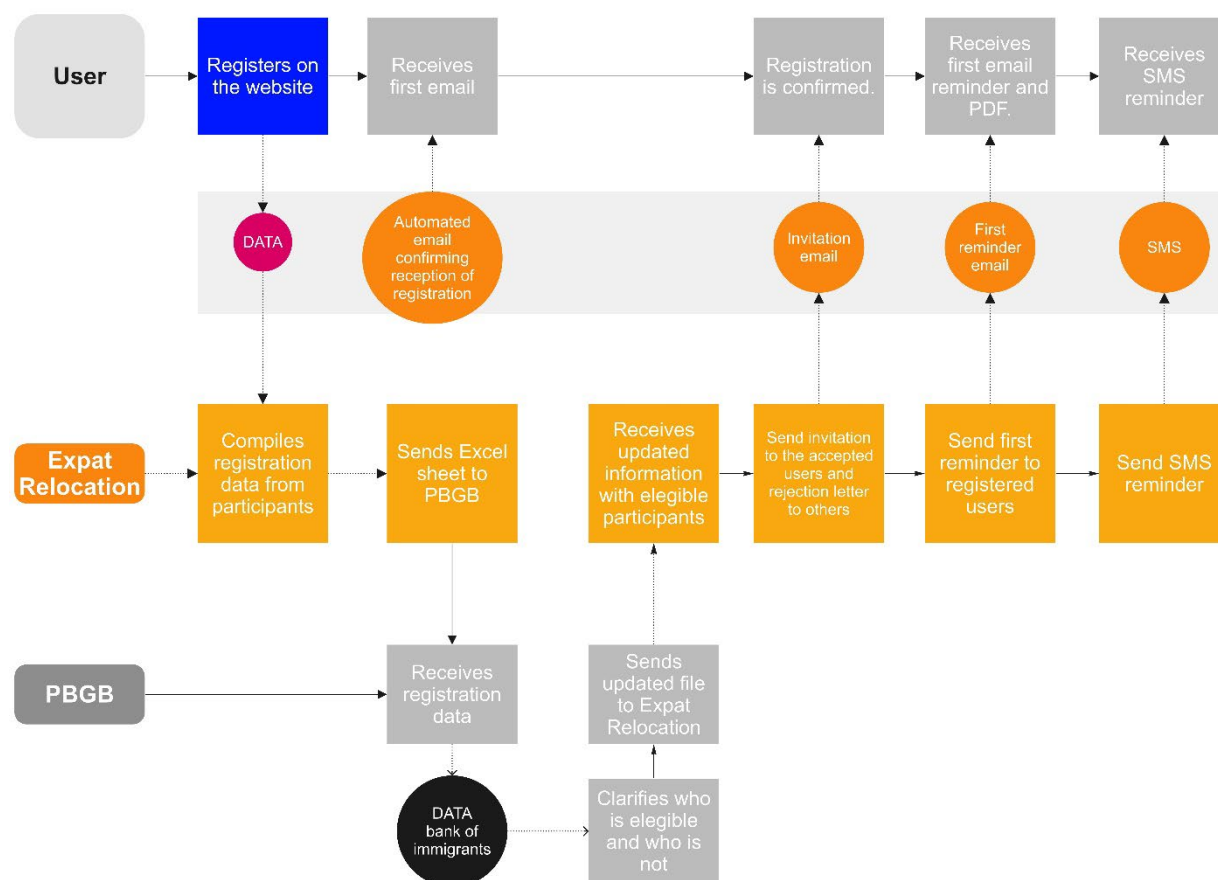
**Figure 4.31.** The enrolment process



## Registration

The registration process is when participants actively sign themselves up for a module offered by the Welcoming Programme. The registration process usually takes place through the website, although direct registration by contacting Expat Relocation or the Police and Border Guard Board is also available in some cases. The current registration process includes a series of background actions that are not visible to the participants, during which the service provider confirms participants' eligibility with the PBGB (see Figure 4.31).

**Figure 4.32.** Registration process.



As can be seen in **Figure 4.31**, after the participant registers for a module or language course, an exchange of information between them and the service provider ensues. At least four communications are exchanged between the provider and the registered participant before their attendance to the module. The website only permits registration to one module at a time, i.e. participants cannot register to more than one module at once, however, in theory, if the participant were to register to four modules and provide a phone number they could receive up to 12 communications from the service provider.

It is also pertinent to point out that while the foreigner registers on the “Settle in Estonia” website, many of the communications come from the service provider using their own brand. This, in conjunction with the lack of a privacy policy and GDPR compliance is problematic, as foreigners are not clearly and directly notified that their personal data will be shared with third parties who will eventually contact them.

### Collecting feedback

The process of collecting feedback is, in some cases, perceived to be duplicated by a few interviewees, as illustrated by the Ministry of Interior and Expat Relocation (see **Figure 4.32**). The feedback collected from the participants is translated to Estonian and compiled into one database within the ministry. Digitizing and analysing the data are two important tasks to make it accessible for the service providers to improve their delivery of the service. As digitizing and analysing the data is time consuming, it is recommended to optimise the collection of feedback, perhaps through electronic mediums that already digitize the data, without a person needing to be assigned to do so.

```
graph LR
    User[User] --> A[Answers test]
    A --> B[Fills in feedback form]
    B --> C[Receives email requesting feedback]
    C --> D[Receives certificate of participation]

    Trainer[Trainer or language teacher] --> E[Gives test to participants]
    E --> F[Hands out feedback form to participants]
    F --> G[Gives feedback formats to Expat Relocation]

    Expat[Expat Relocation] --> H[Gives feedback formats to trainer or language teacher]
    H --> E
    Expat --> I[Receives feedback from trainers and teachers]
    I --> F
    Expat --> J[Checks that all participants have provided feedback]
    J --> K[Shares the documents with Ministry of Interior]
    K --> L[Sends email to participants asking for feedback and inviting them to more modules]
    L --> C
    Expat --> M[Creates and sends certificates to foreigners]
    M --> D
    Expat --> N[Receives feedback from the Ministry of Interior]
    N --> O[Shares feedback with trainers]
    O --> G

    Ministry[Ministry of Interior] --> P[Gives feedback format to Expat]
    P --> H
    Ministry --> Q[Translates and compiles all feedback]
    Q --> K
    Ministry --> R[Analyses feedback]
    R --> N
```

Flexibility refers to the possibility to change and adapt the programme to adverse circumstances or unexpected events. Our research shows that the Programme is not overly flexible or adaptable. Several aspects of the programme point to this assertion. For example, there are sets of topics that need to be covered regardless of a group's characteristics, thus, when the programme receives less participants it is not modified quickly. Service providers have limited influence over the programme and changes need to be approved by several stakeholders, training dates and times are agreed upon six months in advance (there is some flexibility as according to Expat Relocation additional trainings have been carried out if there has been higher need for some of the modules), and trainers do not have room for improvisation in the classroom. However, there is possibility for in-house trainings and quite often family and children module are carried out at the same time to support the attendance of family members.

<sup>98</sup> According to a representative of Expat Relocation it is possible to attend just some parts of the module and arrive later or leave earlier according to that. According to research this possibility is not known of. In the case of the observed modules this was not mentioned either before or during the session and the schedule of the thematical module was introduced to participants just in the beginning of the session. During observations several cases were noticed when people were late or left earlier, but this did not seem to be connected with topics.

with little or no notice<sup>99</sup>, the inability to choose the trainers, the inability to choose and create one's own curriculum, the modules not considering participants' previous experience or knowledge on the topic, etc.

The Welcoming Programme offers the same modules for every foreigner, even though their needs, expectations, experiences, and desires differ considerably. The current Welcoming Programme provides a “one size fits all” solution (with the exception of the International Protection module), regardless of whether participants would benefit from a more personalised approach to the training. These aspects are relevant in that they impact the experience of the service for the users, and the experience of the work for the stakeholders. Building personalisation and offering customised possibilities for users impacts the structure of the Welcoming Programme, its processes and its dynamics. Organisational change is needed to put any of these recommendations in place, which addresses the first topic regarding the lack of flexibility. Our recommendation in this regard would be to consider different structures that support the value delivery, as well as reconsidering what the value of the Programme is for different groups of foreigners (see specific and more detailed recommendations in chapter 9).

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<sup>99</sup> According to representative of Expat Relocation and statistics it is possible to change the dates and times (in case of language course) but it is not communicated about the programme.

## 5. ESTONIAN LANGUAGE LEARNING MODULE

The Language module of the Welcoming Programme is held in a number of different Estonian cities, primarily Tallinn, Narva and Tartu. The Language module is carried out in two languages (English and Russian) and is one of the most popular modules of the Welcoming Programme (WP). According to the research survey, learning the Estonian language was one of the main motivations for attending the Welcoming Programme for the majority (54%) of attendees.

The data collection of the Welcoming Programme Language module was carried out using a WP themed survey, interviews, and observations of the language lessons. Since certain trends were different in the English-based and Russian-based language groups, these differences are also brought out in the analysis where relevant.

### 5.1. Motivation to learn Estonian: practical, emotional, social

The **practical motivation** of new migrants is mainly connected to **everyday life and the labour market**. The need to use the language in more critical everyday situations is relevant for both English-speaking and Russian-speaking learners, but more so for English-speaking attendees (*“The main reason I participated [...] was because I had issue communicating with locals, especially at the shopping stores”*), Russian-speaking learners have a less critical need to learn “the shop-level Estonian” since they can manage in Russian. However, Russian speakers say twice as often as English speakers that Estonian is important for them, because they want to stay in Estonia for a longer period (including applying for citizenship in some cases), and they also perceive that knowing Estonian is crucial for their careers.

The **emotional motivation** of new migrants is connected to their wish to know at least the basics of the language of the country of their current residence: it is considered to be **respectful towards the country, and to be helpful to feel more comfortable and secure**.

While the emotional motivation is important for both Russian-speakers and English-speakers, the two groups describe their motivation in slightly different terms. Russian speakers often mention their wish “to master the state language”, whereas English-speakers describe their wish in terms of “knowing the language to be able to communicate with locals”. Thus, the English speakers are also more in need emotionally, in terms of being able to talk with the locals who do not speak English (*“[...] to communicate with locals”*) and curiosity (*“[...] would be nice to learn a new language and it's good to learn the native language of where I live”*). Russian-speakers focus more on respecting the expectations of the state (*“to feel more comfortable in the new country, and so that the country would feel more comfortable about me”*), and at the same time there is a more pressing need to feel accepted, because virtually all the Russian-speaking migrants who participated in the interviews have come across some reluctance/negative reactions from the Estonian side:

“I was buying veggies at the market, asked in Estonian [...] probably didn’t get it fully right, because the seller started nagging about ‘them living here for 20 years and still not knowing the language’” or “we stood there, speaking Russian to each other and then some old person behind us got angry ‘why do we speak Russian if we live in Estonia’”.

Sometimes the negative feedback came from a person who was perceived to be somehow “official” and sometimes it happened at a time where the person was more exposed or vulnerable:

“[the] Gynaecologist asked me what is my name – I had just arrived, I didn’t understand what she is asking. And then she simply started shouting that I could at least have learned how to say my name.”

**Social motivation** is about seeing the language course as a way to **better get to know Estonia and to also find a network**: both Russian-speakers and English-speakers mention that they chose the language course because they want to know more about the country, and its culture, traditions, etc. In addition, both groups mention that they were motivated by the expectation of getting to know others in the same situation and build up their networks in the new country.

### Suggestions:

All in all, the motivation of new migrants is a combination of multiple factors. Identifying a learner’s motivation is an important aspect of expectation management. For the adult learner, it is especially important to understand whether and how the course corresponds to the aims the learner has set for themselves. Identifying the motivation can also help to set or adjust the goals, and can provide a good foundation for explaining the broader context: e.g. migrants who belong to large language groups might need additional insight to understand the symbolic value of the language and interpret the expectations of Estonians regarding language use:

“At first I was really confused: why you need me to speak Estonian, if you know Russian – I was completely disoriented!”

Identifying the motivation can help to better adjust the service provided by the WP. Thus, if the expectation that participation in the WP will help to establish a network, the language course can provide plenty of opportunities for the participants to get to know each other better (as part of learning), but the participants can also be encouraged to do something together outside of the classroom. Identifying the pragmatic motivation of the learner can help to support the learner by including words that are relevant to the person or by directing the learner to the additional resources. Also, while the migrants express a desire to get a better understanding of Estonian culture and/or life in Estonia, this is not currently an intrinsic part of the language module. There are different options to address this expectation - from including more of these topics or systematically providing the participants with information about regional/local opportunities, which requires cooperation with local level organisations, e.g. Culture Step in Tallinn, Culture Gate in Tartu, ReInvent Yourself, The Spouses’ programme, etc.

## 5.2. Organisation of the Language module of the WP

The WP Language module is held in a number of different Estonian cities (Tallinn, Tartu, Narva) in English or Russian. The lessons are normally twice a week, 2.5-3 hours at a time, with a total course length of 2.5-3 months. The language lessons are held at a variety of venues (such as universities or local centres) but

companies can also ask for an in-house language course for their employees. The training materials are developed for Expat Relocation by language expert Marju Ilves<sup>100</sup>.

Lessons times vary, e.g. in January 2020 Russian speakers in Narva and English speakers in Tartu will be able to join language lessons in the evenings, Russian speakers in Tallinn can choose between morning and evening sessions and English speaker in Tallinn can choose between the afternoon or evening.

### 5.2.1. Organisational aspects and knowledge of the WP Language module

The research identified a number of organisational aspects that hinder participation or learning. For example, several respondents of the survey mentioned that the Language module is not available close enough to their place of residence (*"They were happening either too far in the future, too far from Tartu, or were fully booked"*) or not in a language the learner speaks: *"In 2017, it was not possible to have a Basic Estonian course in Russian"*. As to locations that did not have courses, Haapsalu, Pärnu, Keila, Paldiski, Rakvere, Põlva, Sillamäe and Võru were specifically mentioned.

On one hand, it is understandable that language lessons are indeed not offered in many, many locations: in cities with few new migrants it is difficult to gather a group that would be big enough to make it economically efficient.

On the other, it may also be a problem that, although Language modules were held, potential participants did not have knowledge of the WP. Additionally, in some locations language modules have not been provided due to a perceived lack of need or target group, e.g. in 2017-2018 in Tartu there were no modules in Russian and the only way to join a module was to join the English group. On the organisers side, there were doubts whether a language group in Russian would be feasible to have and whether it would be needed. At the same time it is clear that there are many new Russian speaking migrants in Tartu, but in order to reach this target group the information about the WP would need to be provided in a clearer, more active, and attractive manner, and through the relevant channels.

#### Suggestions:

Effective awareness raising requires a preliminary mapping of the target group and potential partners – companies, NGOs, municipal or governmental institutions, etc. Additionally, effort needs to be made into making it easier to find related information in the most popular search engines, since as of now, a Google search for "learn Estonian language" yields limited references to the WP Language module, both in English and Russian.

As with other thematic modules, it would be useful to agree with the PBGB that in addition to the invitation email (which sometimes lands in spam folder), officials would also mention the WP to new migrants while issuing documents. In addition to the PBGB, it is important to identify other partners who might be interested in passing on the information, such as local level contact points, institutions and organisations (international houses, culture programmes, the unemployment office, etc.). It would also be useful to make better use of social media, taking into account the specifics of the target group – e.g. Facebook and Instagram might have different generations as audiences, and Telegram or VK might be used by Russian speakers more than Facebook, etc. – keeping in mind that one needs to advertise a concrete activity (learning Estonian) rather than only an abstract programme.

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<sup>100</sup> Materials for students and methodological materials for teachers.

Regarding the languages, it is also important to take into account that in the cities of a noticeable residence rate of English or Russian speakers it would be useful to provide opportunities to study in these languages.

Finally, it is important to clearly explain the conditions of participation – including repeating cancelled participation – in the WP Language module, so this information would be easy to find for former participants who cancelled the programme

### 5.2.2. Course and lesson times

The main barrier to participation, according to the interviews carried out for the report, is an **unsuitability of lessons times**. The overlap of lesson times with work or other important events is a hindrance both to the new migrants who would like to study but have not started [NP1] (*“Time table for the language course was bad for person who's working”*), as well as to those who cancel (*“My work Schedule changed and I could not continue attending at the same time”, “I would like to see that I could choose morning or evening course, I work [...] I was not allowed to be in the morning course”*). Also, if a person is working shifts and the work times constantly change, it is not possible to continue participation with the same group.

Also, research by Civitta shows that one of the main reasons for cancelling is the unsuitability of lesson times. As of now, the opportunities to change groups or more flexibly attend several groups, are limited and participants do not have a clear understanding of the scope of flexible attendance. Some (potential) participants do ask the coordinator of the language lessons or the teacher about the level of flexibility available – therefore it is important that teachers also know what the conditions for changes are. However, not all participants will ask – there are also participants who assume that it is not possible because they were never told that it is, thus this information has to be provided proactively and participants should at least be encouraged to get in touch with the service provider to discuss their individual situation.

**The long wait time** was also mentioned as one of the barriers to participation, and it is important to consider how this factor could be improved, since a number of interviewees mentioned that motivation is higher earlier on:

**“Need to wait too long to start. I arrived in March, got my permit in late May, couldn't start classes until September”; “I had to wait for half a year before entering the programme because there were no morning lessons”, “I wanted to participate in the Language module when I first arrived but had to wait several months before a new class began. At that point, I was [already] unhappy with both my employment and Estonia.”**

#### Suggestions:

It is clear that it is not possible to find times that suit everyone. The WP has, throughout the years, increased the selection of times available, which is very positive. However, to prevent cancellations and lessen non-participation, it is useful to provide opportunities to move between the groups (and make sure participants have this information). If it is not possible to provide flexibility to every person, then at least make it available to those who otherwise are not able to participate, but who can join the WP Language module in the cities where there are several parallel groups in the same language of instruction (i.e. currently in Tallinn).

It is also worth considering piloting a course in the summer – possibly in a different form, since there are many additional options for using spaces outside of a classroom.

### 5.2.3. Frequency of lessons and group size

The **large size of the groups** was repeatedly mentioned during the research as a barrier to learning. Some groups start with a rather large number of students (more than 20), which from the language learning perspective is not effective. Lesson observations showed that, at least in some large groups, the learners spent a considerable share of the lesson in a very passive role and were bored. This does not support a learner's motivation, especially since the methods used by teachers are not always effective for the active involvement of a rather large number of students. This is also reflected by the learners themselves:

“Would be better to have fewer people in one group”, “[...] groups with less people would be more effective [...] in my group, there were many people.”; “Instead of [...] classes in one place with a lot of people at the same time [...] create groups where newcomers could [...] study the language in small groups”.

According to the Welcoming Programme service provider, the groups are allowed to become so large because some learners cancel, making the group not profitable. However, too large a number of learners can, in turn, be a reason for cancelling:

“I attended one Estonian language training class and the teacher was excellent. However, there were too many students to learn efficiently. I choose to start with on-line programmes [instead].”

The participants also mention **the length of the lesson and the intensity of the course** as a problem. This is also echoed by the teachers themselves: they say that students are confused because a standard course normally lasts longer.

The structure of the course is described on the WP website as follows: 60-70 minutes of studying, 15 minutes break, and after that 60 minutes of studying. Some of the lessons observed were not structured accordingly (in some lessons participants worked 1.5-2 hours without break). The long study times can especially become an issue if the participant comes to the course after a long workday. In some cases, there is also too much material to cover during the lesson (“*The duration of the Estonian lessons was too long. Good information, but too much for one lesson*”). The observations also confirm that the amount of material covered can be too much for the learner, especially if the methods are not very active. It was observed in several lessons that the learners started yawning after the first hour, and focusing on other things. In some cases, the classroom was an additional hindrance: somewhat dark, not much air, and since the learners just sit most (if not all) of the time, it is easy to lose concentration. The research by Civitta brings out the same feedback from WP Language module learners: several hours of studying after a long workday is difficult to handle, there is too much material to cover during one lesson, and the learner feels s/he cannot follow everything, so it decreases the motivation.

Additionally, one of the reasons for cancellation pointed out by the participants is that the programme is so intense, that **missing a couple of lessons can become crucial** for being able to continue. Here, the problem is also that the current study materials do not support a person to go through the topics missed independently.

### Suggestions:

Large groups are often less effective for language learning and it is worth re-thinking the group size. Several teachers suggested that 12-16 persons in a group is the optimal size, but there are also teachers who are fine working with larger number. To mitigate the understandable financial risks, the first lesson could be organised in parallel groups, with one added group – keeping in mind the possibility that, after a while, the group size will reduce and it will be possible to join the two groups together.

It is also worth considering if a course could be made less intense; possibly, to pilot giving potential participants an array of options to choose from (e.g. 2x45 minutes and 3x45 minutes), and prolonging the total course duration accordingly. This was also suggested by a number of participants:

**“If it was a bit more relaxed and informal and at a slower pace and perhaps shorter lessons, then I think [...] would feel like a commitment that was easier to balance with the rest of your life”, “Twice a week is good, but maybe 3 months instead of 2 [...] and 1.5 hours instead of 2.5”, “[...] would be better it make more than three months so students can learn freely rather than rushing through the course.”**

To prevent cancellations due to gaps, a self-study component could be added to the study material that would be used to explain the topic that was taken in the class with some exercises. Also, (online) support hours could be proposed, during which a learner can ask questions.

It is strongly suggested to consider diversifying the teaching methods and making them more interactive, which means that the provider of the WP has to work more with supporting teachers. Suggestions regarding teaching methods are brought out in the subchapter below (methods and teaching materials).

## **5.2.4. Different language study programmes and branding**

Opportunities to study Estonian are provided by different programmes, and sometimes the migrants themselves do not know which programme they have been attending and whether they have used up their right to participate or not. In the interviews it was clear that the migrants use are different names for the WP, e.g. “police programme”, “integration programme”, “immigration programme” etc. Often the Language module of the WP is confused with the Integration Foundation language programmes, and thus it is thought that it is a programme that has very few places and is therefore extremely hard to get into.

The reason for the bewilderment is, partly, due to a weak WP brand (see the suggestions for thematic modules); and partly because there is no one place where a person can easily gain an understanding of the possibilities they have to study Estonian at their current level of knowledge.

### Suggestions:

In recent years, it has been suggested that this function could be held by Eesti keele maja, but currently the system is still lacking. In any case, wherever the “home” for such information might be, it is important to be able to give location-based advice in the context of where the person resides. In addition to the programmes provided by the state, other actors could also add their services (private sector, third sector). Such a system would also benefit for an option for users to comment and review.

### 5.2.5. Language-related attitudes

Both the survey and interviews show that motivation to learn the Estonian language is impeded by a perception of the **lack of need, especially among English speakers** (*"I personally am not interested in learning a new language, and a downside is that it's pretty much useless outside Estonia"*). In addition, attitudes of Estonians themselves can be a hindrance to learning: disencouraging the idea (*"I think when I stay here, not learning Estonian will not affect my life so much. My Estonian friends also discourage me to learn Estonian. They ask me why do you need it?"*), not being able to use it after spending time learning, and in several interviews it was mentioned that Estonians can even sometimes negatively react to foreigners speaking the Estonian language.

It does not make it easier to keep the motivation up that Estonians often correct and sometimes even ridicule mistakes (this fear is primarily expressed by Russian speakers based on experiences of the local Russian community). And very often Estonians switch to English or Russian or even if they keep speaking Estonian, there is no practice of adjusting the pace and vocabulary.

The question of how to make learning Estonian more popular among the new migrants is not a new one. Some lesson observations showed that teachers try to approach it from the perspective of exclusivity: you study something that is rather unique and not many people know; another argument during observations was that the teacher encouraged using basic polite sentences, explaining that it makes Estonians more friendly. However, these isolated suggestions may or may not have an impact on the motivation of the learner or match a learners real life experience – and in any case, this does not have an impact on those who do not join the course altogether.

#### Suggestions:

The idea of a lack of need of knowing the Estonian language is difficult to solve. It is a long and complex process to change the perceptions of foreigners, and the habits of Estonians, it demands a coordinated effort and will take long time.

It is important to work towards increasing the understanding of Estonians in terms of how an individual can make an impact in supporting non-native speakers in mastering the language. There are many topics and issues to look closer into, but it would be worth analysing whether the fact that the Estonian language is such a strong identity marker may also sometimes become the reason for Estonians having a hard time, emotionally, accepting the use of the Estonian language by "undesirable" groups, be they Russian speakers or visually different groups, e.g. persons of colour. How to provide more opportunities for new migrants to be exposed to the Estonian language also needs to be considered – e.g. immersion if the linguistic environment is part of the course.

To support the motivation of migrants and develop arguments for the possible benefits of the learning, an important aspect is to cover the different motivation clusters and address both the symbolic and pragmatic value of knowing Estonian. A number of interviewees had, based on their own experience, positive/supportive messages, so these kinds of messages could be gathered, analysed and communicated to other migrants. Some of the messages that were brought up during this research are as follows:

**“It’s easier to make friends if you speak the language, especially here where they take it so seriously.”**

**“Estonians are often too focused on not making mistakes when they speak English and they do not really feel comfortable [...] so you can see how the moment we start speaking Estonian they open themselves up completely.”**

**“I figured out that to be able to communicate was the first key and since it was free I felt why not. And with the small basic that I learned I was able to get a job, thanks for the programme.”**

**“If you have Estonian language on the master level, then it opens so many doors, even for jobs, but you need to have a cause for it. [...] a really good job or if you’re married, to settle in Estonia for establishing startup [...]”**

**“...at work we can not translate using google, you shouldn’t transfer confidential information outside of company networks. Our company’s dictionary is terrible. Those little thing happen and then you feel – oh crap, I wish I knew Estonian.”**

## **5.2.6. Not qualifying for the module**

The holders of an Estonian citizenship repeatedly expressed their disappointment in not qualifying for the WP. From their perspective, they have the same needs as other new migrants and the fact that – as opposed to other foreigners – they cannot get support from the programme, makes them feel rejected and not valued by Estonian state:

**“[...] but I have never lived here before because my Estonian parent lived abroad, Hence [...] I didn’t speak Estonian and absolutely NOBODY gave the least care to help me start my life as another Estonian [...] you should include in the website that it is better to be a resident and NEVER want Estonian papers since having Estonian papers [...] you will be getting ½ of the benefits you would get as an immigrant seeking residence only”. The other group that does not qualify for the WP are D-visa holders.**

### **Suggestions:**

If accepting the groups who currently do not qualify is still not possible in the future, and cannot be changed, it is very important that the person who responds to such a request (e.g. the contact person for the WP or the PBGB person) does not only pass along the information about non-availability, but also refers further information about the institutions or organisations that can provide support, incl. language learning. The need is clear for both citizenship holders (if they have not had a close connection to the country prior to arriving) and D-visa holders who plan to stay longer but did not fit into the quota.

## **5.2.7. Parents of small children and participation**

Both the interviews and social media analysis (Part I of the research) show that participation with children is complicated. It is repeatedly mentioned that attending the language course was not possible for the parent who is taking care of a small child:

**“I am sad that Estonian courses are not held on weekends. I live in Estonia already for a year and have not been able to use the opportunity – there is no one I can leave the child with [...] It is hard to combine with kindergarten or afternoon school”. There are also parents who’d like to attend along with the child but this is normally not allowed by the WP: “I wanted to participate with my child, but I was told [by the programme] better not.”**

#### Suggestions:

Participants with children are most likely not a large target group and it is difficult to take steps to meet their needs without a risk of compromising the work atmosphere in the classroom. However, providing an opportunity to have language classes on the weekends would be helpful; also cooperating with other institutions and organisations that work with the parents of small children could be considered a move towards integrated language learning.

## 5.3. Methods and study material

The methods of the Estonian Language module are described on the website as follows: *“Audial and visual training materials as well as games are also used in the language training course.”*

The Estonian Language module uses materials that are specifically created for the WP “A1 Estonian Language training materials”. The material has a workbook for students to use and keep (in the English or Russian language accordingly). There is also a methodical guide for teachers that includes suggestions for lessons and a Powerpoint presentation to use in the first lesson. The course also meant to use Keelekliik (the language programme for independent learning) for students’ homework and some teachers occasionally use it in the lessons.

The material itself is in essence rather traditional, but the methodical guidebook has a number of suggestions on how to make lessons more active, and how to occasionally include games in teaching.

### 5.3.1. Learners’ feedback

Feedback sheet statistics shows that participants’ evaluation of the language module is positive: the average score is 4.7. However, both the survey and the interviews bring out shortcomings in the course. One important aspect is that feedback is currently given only by those who graduate from the course – thus, approximately 15% of the learners do not give feedback. It is also questionable to ask for feedback at the end of the course: for the learners, the process is finished, the first lessons and the initial experience might be forgotten – and, in addition, they feel that giving the feedback will not help them personally anymore.

There are also other factors that can prevent participants from giving negative feedback: during the course, the learners develop a relationship with the teacher and for many participants it is a positive one (teachers are often hailed as friendly), which makes it harder to give negative feedback. Also, especially in Russian focus group interviews, it was clear that participants are so positive about the sole fact that the state provides free opportunities for migrants, that it feels unfair to criticise anything.

#### Suggestions:

It is more effective to ask for feedback as the course is ongoing, and also to consider ways to ask for feedback from those who cancel. It is suggested to engage an adult educator for designing the feedback sheet.

### 5.3.2. Identifying the needs of learners and expectation management

As with other modules, it is also important in the language learning to take into account the background of the learner and to identify the needs of the learner. Currently needs are not evaluated and learner motivation is not mapped. Before the first lesson the teacher only knows (based on the ID code) the age and gender of the learner. Not all teachers ask the learners about their background (e.g. whether they know other languages) or their expectations towards the course: in interviews with teachers only a few teachers could name the motivation of a learner with certainty, generally motivation was guessed at based on loose cues.

The new migrants come across as a rather heterogeneous target group, with different motivations and backgrounds – which is new for many language teachers, as until recently groups mostly consisted of local Russian-speakers. There can be learners who do not feel very confident with the alphabet, there are learners who have not previously studied any foreign languages – or have studied back in their schooldays and are thus only consider “proper” learning to be a certain way.

Not knowing the background and needs of the learners makes it harder for the teacher to adjust the learning. E.g. during observations it was noted that a teacher came with examples from a language the learners do not know and, thus, the examples do not promote the creation of associations, but rather become an additional burden to the learner.

#### Suggestions:

Mapping the motivation of the learner should become part of the WP; mapping could be started at the time of registration, but it is also worth taking up the topic of learners’ motivation in the lessons (which could be also used for increasing the motivation). Some teachers might need support to know how to do it – either methodically or just in order to better understand why motivation is important, what impacts motivation, etc., which could be provided in a training for teachers.

### 5.3.3. First lesson

The first lesson is meant to be held according to pre-prepared Powerpoint slides. However, there is some criticism regarding these obligatory slides from observers, participants and sometimes even the teachers’ sides. There is too much information, including irrelevant information and grammar that makes participants feel that Estonian is very complicated. In addition, slides may make participants feel that the following lessons will be rather passive (in some cases during the first one and a half hours participants have only had the chance to say “I am... I am from.”).

There is very little to no expectation management for the learners. While some teachers interviewed expressed the opinion that participants do understand what the A1 level can provide, it might not be so. The participants should be made aware of what can be achieved in terms of language learning during the module period and what A1 means. As of now, participants tend to express disappointment:

**“I expected that after I complete it I will gain more knowledge and will be able to understand more and speak on different topics”; “Would love to have the option to take the A1 course again, or have A2 provided as well. I don’t feel capable of really speaking much even though I passed the course.”; “Well... kind of children level of knowledge... what would I go with that?”; “I did (an) A1 course and I can’t speak on the level of kids.”**

It is also clear that just stating 'A1 level' is not enough for people to understand whether the program is relevant for them, whether it is for people who have never had any Estonian experience, or for those who have already learned some. This increases the probability of groups consisting of people of different levels:

**“You could check if the groups has any knowledge of the language, because my teacher had a hard time trying to balance the previous knowledge of a few people in my class to those with no knowledge at all.”**

The differences in level is not a problem per se, but then the teacher needs to have a set of skills to work with such a group.

#### Suggestions:

The first lesson might affect whether participants decide to continue, and it should be more representative of how the following lessons will look – as of now, the first lesson is even more passive than the following lessons. The first lesson is a good opportunity to explain the content, aims and methods of the course so participants get a realistic picture of the module. The first lesson should definitely be active, spark the interest of the learner, be very simple and mitigate fears.

### 5.3.4. Topics and grammar

The feedback from the learners repeatedly indicates that the content of the lessons does not correspond to needs and is overloaded with information. At the same time, it was also repeatedly brought out that there is too much focus on grammar (*“The language course needs to be more useful, e.g. not include grammatical theory, but practical themes for conversations”*) which was also confirmed in lesson observations. Also, sometimes the teachers use professional slang to explain grammar, which might not be understandable for some participants:

**“Estonian grammar is based on German, then turned to 14 cases - but do not worry about that. It is a beginner course. We do not use prepositions, we use suffix, but you need to know first 3 forms of the word, but no worries... [...] we never mark palatalisation like in some other languages... [...] it is diminutive of...”**

Such an introduction to the Estonian language will not increase motivation – rather it will create bewilderment.

There are, of course, also learners who want to have grammar. This wish was mainly expressed by Russian speakers, which might indicate that learners refer to the methods that are deemed appropriate in their country of origin.

For an adult learner, it is important to understand what they are doing and why. Therefore, it is worth taking time to explain how language acquisition happens, and what the learner themselves can do to increase their language proficiency – especially if the person lacks the experience of (an effective) language learning. Learners who are focused on grammar and feel the need to develop it can be referred to additional resources that would help them develop this part. However, the most important thing is to encourage the learners to use the language without the fear of making mistakes.

### 5.3.5. Active versus passive approach to language learning

One of the biggest challenges is that – despite website of the WP promising active learning methods, and the methodical also guide suggesting the use of diverse methods, including some references to games – some of the teachers seem to mostly be keeping to the traditional methods of teaching. This leads to some lessons being rather passive and not providing a lot of opportunities to practice the language.

The desire to practice the language is expressed in the feedback sheets, the survey, and the interviews. It is known that, for many new migrants, it is difficult to find opportunities to practice Estonian outside of the course. The often-cited reason is the difficulty of establishing deeper contacts with Estonians – this disappointment is expressed by both English- and Russian-speakers:

**“When I came to Estonia I was enrolled for an Estonian class. But then I came to an understanding that why should I learn it when they do not want to talk to me.”**

Also, this research confirms the findings of a number of previous researches, that Estonians are in general not very good at supporting foreigners in practicing Estonian – people either switch languages (*“Estonians switch to English no matter how hard you try to speak in Estonian”*), or do not realise that the language could be adapted to be easier than normally:

**“I do speak some Estonian. If I speak to someone else, they speak to me exactly the same speed and vocabulary as if I speak completely perfectly, it’s difficult to take that”.**

Since second language acquisition happens most effectively while practicing, it is also the biggest need that the course should cover. The hindrance can be the group size, but also the methods – the use of interactive methods would also allow the accommodation of more practice in large groups. It is also possible to diversify the lesson by inviting Estonian speakers to the class or by referring learners to other available opportunities (such as language clubs, language nights, etc.), or by moving some of the learning outside of the class. Some teachers already do this, while some teachers feel that it demands too much effort. Sometimes, the teachers would like to be more active, but it would demand earlier access to the classroom to be able to reorganise it, and in some cases it is currently not possible

It is important that teachers have access to the rooms and equipment necessary to diversify the methods and make lessons more interactive. It is also crucial that teachers have proper theoretical knowledge about how language acquisition happens and knowledge about active methods. This demands work with teachers – arranging teacher trainings or supporting other means of teacher development. Additionally, it is possible to encourage the learners to discuss how they could start increase their opportunities to practice the language.

### 5.3.6. Role of Keeleklikk in the module

Currently, WP Estonian language module is closely connected to the Keeleklikk self-study online program. Keeleklikk is used as homework, and also in the lessons. This creates a number of issues: firstly, Keeleklikk has

throughout long periods had technical problems (the program does not open on phones and certain browsers are not supported)<sup>101</sup> which makes it difficult to the new migrants to use:

**„I am not from here, I do not have computer, I only have a phone... but homework is given from the website that only opens in computer?“.**

Secondly, it is questionable whether giving homework to adult learners makes much sense. The interviewed teachers of the WP Language module state that homework is a part of the course but are of different opinion about the importance of the homework: some see it as necessary to complete the course, while some see it as an added aspect for the participants who are motivated to learn more.

It is important to keep in mind that an adult learner generally has many other responsibilities and tasks, which is reflected by the learners themselves:

**„If we can make room for people to take the courses at their pace due to other engagements then it will be already very useful“.**

Even if the homework is relevant and engaging (and here, learners have different opinions about whether Keeleklikk is or not), the learners will have different legitimate reasons for not being able to handle it, and having part of the group who has done homework, and part of the group who has not, might have negative impact on dynamics of the learning.

#### Suggestions:

It is more important that all participants can be fully engaged in the lesson, therefore, it might be worth to consider focusing on class hours instead, so that all 80 hours are in class (instead of the current 60/20 system) and consider if homework could be dropped. It is also important to develop the learning materials further, both to better match real life situations, and also to provide learners with the opportunity to fill any gaps that arise from missed lessons.

## **5.4. WP encourages to start learning Estonian – what next?**

Today, the WP has a great symbolic value: migrants perceive it as a welcoming and caring message from the state, this is mentioned by English-speakers and even more by Russian-speakers.

The new migrants often come across the opinion that the Estonian language is very hard to master. In this context, motivation to learn a difficult language that is used on a very small scale, remains rather low. The fact that the program is offered free of charge does effectively support entering language learning in a comfortable and risk-free way. At the same time, it also means that the WP has good potential to provide an experience that lessens the fear of the language, thus, also making an impact in changing the dominant opinion of foreigners. This can be done with real-life-related materials and active and engaging methods. Today, the participants of the module still reflect this belief that the Estonian language is hard.

Many new migrants find that mastering the A1 level is not enough to manage their life in Estonia effectively; A1 is just a start. Therefore it is important that participants of the WP get relevant and up-to-date information

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<sup>101</sup> See e.g. [ERR](#), [Postimees](#)

about further opportunities to study Estonian, since not finding a suitable opportunity to continue language learning is one of the foreigners' main concerns. There are many reasons for that: not having the information about the opportunities, paid courses are too expensive, free courses are full, and sometimes next level courses are just not available. There are also discrepancies between different "A1 levels" – meaning that after graduating from the Welcoming Programme's A1 a person might not be prepared enough to go to another provider's A2 level.

### Suggestions:

It would be good if the WP could add the next language level: A2; especially since it is the first level that is certified. Additionally, it is essential that people who want to learn Estonian can find information about the availability of options in their geographical area in one place. As it is currently, there is no one place for learners to be referred to find the information about local opportunities for language learning, it would be helpful if the WP gathered this information and had it available and updated for learners, also after graduation.

However, the problem of further language learning is also a broader one: there is a lack of teachers of Estonian as a second language, and this is a problem that can not be solved by the WP alone, but needs a coordinated effort between different actors, and could possibly be taken up by the Ministry of Education.

## 6. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION MODULE

Similarly to the Estonian language learning modules, the International Protection (IP) module was examined somewhat differently than thematical modules. However, as the aim of the research was to look at this module only briefly, the research did not go into detail.

The relative lack of wider information about the IP modules, the infrequency with which these module sessions are being organised (due to a shortage of the potential participants from the target group), the somewhat reluctant reactions from module organisers to an evaluator's questions and desire to observe trainings, and the language(s) of instruction have posed special challenges to our evaluation of these modules. For the analysis of the IP module, we carried out two different types of activities:

1. An **observation** of one IP module that was carried out in Arabic:

Our observations were carried out by a contracted (external) observer at the end of June, 2019. The observer was briefed prior to carrying out the observations and completed the same observation questionnaire that was used for other Welcoming Programme module observations. Additional information about the observer's experiences was gathered in the days and weeks after the observations.

2. **Interviews** with IP module participants who spoke Arabic:

These interviews (two focus group discussions and two personal interviews) were conducted by an external interviewer (different person than the observer) and took place in April and May 2019. The interviewer was briefed before the interviews in order to ensure that the interviewer was able to gather the data required for the purposes of our research.

The current IP module takes place over the course of three days, during weekends, and is comprised of a variety of sessions in which different topics are explored and addressed.<sup>102</sup> The observation session took place on the second and third day, whereas the observation lasted two hours on the third day. The range of topics addressed during the whole module, according to the organisers, was rather broad and comprehensive and included: employment and social services, financial literacy, housing, healthcare, education, the Estonian culture, society and language, and everyday life.<sup>103</sup>

Our observation, as well as interviews, indicate however that the **learning objectives** have **not always been laid out clearly** for the participants. Also, during the observation, the trainers, consequently, did not come back to these learning objectives over the course of the module sessions. Although the participants of the module were aware of the need to participate due to the fact that it is compulsory and hence connected to their residency status, more could and should be done to **better inform participants about the overall aims and purposes of the IP module**. According to the service provider this informing of participants is, in most cases, done a few weeks prior to the module by the trainer, who contacts the participants personally and explains the

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<sup>102</sup> According to IOM that depends on concrete situation and may be also shorter.

<sup>103</sup> This list is non-exhaustive.

objective of the training. However, the interviewed participants did not come up with reasons for attendance other than obligation, thus it is not clear how much effect it currently has.

The module's length and comprehensiveness made participating in the module a worthwhile activity for those participating. However, several shortcomings that negatively impacted upon the usefulness of participating were identified.

First of all, there seems to be a need for more **practical, hands-on information**. The participants to the IP module seemed to, by and large, expect the information provided throughout the module to consist of a step-by-step overview of the things they need to do in order to be able to complete everyday tasks by gaining access to a variety of services. Even when the information was supplied, it was too abstract for participants – it was also not clear to them, they did not understand where should they turn in order to get more detailed knowledge about how to complete certain steps that are of pivotal importance when it comes to adapting to life in Estonia.

For example, a number of participants interviewed indicated that they had trouble finding and registering for a family doctor and also struggled to change or get their driver's license. It is important to ensure that more practical examples are being used during the training sessions and that these examples are relevant and realistic. A case in point was the attempt to illustrate the Estonian way of life by showing pictures of an upper-end property, instead of picking a more representative example – although this example was brought out deliberately by the lecturer to illustrate what *may not* be reality in Estonia, with an idea of managing (and setting) realistic expectations, this very specific case of property was underexplained and underused by the trainer. The participants in the interviews repeatedly said that the picture about Estonia they got in the trainings was “too nice” – i.e. not consistent with their experience. It would therefore be well advised to **focus much more strongly on providing easy, relevant, realistic and hands-on information** to the participants to ensure they are able to secure easy access to an array of services in Estonia.

Secondly, **the format of the module**. In the current format, the participants take part in a three-day module that seeks to provide an all-encompassing overview of all the information participants need to adjust to life in Estonia. However, participants communicated that the current set-up of the module might not be the most effective way to go about achieving that goal. Two particular needs were identified in this regard, which are as follows:

**There was an indication for the need for follow-up sessions** to help participants grapple with those aspects of life in Estonia that continue to prove troublesome even after the taking place of the training-module. This allows for the provision of more continual support during the adaptation process and should help the programme to better cater to the needs of participants. Possibly, instead of a three-day straight module, the module should be divided into three separate days where participants can reflect their current need for information as it changes.

**The need to better integrate the IP module with other services** offered to people who have received international protection whenever possible. There appeared to be little to no exchange of information between the various service providers dealing with this particular target group, which meant that the information and support provided was sometimes uncoordinated and frantic. It is therefore advisable to find a way to ask for cooperation with other services that extend to individuals who have received international protection to make sure that they are collectively capable of working towards facilitating the process of immigrant adaptation in the most efficient and helpful way possible. As a case in point, for example the mapping of person's skills for entering the Estonian labour market is sometimes done by 3-4 different organisations (for example, by IOM during the training, by Estonian Unemployment Fund or by the Refugee Council, or by some other third parties), but in these cases, we can presume some duplication of the same work, but with almost no information sharing with each other, which would facilitate and ease the whole process both for these organisations as well as for the person him/herself.

Another aspect identified in the interviews was **the time between arriving to Estonia and participating in the module**. It is crucial that those required to participate in the module do so as quickly as possible after arriving in Estonia. It is often during the first few months of living in a new country that participants are most in need of support, with the IP module potentially fulfilling an important role in this regard. However, some of the participants only took part in the module after having lived in Estonia for as long as 11 months. This also meant that the usefulness of participating for these respective participants was severely limited. It is therefore important to make further efforts to ensure that individuals who have received international protection are able to participate in the module during their very first few months of living in Estonia.

**The participants generally seemed to be pleased with the teaching style** adopted by the trainers. The trainers themselves were deemed to be friendly, supportive, and helpful whenever an issue came up during the training sessions. It must be noted, however, that the Arabic dialects of the trainers did at times make it difficult to fully understand the trainers for some of the participants. Furthermore, some of the participants indicated that the style of instruction was sometimes been perceived as slightly patronising.

For instance, an example was raised about the need to wear warm clothes during the long and harsh winters in Estonia or about crossing street at proper traffic lights. Whilst this may be a valuable piece of information in and of itself, simply telling people that they should dress for the season might come across as self-evident and most people also know what red traffic light stands for. It is therefore important for trainers to not only confirm that all participants clearly understand them, but to also make further efforts to ensure that their tone and style of teaching comes across as understanding and congenial at all times.

Both the trainer-user interaction as well as the user-user interaction appears to be suboptimal at times. Despite the fact that the small group sizes as well as the backgrounds of members belonging to the target group itself may pose additional challenges to fostering an interactive learning environment, more efforts can and should still be made to improve the level of interactivity of the module sessions.

For example, it would be encouraging if at least some additional steps were made to cultivate such a learning environment, for example by using handouts, case-studies, and by urging participants to ask questions. However, the level of interaction between the trainer and the participants as well as between the participants themselves remained limited, with the questions that were being asked labelled as 'safe questions' that shielded away from enquiring about more controversial or sensitive topics. More work is therefore required to improve the level of interactivity of the training in order to further improve the quality and impact of the international protection module.

Finally, it is of great importance that people feel protected and not judged for their views, be it about religion, sexuality, or other topics. Currently there seems to be no particular effort put into providing space for people to articulate the problems they face and might not want to share with other participants because of possible judgment. And even more important is that the trainer's reaction should not come across as judgmental and disapproving of culturally "unproper" ideas or wishes. Some of the refugees expect that coming to a European country will give them a chance to get further away from cultural-religious demands, and they are somewhat disappointed of unsupportive if not disapproving reaction of the trainer – especially if they perceive the trainer as the representative of the Estonian state. Although these kind of cases were mentioned only a few times during our interviews, it is still an aspect where some further attention could be paid for providing completely safe environment for the trainings.

Participants and observers alike identified no pressing issues regarding the physical teaching environment.

The observer and participants indicated that the handbooks are written in understandable way<sup>104</sup> and should be reasonably accessible to most literate participants. Although the content of the handbooks is comparatively similar to that of the other WP handbooks, the writing style and layout appear to be simpler and more graphic, which positively contributes to the overall readability. However, concerns were raised about some of the other training materials, including the handouts. Some of the information seemed to have been google translated and/or copy-pasted, which caused some occasional confusion both among the participants as well as the observer itself (native Arabic speaker).

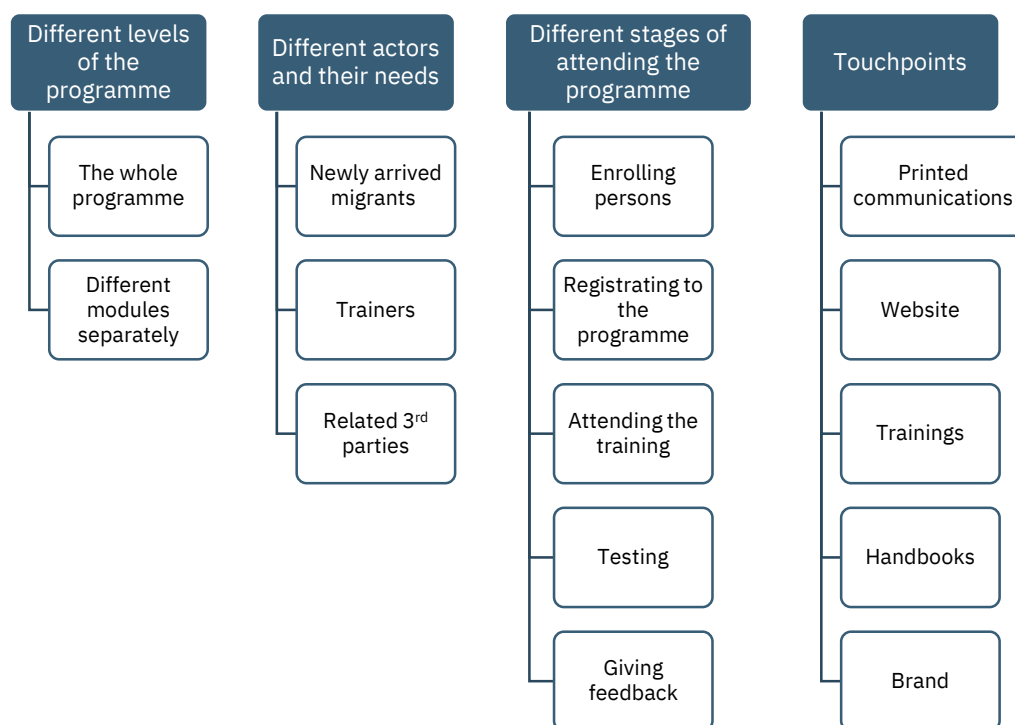
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<sup>104</sup> Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

## 7. FINDINGS AND ANALYSES BASED ON EVALUATION CRITERION

This chapter draws from the information and data collected and the analysis provided in the previous chapters of this report, by performing a more nuanced policy level evaluation and providing recommendations regarding the Welcoming Programme (WP). In this regard, all the aspects covered in previous chapters (different levels of the programme, actors, stages and touchpoints (see chapter 4 and **Figure 7.1**) will be looked at through the prism of standard evaluation criterion such as relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability.<sup>105</sup>

**Figure 7.1.** Different aspects of the programme to be covered with evaluation of the programme



### 7.1. Relevance

Are we doing the right thing considering the needs of newly arrived migrants? Are the training materials relevant? How important is the relevance or significance of the intervention regarding set goals and priorities?

Relevance of the Welcoming Programme will be examined in view of the set goals and priorities, the needs of newly arrived immigrants (incl. touchpoints), and the process of attending the programme.

<sup>105</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional Policy. (2014). [The programming period 2014–2020. Guidance document on monitoring and evaluation](#). European Cohesion Fund, European Regional Development Fund. Concepts and Recommendations.

Based on the regulation of the Welcoming Programme<sup>106</sup> and interviews with participants, experts, trainers and representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, **the overall objective - or mutual and commonly shared understanding of the goal - of the Welcoming Programme, remains somewhat unclear** (see also chapter 4.6.3).

Although the WP regulation defines the goal of the WP as to “*support the migration and subsequent integration of newly arrived immigrants by providing them information on the functioning of the state and society, daily life, working, studying and family matters, and by facilitating the acquisition of Estonian language skills*”<sup>107</sup>, and general competence requirements of the modules reflect the aim of providing the essential information for adaptation and integration, our analysis on the practical implementation of the WP sets the question whether the WP is:

1. a full-fledged integration/adaptation course (a programme that helps migrants, in the long-run, to fully integrate into Estonian society), or
2. a settling into Estonia programme (that supports migrants during their first few months/years in Estonia when it comes to sorting out all kinds of practical matters), or
3. a collection of informational helpdesks (with the main purpose of the programme being one of troubleshooting, i.e. the possibility to ask questions and get information about certain topics).

Therefore, **the question of whether the activities are relevant regarding the set goals and priorities, also depends on the way the Welcoming Programme is being interpreted.**

Nevertheless, based on the target indicators (see Table 3.2 “Output and result indicators”) – that is, the number of participants in total and the number of participants whose Estonian language skills, practical informedness and knowledge about Estonia, Estonian society and culture have improved (see also chapter 4.5.2) – our analysis comes to the conclusion that **the programme has been relevant in the effort to carry out the kind of trainings that aim to increase informedness, knowledge, and language skills.**

However, if the programme is a full-fledged integration/adaptation course (as stated in the WP regulation), more activities supporting the integration are needed. This includes, for example, more intensive and personal support besides the participation in the modules.

If the programme is a collection of informational helpdesks, more direct and informative instructions-advice are needed, instead of forwarding foreigners elsewhere to get answers. At the same time, it has to be said that several other organisations and programmes in Estonia support foreigners in settling in, e.g. WorkInEstonia (Enterprise Estonia), international houses in Tartu and Tallinn, the Integration Foundation, NGO-based activities, etc.

Therefore, **to evaluate the relevance of the activities based on the overall objective of the programme, the objectives should be identified more clearly**, including in the official regulation of the WP, in the website of the WP, as well as in communication and information sharing among the direct target group and other stakeholders. However, **based on the needs of newly arrived foreigners, the programme’s potential in supporting integration is underused** as there is lack of supporting socialising, incl. with locals.

From the perspective of the participants, the primary feedback given to the modules and to language trainings (in essence to the whole programme in general) has been very positive (average scores given to different learning objectives), and most participants also find that their practical informedness and knowledge about the Estonian state, society, and culture has improved (average score given to similarly phrased question in the

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<sup>106</sup> Riigi Teataja. (31.05.2017). Kohanemisprogramm.

<sup>107</sup> Riigi Teataja. (25.06.2015). Welcoming Programme.

feedback form; see also chapter 4.5.2). This indicates that in the opinion of the participants, the programme and trainings answer to their needs. However, it should be taken into account that from the service design principles, users of a service almost never evaluate their needs adequately. This was seen also in (focus group) interviews where several shortcomings came up during discussion. Thus, the subjective assessment given by the participants on how or whether they acquired one or the other skill or information, may be somewhat biased (and cannot be the sole basis for the evaluation of the service).

Although there are several places for improvement (see chapter 4 and subchapters below, for example some information given during the courses is not relevant to the participants, some information is missing, background of participants can be considered more etc.), according to the officially stipulated aim of the programme (see above) and the content of the modules according to this stipulation, **the intervention of the programme is relevant regarding to set goals and priorities** (incl. the goals of the Estonian national integration strategy “Integrating Estonia 2020”).

As the trainings of the WP are based on materials and methodological guidelines produced by Expat Relocation, IOM and the Ministry of the Interior, the relevance of these materials will be examined in the following subchapter, including the accessibility and structure of the content of the WP.

### 7.1.1. Accessibility

Having a programme is not relevant if the target group cannot attend it, or when just a very limited number of persons have the necessary accessibility. Chapters 4.5.2 and 4.5.3 described some of the shortages in the content on the website of the programme (incl. information about the date/time, place and content of concrete trainings), in the brochures/handbooks, and in the information received from different persons who engage with the target group of newly arrived migrants (e.g. different stakeholders or actors such as representatives of unions, universities, NGOs, the PBGB, etc.).

These shortages indicate a **deficiency in communication activities**, that lead to a situation of not all newly arrived migrants being aware of the programme (see more in chapter 4.5.3), and thus, limits in the accessibility. A lack of knowledge about the programme also among the stakeholders engaging or working with foreigners, is similarly a reason the advertising materials - e.g. the printed leaflets or the website - are not used by them. This only serves to diminish the relevance of the programme, and our research confirms that these kind of materials and trainings among various stakeholders are wanted.

**Eligibility rules, enrolment and registration processes** also contribute to the issues of accessibility. Chapters 4.5.3 and 4.6.2 describe the situation of different groups of foreigners who have the need for the trainings but are not eligible to attend. However, considering the aim of the programme (chapter 3), the national “Integrating Estonia 2020” programme, and the general availability of places in courses (free slots; see chapter 3.1 on the cancelling of trainings and the readiness to have more people/courses), eligibility rules should be looked over (recommendations in this regard in the final chapter of this report). In addition, enrolment and registration processes should be carefully redesigned to enable fast and convenient registration and to provide quick and up to date information on the courses, especially *before* the motivation to attend decreases (see chapters 4.1.1, 4.3, 4.4.1, 4.5).

One of the main challenges of the programme in view of all the evaluation criterion is the **time and location of the trainings** (see chapters 4.4.1, 4.5). Our results indicate that considering the number of migrants living and arriving in Estonia, their geographical place of residency (see also part I of the report), and the needs and the number of current participants in the WP, there is room for improvement in terms of a more accessible programme to increase its relevance. Although the percentage of trainings in Tartu and Ida-Virumaa corresponds somewhat roughly to the proportion of foreigners living in these areas, our data collection indicates that overall transport connections in Estonia are not good enough to attract people to attend modules

from surrounding counties. Thus, having trainings close to other centres of attraction and in different times, can be beneficial. But as this may not be enough to get more people to attend the programme and/or to increase their adaptation related skills/knowledge, more varied and diverse forms of information dispersion is needed.

There is also another accessibility issue that relates to individuals with special needs or disabilities. In this regard, the Welcoming Programme is an inaccessible service. The materials, training methods, and the WP in general is not inclusive and user-friendly for groups of people with special needs.<sup>108</sup> This includes deaf or blind individuals, or people with hyperactivity disorder who might find the trainings too challenging because of their length and format, or individuals with reduced mobility that may struggle with the current environment/location settings, etc.<sup>109</sup>

To alleviate some of these aspects, a more carefully designed and targeted programme can be offered to these target groups, by creating, for example, a shorter course that covers the most important topics. This kind of course could be available and eligible to attend for all migrants living in Estonia, not only for newly arrived migrants.<sup>110</sup> If feasible, this course or courses could also be accessed as recordable webinars, or of some other type that do not require attendance in a certain time and place.

### 7.1.2. Structure and content of the modules

Based on the interviews and focus group discussions with migrants and persons working or interacting with migrants, all the topics currently covered by the Welcoming Programme modules are relevant. Also, the most problematic topical areas as mapped in the part I of the research, are covered in the trainings. However, as the situation/policies/rules/regulations in Estonia and needs of participants change over time (including since the drafting and developing the programme in 2015), while also considering the need to increase the variety of methods of providing the information, including having shorter trainings (see chapters 4.1.1, 4.2.3, 4.4.1 and part I of the research), the relevance of topics should be carefully looked over.

However, the flexibility and freedom for service providers should also be preserved, as they possess a particular know-how that might not explicitly be shared with the Ministry of Interior and this enables them to make changes according to the audience. We have identified three main topics for the improvement, as follows:

- basic module: provide shorter and more accessible basic module trainings, for all migrants (more than five years of stay, including returnees with Estonian citizenship), but only during a short period of time after their arrival to Estonia;
- other thematical modules: ensure fewer topical repetitions between different thematical modules, which helps make trainings more relevant while also being shorter, more targeted, and better accessible;
- language trainings: different people need courses with different learning intensities; also, as the A1.1 level is not enough to fulfil the aims of the programme, higher level of language trainings will be relevant (A2 level is in the process of development/implementation by the state).

In all modules, we found that an improvement of content is needed, for example, by adding more practical information. As the time of the training is limited, it is recommended to leave some topics to the handbook for self-study (and/or to some other formats of delivering information), especially in cases where some of the topics or details may not be the most relevant to the audience, to have more time for practical information. Several experts interviewed also brought out the possibility of teaching more Estonian vocabulary during the

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<sup>108</sup> Excluding refugees as specific group of people, for whom a different module/training is carried out by IOM.

<sup>109</sup> See more from chapters 4.2, 4.3.

<sup>110</sup> The need was brought out also in Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne.

thematical modules and/or covering more thematic topics during language courses. This would help provide more relevant or beneficial trainings to the participants.

After a stay of two years in Estonia, our interviews and observations indicate a lower motivation to join the trainings. This points to the Welcoming Programme becoming less relevant, as participants find information and resources to adapt/integrate from elsewhere (gaining it also from their own personal experience during their everyday life in Estonia). Therefore, as learning from the trainings and other's experiences may decrease the potential of negative experiences, the programme can be considered relevant and some additional possibilities should be found to ensure that people attend the programme as fast as possible after arriving to Estonia.

## 7.2. Effectiveness and impact

**Effectiveness:** Are the objectives of the interventions being achieved? How large is the effectiveness or impact of the programme compared to the objectives planned?

**Impact:** Does the intervention contribute to reaching higher level development objectives (preferably, the overall objective)? What is the impact or effect of the intervention in proportion to the overall situation of the target group or those effected?

Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the programme entails comparison between the planned and achieved objectives, and from the detailed analysis of impacts that are or may not be directly connected with target indicators. Although the programme has potential to have a broader impact than just on the participants, in its current form, the focus is put mainly on the participants, as there is a lack of usage and application of programme materials by the other actors (see chapter 4.1.8).

Based on the WP monitoring report of 2018, the target milestones (number of participants, number of participants whom skills and informedness have improved) **for 2018 have been achieved** by more than 1.7 times (see chapter 3.1 and Table 3.1). From this perspective, the programme has been effective.

Awareness rising shows the preliminary short-term impact. However, awareness rising should be evaluated by trainers, e.g. through tests, not by participants themselves as this does not indicate exactly how much participants know after the training. Also, next to the short-term impact, the long-term impact should be evaluated or monitored, e.g. through evaluating working life, which would also mean that the preliminary short-term impact is monitored and by asking for additional specific feedback about 1-12 months after attending the module.

By spring 2019, there are 31 200 eligible newly arrived migrants living in Estonia with the attendance-participation rate around 15%. Thus, the programme may not have reached the milestones set as a target. However, connecting targets with the attendance percentages of eligible persons may cause difficulties in planning resources, therefore, it is recommended to examine this information as an unofficial target that supports understanding the effectiveness of the programme. Although the indicators of target levels should be reconsidered and redefined as migration levels increase, all our indications from the current research confirm that the **programme has had a positive effect on the majority of the participants and their knowledge about Estonia and Estonian language** (see chapter 4.3).

Based on the feedback statistics of the WP, the learning objectives of the WP have been mostly achieved, depending on the person and his/her personal needs. However, having more varied, diverse, and interactive methods and knowledge of adult training methods (including how to make effective slides) would bring about deeper commitment in the participants, as well as in reaching learning objectives in full (see chapter 4.3.1.1). Some interviews and open answers to the feedback questionnaire indicate that some of the participants – even

while being satisfied with the trainings in general - do not learn the relevant skills they may need for the future. For example, not all participants who have attended the WP are convinced that the ID-card or mobile-ID can be valuable and beneficial in their everyday life in Estonia. One option to increase training quality in this aspect is supporting trainers with process analysis (e.g. through trainings and the process evaluation form) to find what should be improved next time. Also, it was pointed out quite often that the [settleinestonia.ee](http://settleinestonia.ee) website itself does not specifically help in terms of finding information on or solutions to some of the existing problems (see also chapter 4.5.2).

Our interviews with different target groups also indicate a clear need to have the subsequent level of Estonian language courses available to reach some of the learning objectives, since the A1.1 level is not enough to communicate successfully in everyday situations.

As seen from chapter 4.4.1 and part I of the report, the needs of and opportunities for foreigners in Estonia change over time. Thus, to help foreigners adapt more effectively, a more individual approach is desirable (including different type of methods to deliver the information), and if feasible, more emphasis should be put on the activities that facilitate long-term integration with the Estonian society (including more interaction with native Estonians).<sup>111</sup>

As discussed before in depth (e.g. chapter 4.6.3), the overall goal of the programme is somewhat in question – as defined in the regulation as supporting the migration [process] and settling-in, and [subsequent] integration. It is difficult to evaluate in which extent the programme has helped in achieving these goals, especially with regard to supporting integration, as integration is typically considered as a long-term process, which sometimes may even take generations. **Identifying the objectives of the Welcoming Programme more clearly** would help to better ascertain its success. Moreover, it could also help to improve the structure of the WP itself, since defining the purpose of the WP less vaguely will give those running it a much clearer and distinct understanding of the strengths and shortcomings of the programme.

The impact of the programme can also be improved through active **communication activities** (with the help of the communication partner, see chapter 4.1.4). Firstly, it will increase the awareness of the programme and the understanding of who is eligible to participate. Secondly, the more participants there are, the better the chances to share experiences and/or to support establishing social networks among each other. Thirdly, if employers, universities, and other organisations engaging or working with (newly arrived) migrants receive regular and clearly targeted information about the programme, more people may attend the programme and/or get the necessary information (for example through the handbooks online or on paper), thus increasing the impact of the programme. As of now, there is a **clear lack of spill over effects**<sup>112</sup> or of affecting the other parties,<sup>113</sup> as the programme is not well known by different actors in Estonia (including some employers who employ foreigners). Therefore the materials are generally also not used outside the programme itself, e.g. by enterprises, universities, NGOs, etc., to introduce general topics involving Estonia or the WP itself if they have foreigners, although this would be valuable (see also chapter 4.1.8).

Equally important for the impact are organisational questions like the size of the group, the place and time of the trainings, and communication during registration as well as after the course. Although the size of the group cannot be too small as there will be less experiences to share, the group also cannot be too large as there may be no time to address every question and may limit the teaching method chosen for the training. However, **the**

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<sup>111</sup> See also Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 46.

<sup>112</sup> See Manuela, A., Vincenzo, D. (2010). Program Evaluation and Spillover Effects.

<sup>113</sup> If not to consider indirect effect on persons who deal with foreigners: as foreigners are more aware of different aspects, it is easier to communicate with and explain options and there should be smaller need for social benefits as they cope by themselves.

**higher the number of foreigners attending the programme, the higher the overall impact of the trainings.** This can be facilitated by having trainings in more (geographical) places and with a better variety of times (better accessibility).

Another issue influencing the impact of the WP is the lack of diversity of methods/forms facilitating the acquisition of information by the participants (e.g. longer courses together with shorter ones, webinars, recorded sessions or videos, etc.; see chapters 4.4.1 and 4.5). This kind of diversity would help to satisfy the different desires and needs of the users and thus, help to mainstream the WP among wider group of newcomers.

Moreover, **well-communicated aims, eligibility rules, registration process, and clear communication after the trainings** support the increase of first-time attendance and more specifically, to increase the attendance in more than one module (i.e. repeated participation in the WP). The further development of the registration process to WP modules in this regard is a key moment, as it allows to identify the person's most utmost needs (and already existing information about Estonia) in prior, and in turn, target his/her needs in a best manner – by indicating the topics where he/she needs additional information (for example through a pre-populated list), support or consultation. Based on this, trainings with specific dates can be suggested to the participant. In a way, the process is reversed – the participant *indicates* his/her wishes, this information is gathered from all the potential participants in certain time-frame, and then the most suitable modules and times are offered to the person, not the vice versa.<sup>114</sup> Also, in its current form, and as English-speaking foreigners may also speak Russian and vice versa, trainings in all languages should be shown in both language versions of the WP website.

In situations where there are sufficient resources for the implementation of the programme (for example, the courses can be given to all those who wish for it) and in situations where the need for trainings is high, even by those who are not eligible, **eligibility rules should be re-examined.**

Broadening the target group of the programme, at least for the basic module, may speed up the settling-in process in general over the whole target group of foreigners living in Estonia, and decrease the amount of potential negative experiences as well as problems with the integration later on. This is mostly the case with migrants who arrive to Estonia with D-visas (short-term stay) and are not eligible to almost any of the national services; however, these short-term migrants may and tend to become long-term migrants quite quickly.

Also, our interviews indicate that there is a high need for the programme among those who have Estonian citizenship by birth, although they have never lived in Estonia, or lived in Estonia many years ago. Our research confirms the findings also from other studies,<sup>115</sup> that people with short-term visas, foreign students, returnees, diplomatic staff and their family members, as well as foreigners who have been in Estonia longer than five years and foreigners who have already attended desired modules, should be eligible to attend (or attend again) in at least some of the modules (see also chapter 4.4.1).

In some cases, a person may be interested in taking the same module again, or to take the module from a different perspective than the first time – for example in the case of becoming pregnant, becoming a parent, becoming a student, becoming unemployed (e.g. during the time of an economic recession), etc. In its current

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<sup>114</sup> It is also worth considering asking some of the questions as set out in the feedback form *before* the module takes place, i.e. during the registration at the website. For example, the question no. 2 in the feedback form (“*Your evaluation of reaching the learning objectives of the training. As a result of the training you:*”) can be rephrased and asked prior, in order to identify the needs of the participants. By getting this information, people can be targeted and channelled to different modules based on their needs, wishes or prior knowledge about Estonia.

<sup>115</sup> See e.g. Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 59-60.

form, the WP does not match with the life-cycle of a person, and after being in Estonia for a while, some of the programme for the foreigner as it becomes mostly obsolete (see chapters 4.4.1 and 4.5).

Testing the knowledge gained and giving feedback to the trainings, at the end of the training, are an important part of the modules. One helps to somewhat foster or test the knowledge and information gained during the course, the other provides input for the further development of the trainings.

However, as pointed out in chapters 4.1.1 and 4.2.4.4, the **impact for participants and trainings can be higher if different methods are used or combined for getting feedback**. Our observations indicate that in many cases, the filling out of the feedback form is not taken seriously – this is also reflected from the general observation of all feedback forms, where most respondents have graded all training components with the score of 5 out of 5, without any further explanation, making it questionable how seriously the feedback was given.

If the feedback form is filled out in a hurry right at the end of the training, without thinking seriously about the questions and without explaining the grades given, it may be much more valuable to only ask one or two questions in an open answer format, instead of a formal questionnaire. Also, to understand why around a tenth of all eligible people attend the WP modules, it should be considered to add a question about where the information about the programme was received, in order to improve the communication.<sup>116</sup> The feedback received should be combined with trainers' self-evaluation of the training process and if possible, with long-term impact (e.g. asking feedback about six months after attending the training, checking the employment, etc.), to have a better understanding about the impact of the training.

**Participants' handbooks** are seen as valuable resources to look over the information if needed. Several experts agree that having and sharing this kind of material is necessary, if extensive information is provided over long days, as some may not be able to grasp all the information. However, as covered in chapter 4.2.3, handbooks are not very comfortable to use, and the information is not represented in the best possible way - there is sometimes too much or too little information, and they are not very practical to be carried along nor easily readable.

Several possibilities to develop the handbooks were mapped during our research to increase their usability and from there, the impact of the programme as well, as follows:

1. Introducing a new type of handbook in a more practical and welcoming format that offers an accessible and easy-to-read overview of the most important aspects of settling and adapting to life in Estonia. Although some topics are covered in several modules, there is no need to combine all information into a one single handbook, yet this kind of smaller (yet thicker and firmer) handbook should offer a bespoke alternative to the various other handbooks and enable the participants with easy access to most of the more general types of information about living in Estonia, without having to resort to the several module-specific handbooks. Such a (for example, a ring bound) handbook printed in A5 or another custom size is easy to carry around, practical and provides the opportunity to present information in a more graphic way. This generic handbook could either be handed out alongside the traditional module-specific handbooks or be the only printed handbook that participants receive during trainings; with the traditional module-based handbooks becoming an online-only option. Creating a comprehensive handbook that includes all of the basic information for settling in Estonia could also serve the purpose of communicating the work of the Welcoming Programme and attracting foreigners to join. This could be done by using the handbook as the first point of contact with the service: receiving it when the foreigner picks up their ID-card from a Police and Border Guard Board service point, or even earlier, when the foreigner first goes to the Police and Border Guard Board or local municipality to start the process of registering and receiving the permit/ID-card.
2. Creating and adding a specific section for basic information regarding settling in Estonia and adding it to all the modules' handbooks (similarly to the information about living permits at all handbooks). This approach would allow participants to have the basic information about Estonia regardless of the module they attend. However, this approach would put into question the need to have a separate Basic module, or at least its structure and length.
3. Re-designing the concept of the handbook so that each module represents a section of a whole handbook. The modules are elements and parts of a whole, the Welcoming Programme. This concept could be translated into the handbooks, where each of the modules becomes a section in a larger handbook that comprises the manual for

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<sup>116</sup> Starting from 2019 this is asked at least at the beginning of the language course.

- settling in Estonia. If done properly and carefully, the handbooks could become prized guides to living in Estonia, and even collecting the different handbooks could become an attractive reason to attend all the modules.
4. Re-design the handbooks as manuals and tools to be used during the trainings by the participants. As described before, the usage of the handbook during the training session greatly depends on the trainer's style and approach to the content. A solution could be to design the participants' handbooks as interactive manuals or workbooks, with specially designed activities, quizzes, space for notes, short exercises, etc.
  5. Handbooks are compiled and updated in cooperation with representatives of organisations that are dealing with the topics covered in handbooks. Although the most important information seems to be covered, there are possibilities for improvements, showing the need to involve more experts in updating the handbooks. There are three aspects that should be kept in mind while updating the content:
    - i. Is all the needed information covered?;
    - ii. Is all the information covered under the correct heading?; and
    - iii. Is all the information represented in the best way?

All of these recommendations could currently be applied to the participants' handbooks for improvement. However, the nature of the materials as a touchpoint is, even if crucial, just one part of the larger structure of the service. As such, any changes in the participants' handbooks should be made following the service logic. To increase the impact of the programme, the **materials should be developed to support the chosen training method, increase the consistency of the brand, and enhance the delivery of information**. Therefore, it is imperative that the handbooks are adjusted to the changes in the structure, changes in the training methods, and changes in the Welcoming Programme, etc.

The videos used during the trainings in the classrooms, as a method of introducing different procedures/services, change the rhythm of the training and better showcase the learned materials, increasing the impact of the training, but are currently underused (see more in chapter 4.2.4.3).

Foreigners arriving to and living in Estonia need practical, actionable information that can guide and direct them in their daily activities. The video format has many positive characteristics, it can be used to convey a large amount of information in a short time, edited for clarity and can be re-watched by participants as many times as desired, increasing the efficiency. Therefore, using videos as an opportunity to provide an overview of the processes the foreigner needs to undertake is a useful tool for increasing the impact. Creating more videos in the form of "how-to" videos, or micro tutorials that could provide links and information for foreigners on commonly asked topics or processes. All of the Welcoming Programme's videos should be located under one account, on the website or the social media account used for the programme and links to videos should also be in the handbooks to increase their usability and impact. Moreover, ensuring the quality and homogeneity of the videos helps to optimise their usefulness and coherence.

Using more interactive methods, including videos, shortens the time foreseen for other activities within one module. However, one of the conclusions from our observations is that instead of slides, more stress should be put on practical processes, sharing experiences and finding solutions to genuinely experienced problems (see chapter 4.2.4) to increase the value and the impact of trainings. This will be supported by slides with less text and more visual elements, including information that is easier to understand, and the knowledge that there is no need to cover every detail, which would leave more time for questions and comments.

Also, trainers should make a more concentrated effort to apprise the particular questions and/or topics that the participants would like to see discussed over the course of the session at the start of the module, for example by creating a post-it wall (see chapter 4.3.1). Stronger support by the service provider is needed in this case as several trainers indicated during the interviews that knowing the size of the group and having some information regarding participants prior to the trainings may increase the effectiveness and impact of the training. Also, increasing the competences of trainers in multicultural learning and andragogy (incl. competence in self- and process analysis) may help to find a balance between different activities and topics to cover.

## 7.3. Efficiency

Are the objectives being achieved economically by the intervention? Are there any needs for changes in the system?

Evaluating the efficiency of the programme compares the current and alternative activities and process of the programme, which helps to indicate whether the most efficient process has been adopted. The research did not focus on the costs of implementing the programme.

Based on the 2018 monitoring report, the target milestones for 2018 were achieved (see chapter 3.1 and Table 3.1). However, **there are several possibilities to increase the efficiency of the Welcoming Programme**. As analysed in chapter 4 and in earlier subchapters, in the case of the WP, the in-depth evaluation of efficiency is complicated as the regulation of the programme mentions both migration, adaptation and integration, whereby the emphasis on the implementation of the activities is mainly on adaptation (as defined mainly through the delivery of information, see more in chapter 4.6.3).

It can be interpreted from the practical implementation of the trainings (thematical modules) that the **programme is mainly to support initial adaptation, by giving an overview of most important information** - what to get from where. Our research shows that the most important preliminary information is covered during the trainings, although modifications are recommended (see chapter 4.2).

Also, most of the participants are satisfied with the programme and recommend it to other foreigners (see chapter 4.5.2), showing that most of the objectives have been achieved. However, the efficiency can be somewhat lessened in the case that the foreigner has already been in Estonia for some time and then attends the module – in these instances, the information provided or knowledge given may have less value than for the other participants, because he/she has gained similar information through the internet, experiences, contacts, etc. Also, it is somewhat questionable as to how much of the learned information is actually being used, for example after six months have passed since the training, and whether participants are more successful in adaptation and integration. Unfortunately, our research and data collection was not able to prove neither disproved these hypotheses.

However, our research indicates that the deadweight<sup>117</sup> is not 100%, as, at least in the case of persons who reach the programme just after their recent arrival to Estonia, their time for integration may be much shorter and the trainings can help to decrease negative experiences. Therefore, **the programme has time and quality additionality<sup>118</sup>**, as these are the key factors in supporting effective settling-in and integration.

In addition to language training and learning, which is usually a core aspect of any adaptation/integration process, **the programme also has the potential to support several aspects of integration without remarkable additional expenses** (see also chapter 5.2). As argued in chapters 4.4.1 and 4.5, socialising is briefly supported by trainers and usually at the very beginning of the foreigners stay in Estonia, there are almost no contacts with native local Estonians. As indicated by some trainers and experts in our interviews, and as can be seen from the experiences of other countries (see chapter 8), the creation of contacts with locals should be encouraged to support the long-term integration, e.g. through attending cultural events, having a local mentor, or by being a volunteer as brought out also during design process and validation seminar.

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<sup>117</sup> Deadweight refers to the impacts of an intervention that would still have occurred if public sector support had not been provided. See more e.g. Scottish Enterprise Economic Impact Guidance. (2014). Impact Deadweight.

<sup>118</sup> Additionality is about what is being caused by a policy intervention. It is a determination of whether an intervention has an effect, when the intervention is compared to a baseline (i.e. what would happen without the policy intervention).

Several Estonian organisations have their own programs to support foreigners, yet there is almost **no cooperation or mutual sharing of experiences in providing the information to foreigners**. Different actors (including the WP participants themselves) do not know that the materials of WP are available online (see also chapter 4.1.8). If all organisations would have their own programme to support settling-in, it would be a waste of resources and would diminish the effect/need for a one-stop governmental programme (i.e. the WP). Therefore, there is a need to map the variety of similar services and their differences (see part I of the report), and to focus on the cooperation of different services/actors so that all foreigners would get the needed support.

There are **several potential methods to share basic information that supports settling-in and adaptation, e.g. sharing online materials, carrying out shorter workshops on particular topics, having additional online webinars and seminars** (see e.g. chapter 4.3.1), but most of these are not currently used within the Welcoming Programme trainings. Although it is not necessary nor meaningful to replace the current format with some other, the diversification of options may decrease the amount of the instances when the trainings are cancelled (in some cases, only with a notice of a few days ahead) due to lack of the minimum number of registrations and decrease expenses of the programme per person as more people attend the WP or use materials produced in a programme. **Having several of these options combined together would not only help to increase the accessibility to the programme** but also gives the participants the possibility to get some information earlier compared to the current schedule of trainings.

This is especially the case in the summer period, where the WP thematic module trainings are usually on pause. Also, our research shows that compiling pre-arrival (digital) materials to persons who plan come to Estonia is recommended to increase successful adaptation (i.e. pre-departure services). This may also help to introduce the programme and enable going through the basic information faster (see also chapter 9).

While looking at the resources needed for the intervention, one of the key problems in efficiency is the **number of actors connected to the programme and understanding their tasks, their dependence on each other and the workload that could be automated**. Although the number of service providers has been reduced already (see chapter 4.1.2), the process to attend the programme involves several different actors (see chapter 4.1). This is one of the risk factors for being an efficient programme, as administrating different tasks and communicating different activities of the programme may be more cost-effective and have higher impact if done by one actor or being in responsibility of one actor. In this case it is also possible to have better understanding of what kind of information someone has received to carry out strategical communication activities and be sure that all newly arrived migrants are aware of the programme.

Our research indicates that there is lack of cooperation and sharing of experiences between different actors – similar activities are carried out and similar materials are compiled by several actors, hinting at the possibility to increase the efficiency. While the WP already has existing guidelines, it could be valuable to draft a “service handbook” in which all of the responsibilities of each stakeholder are clearly stated and available for all providers to see. Processes and goals of the service could also be shown in this handbook, giving all actors the possibility to understand the tasks that need input from them, the tasks they are dependent on, or cooperation possibilities. Also, regular meetings with various service providers are recommended (e.g. twice a year) in order to share experiences and find common opportunities to improve the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the WP. Ideally, all service providers should attend, as having several perspectives of the Welcoming Programme could provide a more holistic view of problems, situations and needed improvements.

Regarding efficiency, there are also **options to reduce costs related to the WP**. For example, the work done by the PBGB while checking the eligibility to the programme could and should be automated (see more in chapter 4.1.6). Also, even if the letters sent out from Expat Relocation to participants are automated, at least some of these should be integrated into one point of communication (see chapter 4.1.1.3), especially in cases where a person registers for several trainings at once. The more information is sent out, the more likely that it

may get lost, with the recipient getting several letters in short period of time, as the communication in this kind of situation may not be effective any longer.

**The efficiency of the communication activities of the WP was questioned** by several experts and representatives of employers, unions, and universities. There seems to be a somewhat of a **general lack of awareness about the programme among these actors**. With the new communication's partner as of summer 2019, we expect awareness to increase. However, steps must be taken to avoid a situation similar to the one occurring in 2018, where the WP's strategy and communications were not coordinated by anyone.

Moreover, the Welcoming Programme could benefit from more frequent interaction between the different actors, stakeholders or 3<sup>rd</sup> parties in order to promote a flourishing and more systematised organisational structure. For example, some interviewed employers did indicate that they could be collaborated with more in order to spread the information among different target groups.

It may also be useful to increase the attention paid to branding, as the **same design throughout different touchpoints and a consistent identity of the programme will increase visibility and therefore also simplify the communication activities**.

From the service design perspective, another element for reducing costs is the feedback. Feedback forms are filled in on paper and even if there is a possibility to answer through e-mail (a pdf version of the questionnaire to the ones who did not answer the paper version at the end of the course), answers do not go directly to a database that can be quickly utilised by the ministry or the service provider. The feedback is manually digitised (see also chapter 4.1.7) and while this helps to gather preliminary results, its current form does not enable it to be analysed automatically using statistical methods (the data needs to be cleaned and restructured, which takes a considerable amount of time, around one month in the case of the current research). Therefore, **analysing the feedback is not efficient in its current form** (see also the end of chapter 3.1).

Efficiency can also be increased by looking over the **aims of different activities**. For example, more than four e-mails are currently sent to registered participants, whereas, as mentioned above, at least in some cases it may be more reasonable to combine the information about several trainings into one letter (on this, see chapter 4.1.1.3). Also, the current language used in the communication should be edited to ensure that the aim of the letter is understandable (information about the upcoming trainings or the need for feedback – see chapter 4.2.4.4 “Feedback forms”). In its current form, some recipients have not noticed that additional feedback is requested whereas some have only noticed the need to give feedback a second time.

## 7.4. Sustainability

To what extent do the benefits of the programme continue after attending some modules?

What are the major factors that influence the achievement or non-achievement of the sustainability of the programme?

Is the programme sustainable in a current format?

The sustainability of the programme is analysed from the perspective of the sustainability of the benefits of attending the programme or some of its modules. Here, the sustainability of the programme itself is also covered.

The Welcoming Programme offers valuable information that supports and accelerates the adaptation of foreigners (see also chapters 4.6.2, 5.1.2, 5.2, 5.3). The information received from the programme is valuable even after attending the modules, for example, 78% of participants have also looked at the training materials after the end of the module and found these useful (see chapter 4.2.3). However, based on the interviews and

other data collected, we could not establish any causal connection whether the participants have been more or a smaller amount successful in settling-in, compared to those who have not attended the programme (for this, an in-depth survey and statistical analysis is needed, for example within the upcoming Integration Monitoring 2020).

Also, based on our interviews and the open-ended answers from the online survey, some participants indicate that the information received was too theoretical and too brief, so they **were not able to search for needed information or carry out some needed activities on their own** (see also chapters 4.5.2, 5.2). From this perspective, in some cases, the continuing benefits of the programme are somewhat diminished.

Our results indicate that the sustainability of benefits is more problematic in the case of language courses. Although the feedback for the language courses is high (see chapter 5), the information from participants, experts, and our observations hint that attending a one language course (80 hours) does not support the adaptation process (or long-term integration) in full, as it does not provide enough vocabulary, grammatical structure, nor cognition of the Estonian language (see also chapter 4.4.1). The sustainability of the benefits, rather than the programme, is more questionable, as just about 34% of participants have attended in more than one module.

On the sustainability of the WP itself, the main issue arises from the number of actors and their ability to cooperate while implementing the service (see chapter 4.1 and 4.6.1). This includes competition with the other similar measures that support adaptation/integration in Estonia or that provide counselling/mentoring and language learning (see chapter 1, 5.1<sup>119</sup>). The high number of actors involved in the programme is one of its weaknesses, as it impedes sharing information and makes actors dependent on each other (see chapter 4.1.8, 4.6.1, 5.3).

Strong branding is also important because without a strong brand, different target groups do not understand which programme(s) they have attended. This makes it more difficult to both recommend the service to other potential users or give feedback about the programme to right channels. In relation with the shared resources (see chapter 4.6.1), branding and sustainability should be considered during the development of the handbook. As there are several providers and these may change over time, a handbook of the service could be a useful tool to ensure that there are know-how and tools that are unique to the Welcoming Programme.

The development of a brand as well as brand manual as a part of the handbook is also recommended, as they are valuable tools to guide communication, design the materials and the website. A common repository of valuable information could be generated by the Welcoming Programme, for example in a digital format, so that it is accessible by all providers and can be used as a platform to share knowledge and information.

Therefore, to have a sustainable programme with sustainable benefits, it is recommended to look over the objectives of the Welcoming Programme (incl. distinction from the other policy measures or services), its target groups, structure and all touchpoints as identified in this report.

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<sup>119</sup> See also Part I of the report.

## 8. OVERVIEW OF SIMILAR ACTIVITIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES

To gain a better understanding of how the Welcoming Programme could look and to get ideas to improve some of the weak points of Estonia's programme, research was carried out on the similar activities available in other countries. The current chapter gives an overview of the results of the desktop research and compares the Estonian programme with other similar programmes.

### 8.1. Two types of welcoming programmes

The country comparison table (see Annex 6 about *Welcoming Programmes in other countries*) identifies the differences and similarities between 20 different similar actions to the Estonian Welcoming Programme, with regard to their target group(s), participants' costs, time limit(s), duration, structure, history, compulsory/non-compulsory nature, and the potential sanctions as well as the benefits to either completing or failing to complete the respective programme.

In general, the actions or welcoming programmes of other countries can be divided between compulsory programmes aimed at non-EU nationals or some other specific group of foreigners, and elective programmes targeting all newly-arrived foreigners.

The majority of welcoming programmes in Europe were developed and implemented with the objective of helping non-EU nationals better integrate into society. In addition, a number of countries (including Norway and Sweden) have specific programmes in place for refugees and/or other individuals under international protection. These types of welcoming programmes are typified by a number of characteristics:

1. The target group is normally obliged to take part in the programme.
2. The programmes often have a set time limit and duration.<sup>120</sup>
3. There are certain sanctions<sup>121</sup> (and hence also certain benefits<sup>122</sup>) in place for those failing to comply with the rules and regulations stipulated by the respective welcoming programme.

The welcoming programmes in *France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Austria, Norway, and Sweden* fall into this category of targeting mainly non-EU nationals. In 2009, Estonia's Welcoming Programme was piloted by the Integration Foundation and University of Tallinn and was also targeted at non-EU nationals, whereby persons under international protection were not eligible.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> In other words, most of these programmes need to be completed within a certain time limit and require participants to complete a minimum and/or a maximum number of hours of tuition.

<sup>121</sup> Such as being fined and/or not being able to obtain a (permanent) residence permit.

<sup>122</sup> Such as being able to obtain a (permanent) residence permit and/or being (partially) exempt from future citizenship tests.

<sup>123</sup> Civitta Eesti AS. (2019). Siseministeeriumi ja Kultuuriministeeriumi ESFi kohanemis- ja lõimumismeeetme rakendamise vahehindamine perioodil 2014–2018. Lõpparuanne. P 51.

There are also a number of welcoming programmes (e.g. in *Estonia* today, *Luxembourg*, *Malta*, and *Slovenia*), that expressly seek to contribute towards better integrating all newly-arrived foreigners. These programmes are characterised by the following elements:

1. These programmes are elective in nature.
2. They are usually less comprehensive than compulsory welcoming programmes aimed at non-EU citizens.
3. These programmes are often significantly shorter in length.<sup>124</sup>

For further details about practices in other countries, see Annex 6.<sup>125</sup>

## 8.2. The Estonian programme compared to other similar programmes

The overall structure of the Estonian Welcoming Programme is broadly in line with the other welcoming programmes that target all newly-arrived migrants. This type of programme is non-compulsory, of relatively short length<sup>126</sup>, and generally provided to the target group free of charge. Moreover, these programmes are comprised of two components:

1. A cultural and/or societal integration course that intends to help migrants better integrate into society.
2. A free or low-cost language course designed to help migrants get a grip on the fundamentals of the language(s) spoken in their new home country.

However, the Estonian Welcoming Programme is also unique in a number of ways. While the other welcoming programmes falling under this category offer a standardised cultural and/or societal course or orientation day, the Estonian variant offers a more flexible programme that is more tailored to the individual needs of those belonging to its target group. Eligible participants are able to choose between a variety of modules and can, for example, decide to (only) take part in the more specialised *Work and Entrepreneurship* or *Studying* modules without having first participated in the more general *Basic module*. The Estonian Welcoming Programme is hence the only identified scheme not to offer a set programme to its target group(s).

There are also two other distinctive aspects of the Estonian Welcoming Programme.

1. Most of the compulsory welcoming programmes aimed at non-EU nationals and elective programmes targeting all newly-arrived foreigners offer additional benefits to those who have successfully completed the programme (such as a shorter path to citizenship or (partially) exempting individuals from future citizenship tests). Completing the Estonian Welcoming Programme does not offer such benefits.

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<sup>124</sup> With Malta being a notable exception, since its cultural orientation course lasts for at least 100 hours.

<sup>125</sup> The countries of Canada, the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Ireland are also included in the table for comparative purposes. Latvia does not have a standardised civic integration programme and does therefore not neatly fall into either category.

<sup>126</sup> With the exception of Malta.

2. The Estonian Welcoming Programme appears to be the only elective welcoming programme to have a set time limit in place, as participants can only take part in the WP if they have been residing in Estonia for five years or less.

## 9. SUMMARY AND MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

From 2014 to the spring of 2019 the different modules of the Welcoming Programme have been attended about 4 900 times, by 3 200 persons. Approximately 14.7% of eligible newly arrived migrants have attended the programme. The most popular are the language training, the Basic module and the Working and Entrepreneurship module.

In general, the **programme is relevant as it provides the information needed by newly arrived migrants to adapt and integrate faster**. The programme is also seen as a very valuable part of the image building of Estonia – it shows Estonia as an open, helpful and inclusive country and gives foreigners a feeling of being cared for and considered by Estonian authorities and people. It is important to better understand why most newly arrived foreigners do not attend the programme. One of the key findings of the research shows that as the programme offers rather general information, it is more relevant to attend the modules just after arriving to Estonia, however at this time potential users may be facing too many other problems and information sources at that time and therefore they do not reach the programme or cannot afford time for it. Although people may gain needed information from the internet, acquaintances, personal experiences, etc., it is important to reach to the programme as soon as possible after arriving to Estonia to decrease the time needed to settle-in and the potential for negative personal experiences. One of the options is to offer the most important basic information at the pre-arrival stage (digital information – files, videos, FAQ, etc., about culture, climate, working, studying, hobbies, etc.,) and offer a slightly shorter basic module after arrival to increase the accessibility to the training. Thereafter, when the most critical everyday questions have been solved and people are ready to receive more precise information about specific topics, higher stress should be put on introducing other modules, incl. language training, and attending local events.

The **programme is effective as all result indicators have been exceeded** although these indicators may not be the most appropriate, considering the increase of immigration. The programme also has at least **short-term positive impact** as participants are of the opinion that their knowledge about Estonia and Estonian have improved. However, from a user service and sustainability perspective, **several possibilities for improvement were mapped to increase the relevance, impact, efficiency and sustainability of the programme**. The need for change is high, as just 14.7% of eligible newly arrived migrants have attended the programme and just about 36% of them have attended more than one module. Below are the most important problems to deal with in view of AT-ONE+S thematic areas:

### Actors

Actors refers to all the stakeholders who are directly involved in the provision and creation of the service. There are several actors who are responsible in some of the activities connected to implementing the Welcoming Programme. Increasing the understanding of the actors' responsibilities and their cooperation will increase the efficiency and impact of the programme. Also, a variety of participants should be kept in mind while modifying and communicating the programme. The more different actors are aware of the programme, the more trainings and information on the webpage of [settleinestonia.ee](http://settleinestonia.ee) can be referred to, again increasing the impact and the efficiency of the programme.

## Touchpoints

Touchpoints are all of the moments when the user interacts with the service. In the case of the Welcoming Programme the most important ones are the contact with the Police and Border Guard Board (service points), the website for information and registration, and the handbooks and trainings (incl. teaching materials).

Research showed that the importance of the PBGB is underestimated and therefore a higher focus should be put on their knowledge about the Welcoming Programme and their ability to share information about it.

Concerning the website of [settleinestonia.ee](http://settleinestonia.ee), remarkable changes have been made and a new version has been published as of autumn 2019. Although the analysis was based on the old website and some of the feedback given while drafting the report has been considered, there is still some room for development. Such as, 1) making the page and texts easier to understand; 2) making the page easier to navigate and 3) adding a chat option to the website or social media channels to ask about the programme as well as specific questions on the topics of trainings.

## Value offer

Value offer refers to the value that the service is generating or providing for its users. It corresponds to the questions: 1) why would a person use the service and not any other?; and 2) what makes the service unique? The research showed that there are several services that support settling in Estonia, and in the case of the Welcoming Programme there is a lack of coherent style and branding, which causes a lack of a strong identity and makes it difficult for participants and the target group to differentiate the service from others. Therefore, even if trainings as touchpoints are the key value of the programme and highly evaluated by participants, the information about the programme and its possibilities should be easily understandable and sharable and reach to target groups to be effective in supporting settling. Although participants have given high grades for trainings and training materials, research shows there are several possibilities to increase the value of the programme. Firstly, there is a need to reconsider what the value of the Programme is for different groups of foreigners. Secondly, there seems to be a need and opportunity for the Welcoming Programme to broaden and expand its offer through a more diverse set of formats (not only trainings) and a more diverse pool of participants. Thirdly, there is a necessity to respond to participants' needs (preferable methods, interaction between participants, interested topics, cultural background, family status, possibility to attend whole-day trainings, etc.), to a better extent that was brought out by several target groups of the research.

## Needs

The needs provide cues and guidance for the service provider to develop the value offer, implement the service, and choose delivery methods. As there are several actors and different types of participants, their needs (information about the programme, value content, emotional needs) are also different whereby needs change in time. To better answer to the needs of different actors and increase the relevance, impact, efficiency and sustainability of the programme, flexibility and personalisation are needed. For that new methods and formats of providing information in terms of time, location and content, are needed to respond participants' life situation and increase accessibility to the programme. Although trainings were highly graded and 78% of survey respondents have checked the programme materials after the training and found these to be useful, the research provided several ideas to develop trainings and the handbooks to better meet the needs of newly arrived migrants. One of the key points is to have more practical information for everyday life and to support social interaction. Also, it was seen that the feedback form and feedback collection methods do not currently provide enough input to detect the needs of foreigners in order to update and improve the service in future.

## Experience

Experience shows the dynamic interrelationships between people and the environment, which shapes the way people perceive situations and make decisions. According to the service design concept, experience can be designed and planned by the provider. We found that users have negative, neutral and positive motivations to join whereby the main challenge in usability relates to the accessibility of the course and its information. Although the programme is graded 4.66 out of 5, and 96% of respondents reported, in feedback forms, that their informedness had improved at least slightly, interviews and focus groups showed an inability to deal with practical situations after training. Also, for non-participants the usefulness of the programme remained somewhat unclear. Therefore, as the PBGB is the first contact point and trainers and teachers play a crucial role in creating a positive experience of the service, as their work is the most memorable for the users, more stress should be put on their capability and competences to increase the number of participants and decrease the number on persons not joining or cancelling the training.

## Structure

As the Welcoming Programme has a complex organisational structure supporting it, it was decided to include this additional element into the analytical framework. Research showed that there is a compartmentalisation of the service with interruptions in activities, overlapping processes, shared resources and unique know-how and tools of certain actors. Also, the service's structure is seen as rigid in terms of personalisation.

## Main recommendations

Considering the fact that the aim of the evaluation was to obtain input to develop the Welcoming Programme and there are limited resources for that, three main scenarios were developed based on the problems mapped with the research:

1. not changing anything as training materials are revaluated and updated regularly and webpage has been just updated;
2. slightly modifying the trainings and the current materials used by the programme; or
3. reevaluate the aim of the programme and restructuring the programme and materials that support the provision of the information.

The first scenario may not be a reasonable choice as it was seen that it may have a negative impact on the sustainability of the programme, and even more so if the programme is not offering enough value to all target groups. The second scenario gets valuable background information with some potential ideas for changes from the current report. However, it is recommended to avoid the situation where ideas from the current report are integrated into the current programme without changing the modules and methods of providing the information as it will overwhelm the programme. The third scenario is the most challenging and time consuming: representatives of actors should come together and discuss how to go on with the programme. However, as research showed, before making any changes there is a need to decide what is or should be the aim of the programme, what should be the value for different groups of participants, and what kind of restrictions are there for making any changes. These decisions will be the basis for choosing how to tackle which problems.

Regardless of the above, however, below are the main recommendations for further developing the programme without restructuring it totally (explanations of the needs for the changes and more information about potential changes can be read from chapters above):

- 1) The aim and value of the programme in view of the MoI (for different groups of foreigners) and other stakeholders should be clarified.

- a) If the goal of the WP is the one in the regulation, this goal needs to be communicated horizontally, strategically and systematically to all relevant stakeholders, including the participants themselves. It may help to have a one sentence slogan of the goal that is shared among all materials, communication, websites, etc.
  - b) The aim of the programme should also be looked at in a view of “Integrating Estonia 2020” and other services that support adaptation and integration: if all modules and potential services have been attended, is the person adapted and integrated or is he/she missing some kind of support? What service should offer this support?
  - c) Expanding the offer to a more diverse pool of participants should be considered.
  - d) Although “settle in Estonia” fits to the context of study in Estonia, work in Estonia, research in Estonia etc., the web domain should be changed e.g. to Welcome in Estonia to avoid the confusion between different brands and programmes.
- 2) The awareness of different actors about the programme and its aim (see previous point) should be increased. Stress should also be put on the whole picture so that actors understand the need for the programme and their role in supporting settling.
- 3) Roles and responsibilities of actors should be clarified, cooperation with each other and sharing experiences should be supported (regular frequent common discussions with all stakeholders, common trainings and events to increase competences and solve problems raised).
- a) In the case of the Research and Study modules more cooperation with universities is needed – those modules are more valuable when taken in autumn and the benefit of it would be greater when the specifics of a university are explained by the university staff.
- 4) The registration process should be user-friendly. At the moment, the registration goes through a webpage where information, including the timetable of trainings is not easy to get.
- a) More structured schedule of trainings – e.g. basic module every first Saturday of a month or every other month, etc.
  - b) Enable possible participants to subscribe to get information on when their preferred training takes place.
  - c) Make registration possible at the PBGB.
- 5) The structure of the programme should be changed to support value delivery:
- a) Divide the training modules into sections, so that a whole module can be attended in one day, or only one section of it. For example, the Family module could first address life without kids in Estonia, and later, life with kids. Participants without kids, could attend the first half of the module and then leave, and they could take the other half of the module later on their lives. Information about the possibility to attend just some of the sections must be clearly communicated to the potential target group.
  - b) Change the schedules to reduce the time spent in training and make the trainings more attractive for foreigners who do not enjoy spending eight hours learning in a classroom.
  - c) Allow foreigners to create their own curriculum, and instead of attending modules, attending topics. This could be done by allowing participants to select several topics of interest on the website, and later providing dates when the topics will be covered.
  - d) Ask participants about their experience level with the topic and assigning them to a group that best fits their experience level. This could be particularly relevant and useful in the Estonian class.

- e) Map participants expectations of a topic or module and group similar interests together. E.g. if the participants want to learn Estonian for work, they are grouped together, those who want to learn for socialising, are grouped together.
  - f) While letting participants map the information they believe is necessary to them, it should be kept in mind that they are likely to lack the full “big picture” of possibilities and life in Estonia: so topics should still be offered that consider their needs based on their background, family status, time of arrival to Estonia, etc.
  - g) Create different levels of knowledge in the modules, so that the modules could be shortened and respond to participants’ experience. For example, Basic Study module, Intermediate Study module, Advanced Study module, etc.
  - h) Offer the information in different formats: provide informational videos through the website, offer webinar sessions, use seminars and talks only for specific topics, etc. Trainings do not need to be the only format used by the programme.
  - i) Use different methods during the training: more interaction, socialising and practical information for everyday life; support social interaction.
- 6) All touchpoints, incl. trainings, materials, and the webpage should use easily understandable language and be logical.
- a) Shorten and simplify sentences so that even persons whose mother language is not English or Russian can easily understand what has been said (clear or plain language).
  - b) In cases where different laws have been mentioned, it may be reasonable to add the name of the regulation and a link to more information in footnotes.
- 7) All touchpoints, incl. trainings and materials should use a common brand to increase the identity of the programme.
- 8) Handbooks should be modified so that these are usable as workbook manuals.
- a) To avoid the workload of updating the data in handbooks, it should be considered to compile it partly as a workbook that can be updated with the information by the participants during the session.
  - b) Consider having one handbook instead of several ones.
- 9) A variety of potential participants and their needs should be considered.
- a) In the case of trainings, groups should be formed based on similar interests, backgrounds and needs.
    - i) Inquire into the abovementioned aspects and preferable times while registering to trainings.
    - ii) Share the abovementioned aspects with trainers before the training takes place.
    - iii) Trainers: consider the information received and modify slides based on that but at the same time keep in mind that migrants may not know what they do not know and therefore at least some basic information is needed.
    - iv) Forming groups:
      - (1) As some topics are solved differently by EU citizens and people from third countries, there should be different training groups, if possible.
      - (2) Consider dividing modules, e.g. working, science, so that these can be focused more on workers vs potential entrepreneurs, MA vs PhD, student vs professor.
  - b) There is a need for more variety in methods of delivering information (see also the point 4).

- i) Offer pre-departure information to all persons who are planning to come to Estonia or are interested in Estonia (e.g. easily understandable and navigable webpages, recorded webinars, FAQ).
  - ii) Offer a shorter basic course for all people who have just arrived to Estonia, even to persons who have arrived with a visa or who are returnees.
- c) Next to general overviews, practical topics should be covered and practiced so that people actually know practical skills, e.g. how to digitally sign documents, get an identity code, use free public transport, etc.
- d) More stress should be put on socialising, incl. with Estonians.
  - i) Trainers should plan breaks and the methods used during the trainings more consciously.
  - ii) More hints should be given on how to spend one's free time (hobbies, events, volunteering, etc.) and on meeting local people.
  - iii) Attending local events should be encouraged.
- (1) The programme should include attending the above-mentioned events with the trainer, incl. explanation sessions of what to notice and keep in mind.
- 10) Offering practical and in-depth trainings to trainers in topics of teaching methods and processes, incl. compiling and choosing training materials, differences in teaching children vs adults, teaching persons with different cultural background, and analysing teaching processes according to the adult training occupational qualification standard (if possible, electronically), should be considered. Providing and attending a co-vision twice a year would be valuable. An alternative would be to request that trainers have an occupational standard that presumes trainers are dealing with the mentioned aspects.
- 11) The aim of asking for feedback and testing participants should be reconsidered: general feedback vs specific feedback to develop the programme vs information to evaluate the impact of the programme.
  - a) Modifications are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the training in view of the learning objectives. In the case where there is a desire to monitor longer-term impact, the feedback requested in one of the letters sent to participants after the training, should be more specific. E.g. if more feedback is requested six months after participation, stress should be put on usability of the knowledge gained.
  - b) To get valuable feedback about trainers and to support developing their practices, questions should cover a variety of different aspects: e.g. competence of the trainer in a topic, the communication of trainer with participants, involvement of participants by the trainer, the variety of methods used, etc.
  - c) Feedback for trainers and self-analysis of the teaching process should be easily (electronically) comparable.
- 12) The short-term impact should be evaluated based on the tests carried out at the end of the training, not based on a person's own opinions. In addition to the short-term impact, looking for possibilities to evaluate the long-term impact is also recommended, e.g. through collecting statistics about whether the participants have been more successful in adaptation compared to the ones who have not attended the modules.
- 13) The data quality and data collection should be improved. In the registration sheet or in the feedback form, ask participants to include their date of arrival to Estonia (month/year). This is the simplest and easiest way for the future analysis of data (without the need for combining through a database on the WP participation with the registry data), to get (for example) information about the time of entry into the service; and, on the other hand, gives trainers valuable information by understanding how long the

participants have been in Estonia (and, if necessary, allows an adaptation of the content of the training). Also, to avoid the misinterpretation the data and to speed-up the analysis of data (incl. following evaluations) the data collected (whether by an organisation or individual) should be always high quality and easily understandable.

While making changes it is important to always consider the needs of participants and potential participants, and to keep in mind that the aim of the programme may/should be different as time passes and as public authorities and service providers become/are more ready to offer services and answer questions in more languages.

# 10. ANNEXES

## Annex 1. Report of the 1st validation seminar: Exploration and ideation session for the Welcoming Programme

On the 25th of October 2019, the Exploration and Ideation session for the Welcoming Programme was conducted with representatives from different organizations. During the 5-hour session, with breaks, a facilitator from the Velvet design agency shared the main topics found during the evaluation activities with the participants. The selection of information to deliver was based on two considerations: the magnitude and relevance (high-relevance finding) and the possibilities it offered for exploration (how much a participant can work with this problem or information to find a solution). Thus, many detailed findings of the research such as spelling mistakes in the handbooks, the unclear enrolment process, or the placement of brochures were intentionally left out.

The session followed a custom structure for the programme with the following guidelines and considerations:

- Activities given to participants should be paired with sufficient information to carry them out;
- Activities will be used to allow participants to explore information in depth, reflect on the information and build on it;
- Both group and individual activities should be considered. The first ones will allow participants to express or define their own opinions without social pressure, while the second will allow opinions to be exchanged and ideas and findings to expand and grow;
- There should be a balance between active and passive participation.

All activities and information given during the session had the objective of delivering the main findings from the research to the main stakeholders, to validate and confirm findings, to create a space for exploring solutions to the problem areas detected in the Welcoming Programme and to create a common understanding between participants about the need to view services from users' perspective. All activities undertaken during the session followed these objectives, and a pragmatic design approach was taken to ensure the delivery of information, mainly that participants "learned by doing".

- The creation of ideas is not the main goal, but a conduit to understanding and exploring the limits of the Welcoming Programme.

To support the learning by doing approach, the facilitator guided the group to create a series of proposals for the improvement of the programme, taking into consideration the needs of users. To relay the needs of users to participants, the facilitator presented five different personas compiled from the research explicitly for this exercise. Each team was given a persona to work with and design for.

The desired output of the session was an increased understanding of the complexities of the Welcoming Programme, its purpose and value, expressed through a series of improvement concepts created by participants. To this extent, four final concepts were created between four participants' groups. However, during the session more than 300 different ideas were expressed and written by participants, many of which did not touch upon the last concepts created by the teams. During the session, two voting rounds were

conducted, the first one between the teams, to select their most interesting ideas to develop. The results of that voting can be seen in the table below:

| # of votes | Idea  |
|------------|---|
| 1          | Visa holders eligible for WP  |
| 2          | More detailed information on visa and residence permits and different possibilities               |
| 1          | Welcoming module before permit  |
| 2          | Use newcomers with pedagogical background   |
| 1          | Housing forums and renting information  |
| 4          | Online medium   |
| 2          | Bridge between employers and newcomers  |
| 2          | More personalized service and splitting the modules into parts                                    |
| 1          | Voluntary activities  |
| 1          | Teaching small-talk to start contact  |
| 3          | Alumni of the Welcoming Programme   |
| 2          | Webinars for concrete topics  |
| 2          | Activities that support making friends and practicing language. (i.e. Volunteering, hobby groups) |
| 1          | Offer shorter courses and a working module for the D-visa.  |
| 1          | Cooking together for language training  |
| 1          | Visits to various organisations like Töötukassa, EMTA, etc.                                       |
| 1          | Visits to locals' homes for events like Christmas.  |
| 1          | Have local mentors for a group of foreigners  |
| 1          | Practically go through the steps of registering to services                                       |
| 1          | Specialized real-estate broker services for foreigners  |
| 2          | Creating a newsletter   |
| 3          | Patron/matron. Having a spokesperson for the Programme  |
| 1          | Finding a hobby   |
| 1          | Audio-visual materials  |
| 2          | Special language courses for families   |
| 3          | Make a personalized plan so that foreigners can achieve their dreams in Estonia                   |
| 3          | Settle in Estonia podcasts in many languages  |
| 1          | Audio materials   |
| 1          | Online information and classes  |
| 5          | Personal coach or mentor  |
| 3          | Having follow-up sessions with foreigners   |
| 2          | Speed dating  |

The second voting session allowed all participants to vote for any idea they found most relevant to pursue from all the teams' ideas and concepts. The results of that voting session were as follows:

| # of votes | Idea  | Notes  |
|------------|---|--|
| 3          | "Selling" the Welcoming programme by the PBGB                                 |  |
| 1          | Sending text and email reminders to participants                              |  |
| 1          | Regular training  |  |
| 1          | Coaching-mentoring  |  |
| 2          | Follow-up sessions  |  |
| 4          | Online medium   |  |
| 2          | Bridge between employers and newcomers  |  |
| 1          | 1-month long paid language camp   |  |
| 5          | Settle in Estonia podcast   | The 5 votes are added to this idea's 3 votes from the first round. |
| 1          | Personal coach or mentor  |  |
| 1          | Collect data about interests when the participant enrolls through the website |  |
| 6          | Creation of a personal plan by each foreigner during the WP                   |  |
| 2          | Follow-up meetings  |  |
| 1          | Having happy residents  |  |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Patron/matron. Having a spokesperson for the Programme   |  |
| 1 | The alumni programme concept   | This concept was created by one of the teams. The concept is that all participants of the Programme can later become alumni, upon "graduation". The alumni can keep having meetings and support newcomers. |
| 1 | Giving an option of attending the regular programme or having a webinar introduction.            |  |
| 2 | Webinars with concrete topics  |  |
| 2 | Activities that support making friends and practicing language (i.e. volunteering, hobby groups) |  |
| 7 | Alumni of the Welcoming Programme  |  |
| 4 | Welcoming Module before the permit or ID card is given out                                       |  |
| 5 | Online course offered for pre-settling (before arrival)  |  |
| 4 | YouTube channel with success stories   |  |
| 1 | WP for visa holders  |  |

The four concepts created by participants directly addressed some of the main problem areas covered during our research, including:

- Awareness of the Welcoming Programme;
- Accessibility to the Welcoming Programme;
- Format of the trainings. No personalization possibilities and lack of variety in the offer, which responds to the needs and desires of users;
- Unmet user needs and desires.

Other areas of our research were not as popularly undertaken for experimentation, or were addressed tangentially. In this category, we find:

- Consistency of the service and brand;
- Purpose of the Welcoming Programme.

While the ideas might not necessarily be ready to be deployed, financially feasible or consistent with the Ministry of Interior strategic vision for the Programme, the results of the experimentation and ideation session can be considered positive, as the ideas and exploration by participants occurred in several levels, from the systemic to the detailed, and touched on the different categories our ATONE+S methodology.

## Annex 2. Personas

Figure 2 Persona 2: Aldert from the Netherlands

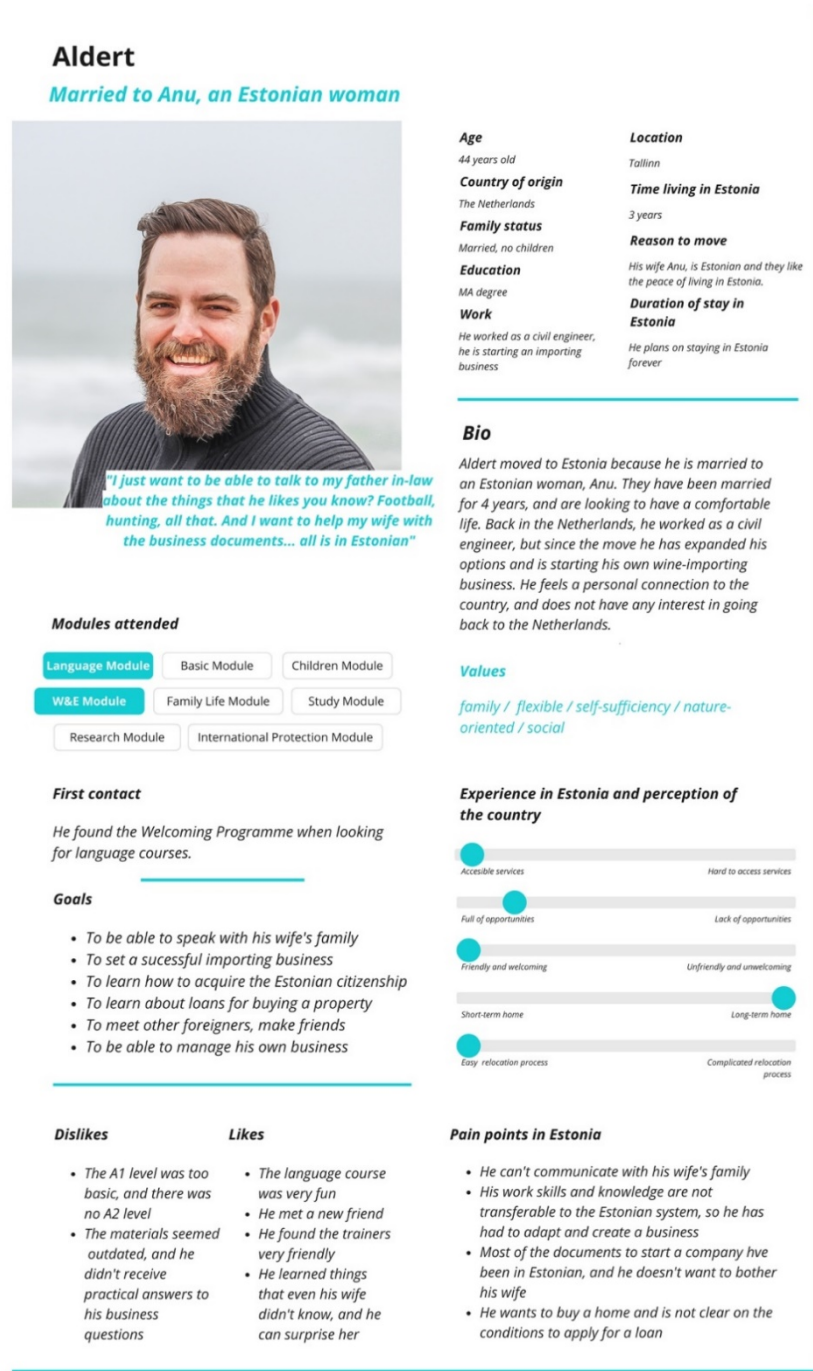


Figure 3 Persona 3: Baran from Egypt

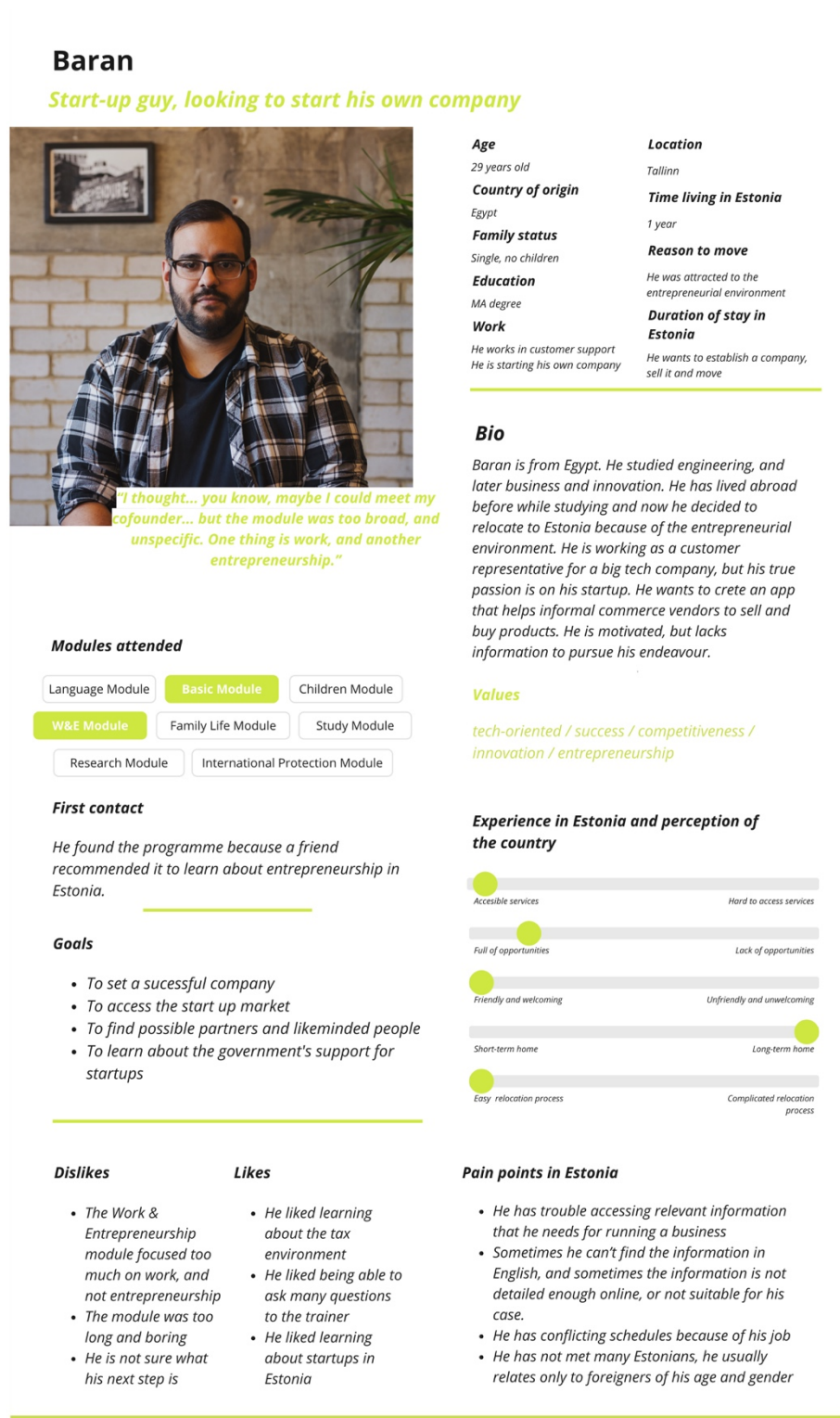


Figure 4. Persona 4: Khrystyna from Ukraine

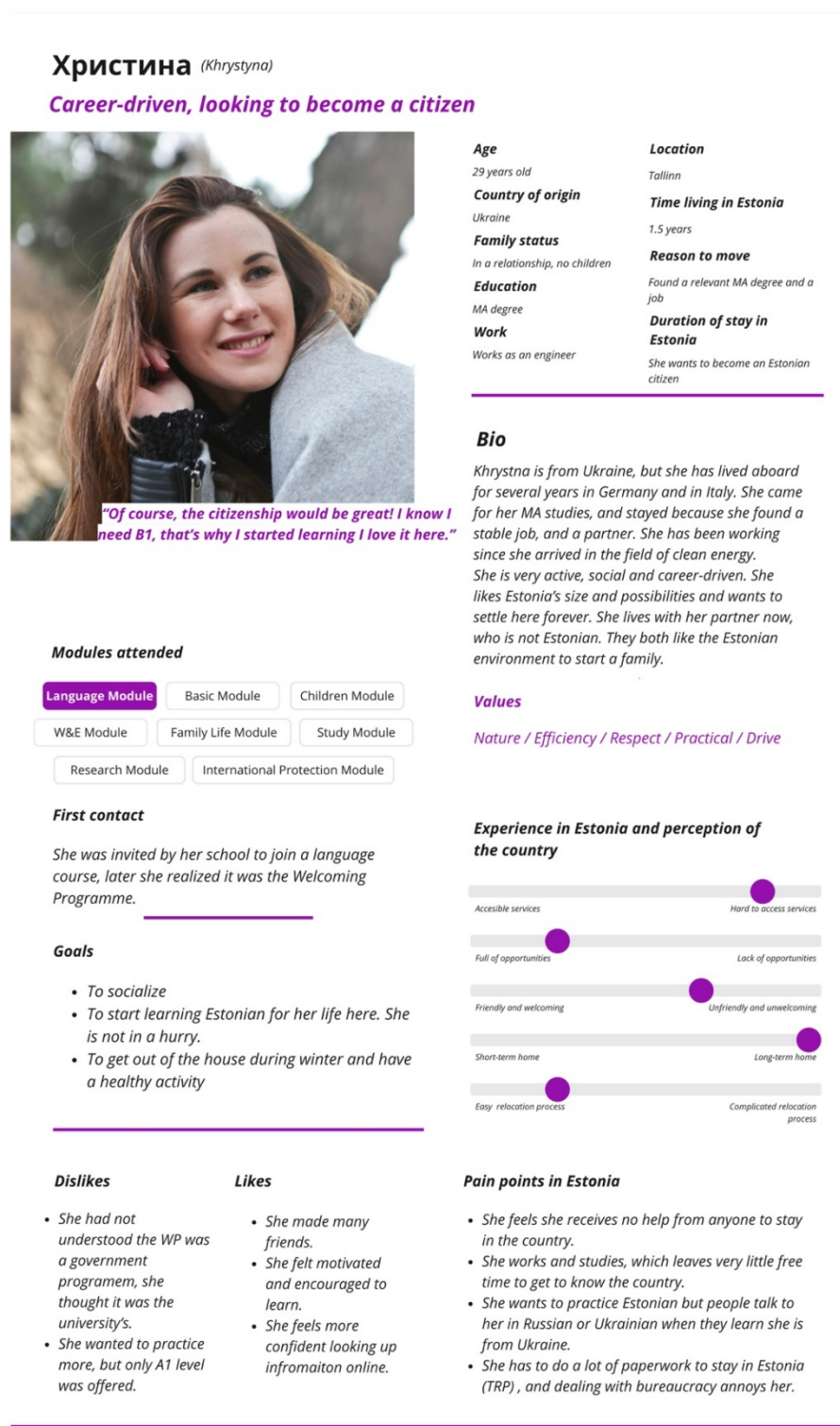


Figure 5 Persona 5: Nikoloz and Tsisia from Georgia

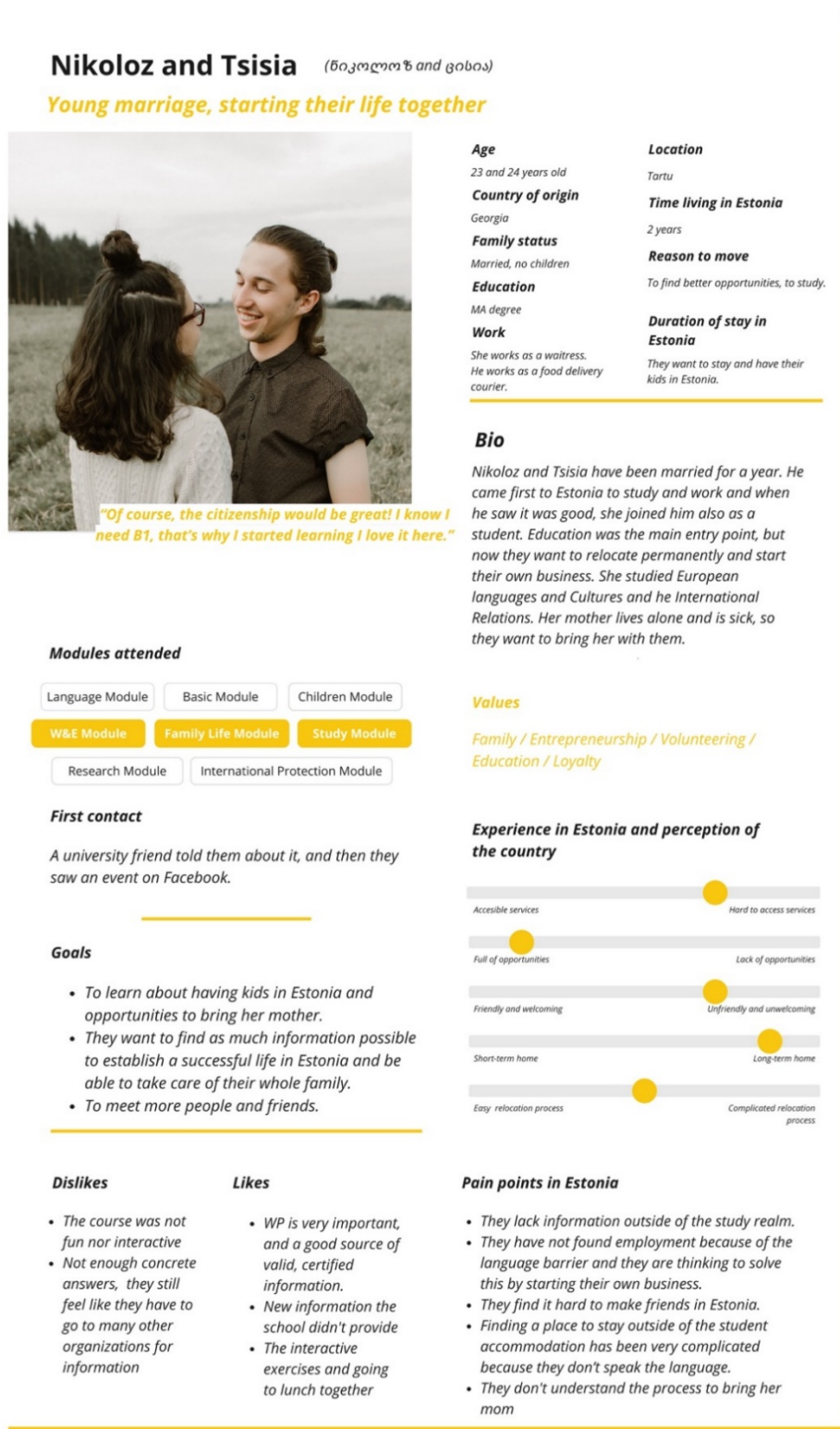
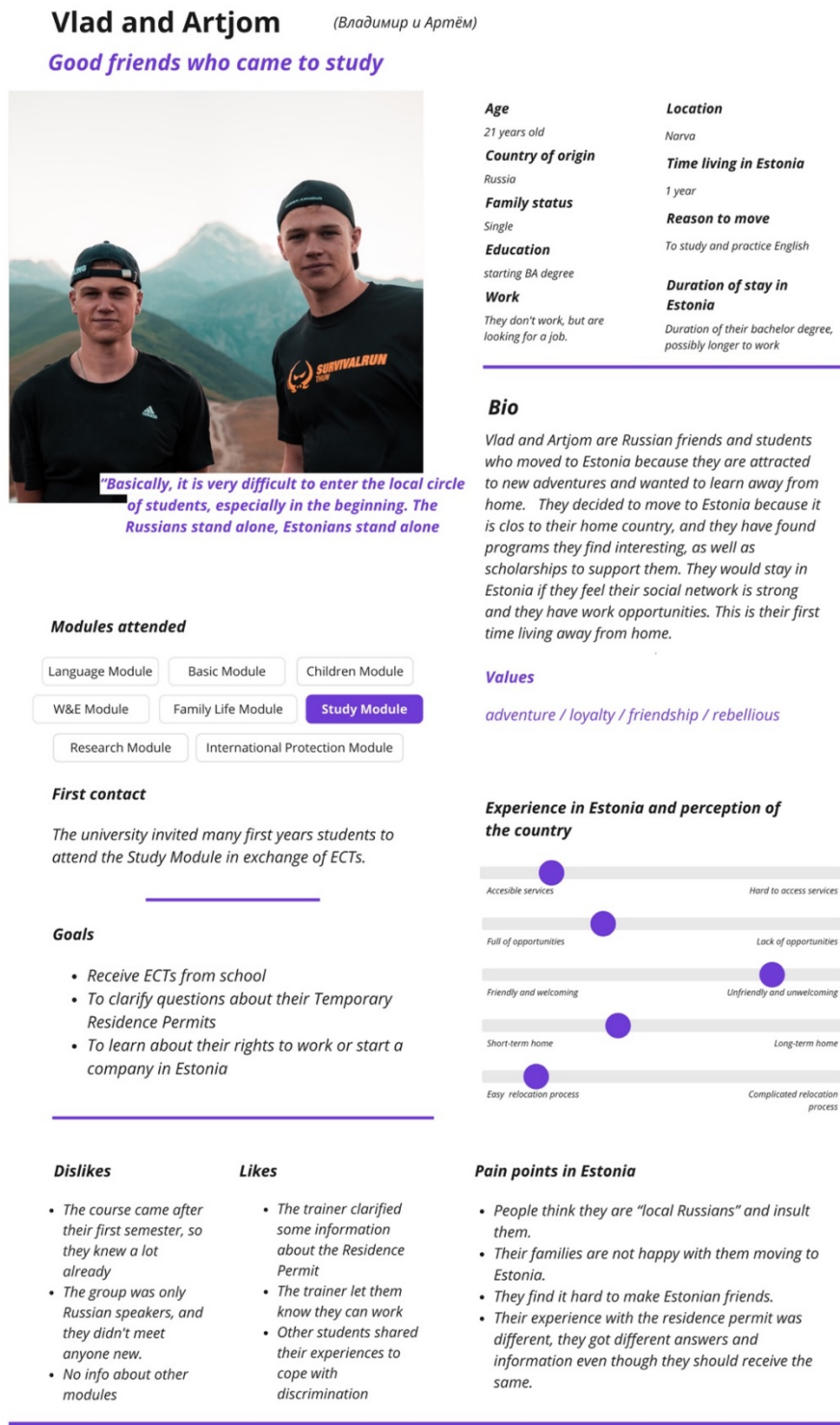
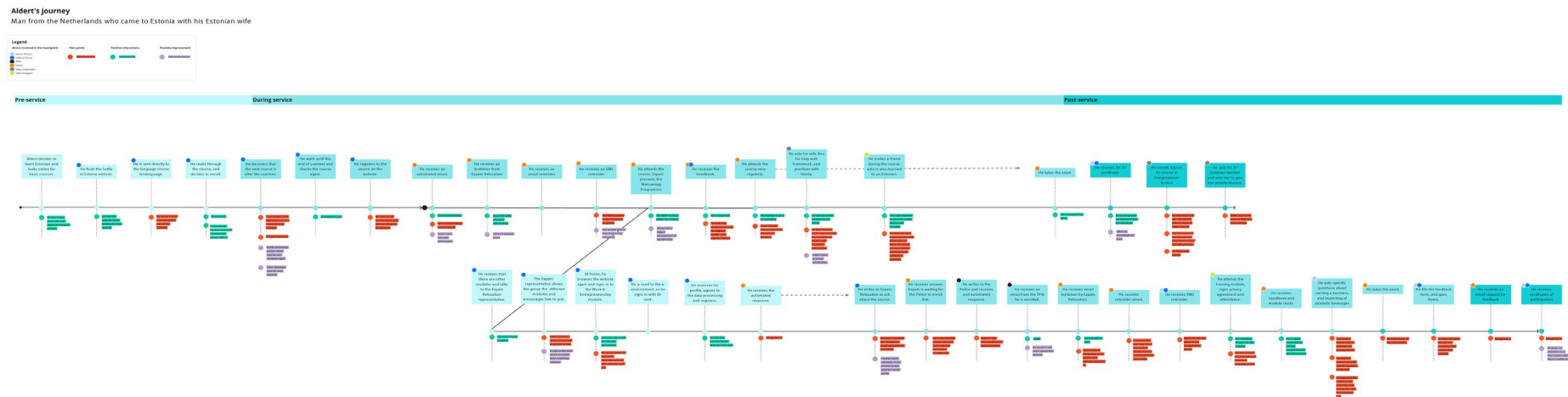


Figure 6 Persona 6: Vlad and Artjom from Russia

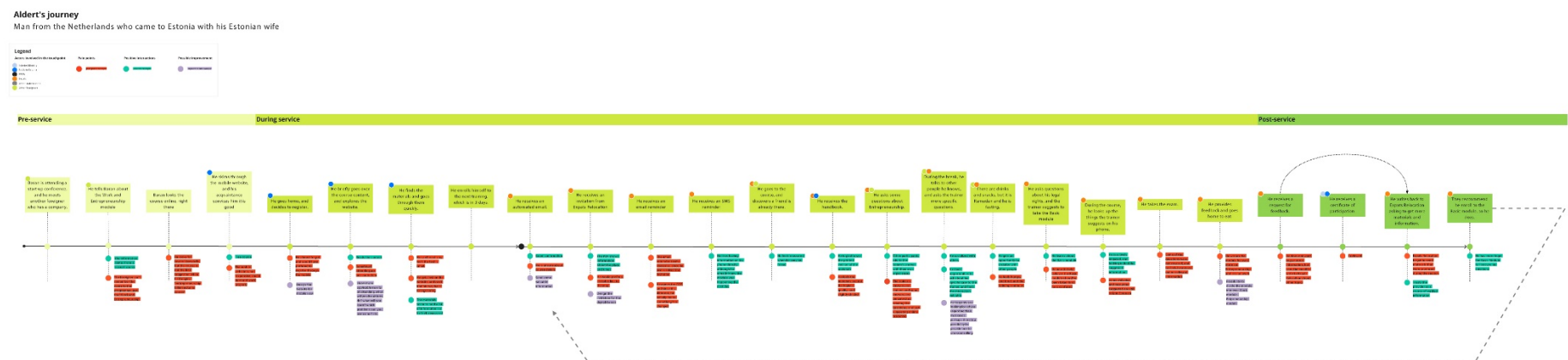


## Annex 3. User journeys

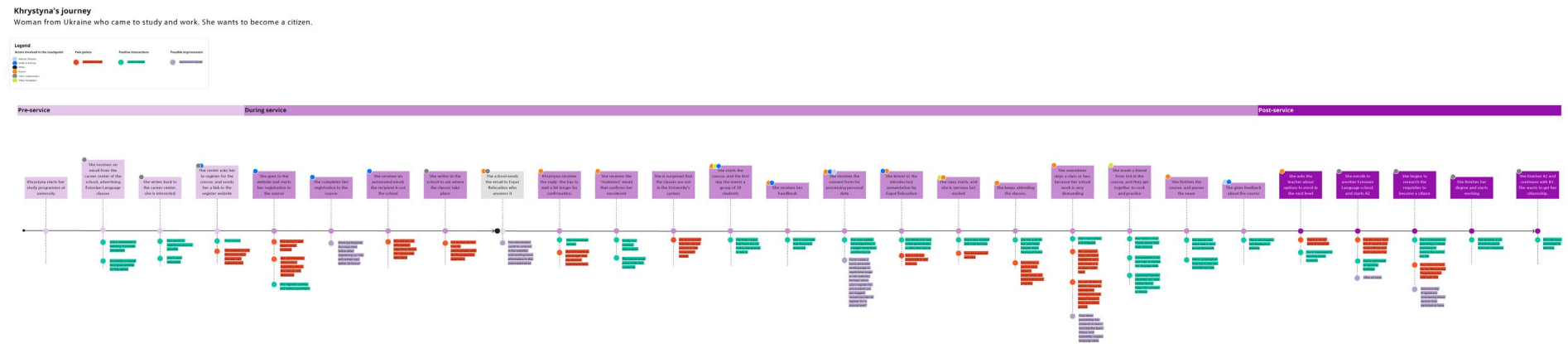
**Figure 7.** User journey 2: Aldert from the Netherlands



**Figure 8.** User journey 3: Baran from Egypt



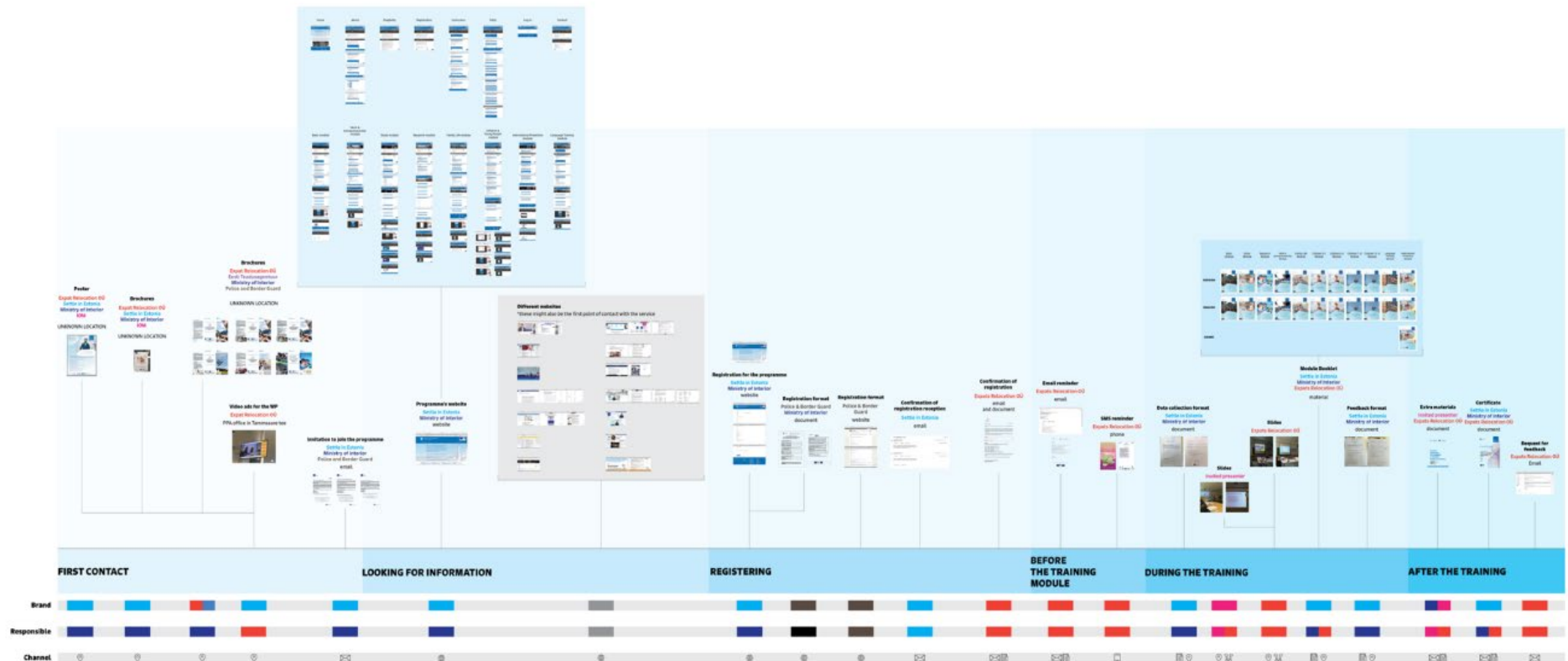
**Figure 9.** User journey 3: Khrystyna from Ukraine



## Annex 4. Other figures

Figure 10. Diagram showing the artefact touchpoints of the service.

### Touchpoint analysis



## Annex 5. Analysis of the old webpage

As the webpage was updated before publishing the report, the current annex includes feedback for the old webpage of the Welcoming Programme. As this section has been written before updating the webpage, it is written in a present tense. Researchers have not compared the old and new webpage to see what of the below mentioned pain points have been solved.

The website presents many issues and according to our interviews and service safari, has never been finished in a function or a form to reflect the ministry's initial plan for it. By its nature, the website is a tool meant both for the participants' and the service providers, and as such, the need to renew and rebuild it into a functional one is important. The website should provide a benefit for the end users as well as the service providers.

While analysing the website, our method of approach was from both its main purposes: to act as an informational medium, and, as a practical tool for registering. In the following subchapters general aspects of the website are also described and analysed.

### General

#### Brand

The website uses the old Estonia brand, and it also differs in the brand usage from other touchpoints, as can be observed in the general touchpoint diagram shown before. The brand is inconsistent, and mostly only the visual identity elements are used, without considering other aspects such as the tone of voice, character, etc.

#### Language

The website is available in three languages: Estonian, English and Russian. There is also an option for the visually impaired. Even though the international protection module is conducted in Arabic, there is no Arabic version of the programme's Website.

The website has non-graded legal language, making difficult to understand the text (also see chapter 4.2.1.2.) This is especially true when the language of the website is not in a person's mother tongue.

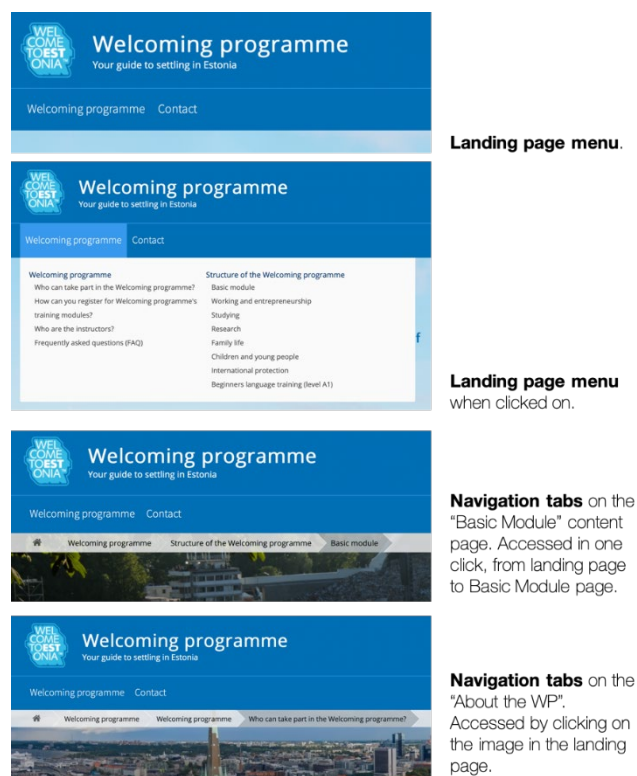
#### Navigation

The navigation is confusing and unclear. The navigation is done through a menu, but the menus change from page to page, as can be seen in the images on Figure 4.11. Also, the information is divided onto several pages, without any need to do so. The general information about the Welcoming Programme shown on the website (in the English version) is the following (each of these subtopics has its own page, even though the information could be shown in one single page):

1. Who can take part of the Welcoming Programme?
2. How can you register for the Welcoming Programme's training modules?
3. Who are the instructors?
4. Frequently Asked Questions

Moreover, there are no sub-menus explaining "What is the Welcoming Programme?" This information can be accessed by clicking on an image on the landing page, but the reason for such an action is unclear.

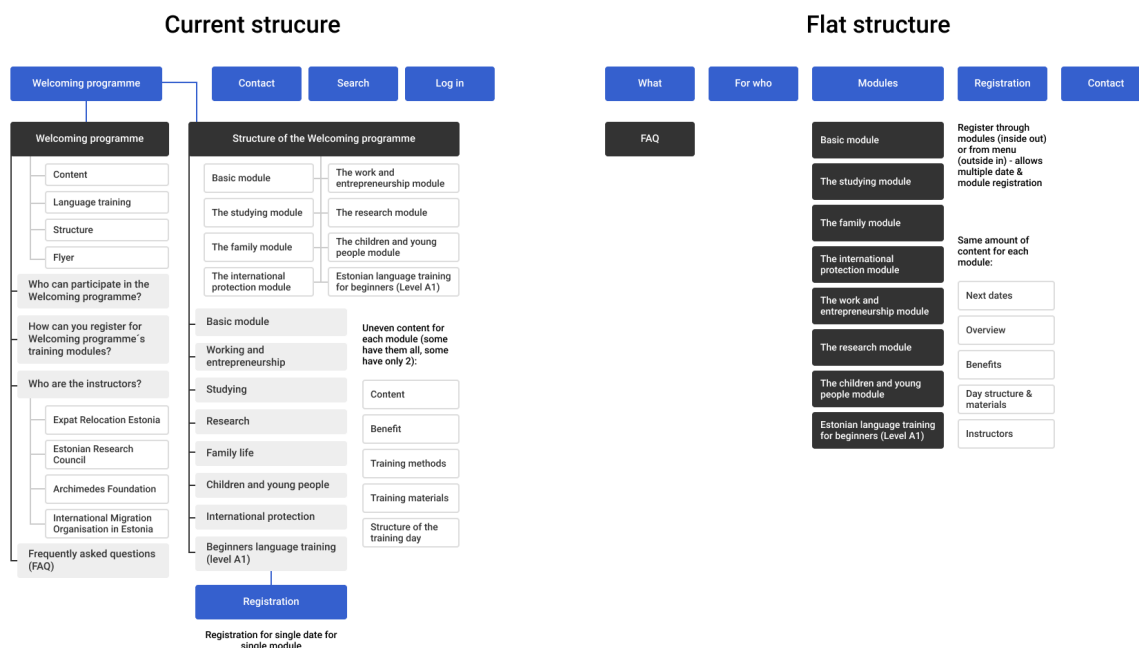
**Figure 11.** Screen image of the Welcoming Programme’s website’s menu and progress tabs



Further analysis was done to understand the navigation of the Welcoming Programme’s website by creating a diagram of its architecture (figure 4.12 on the left). The diagram and architecture of the website demonstrates the **unnecessary repetition of information, hidden pages, unclear hierarchy and redundant pages**. The relegation of the registration page is behind many layers of content. The content-pages are very similar looking, making it hard to understand whether one or the other content-page has been visited before or not.

In Figure 4.12. we provide a potential solution on the right (the flat structure), created by a digital designer, for the website architecture that could possibly provide more clarity, and eliminate the unnecessary content and steps in the navigation.

**Figure 12.** Comparison of the current website's structure to an initial proposal by researchers

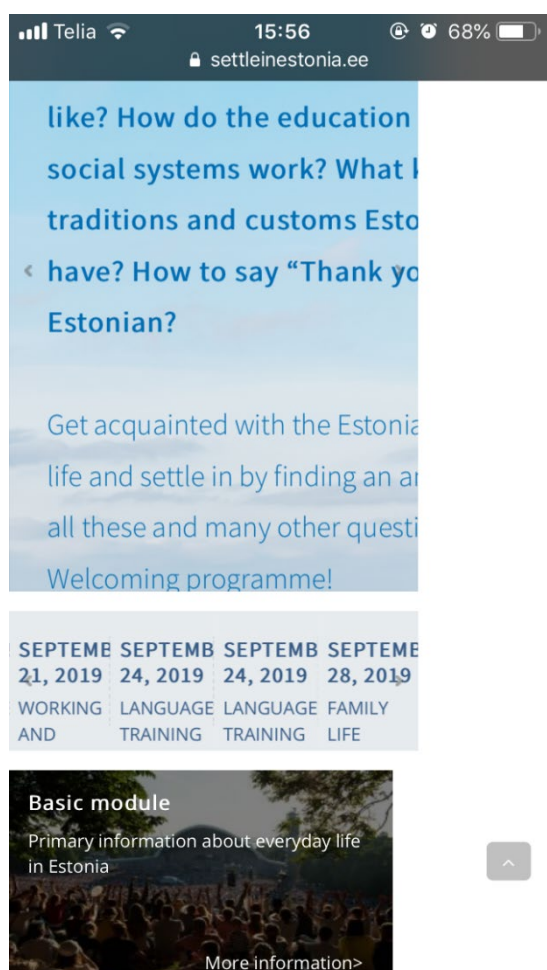


The website problems point to a lack of conscious development of user-experience and the user-interface (UX and UI respectively). The current website seems to act as a repository of information regarding the Welcoming Programme, while relevance and value to the participants and to the public or other actors/stakeholders (employers, universities, NGOs active in the field of migration/integration, etc.), is not presented in the best manner possible.

## Mobile version

The mobile version of the website is not responsive, and it has not been designed. This results in a poor performance when the website is opened in a mobile device, as can be seen from the Figure 4.12., captured screen shot from a mobile device. The information is unreadable, there are large white spaces, the website is hard to navigate by scrolling and the possibility to provide or highlight any valuable information is lost.

**Figure 13.** Screen shot of the Welcoming Programme’s website taken on an iPhone SE



Interviews with the past-users of the website confirm that the website has an outdated look and is considered unattractive. In some cases, the website is perceived as untrustworthy. Some interviewees indicate registration problems and that some links do not work. It should be also pointed out that the perception of Estonia as a digital society also plays a role in some of the website users’ perception of the website’s untrustworthiness, since better a designed website might be expected.

## Informational medium

One of the central aims of the website is to share the information about the programme. The current subchapter covers the issues with copywriting and the relevance of the information.

### Copywriting

Copywriting is the activity of writing texts for advertising or marketing, and in the case of the Welcoming Programme, the copywriting mechanism is also used for the website and for all other communication.

As an informational medium, the website has too much text, as can be seen under the menu “*Who can take part of the Welcoming Programme*”. The content of the website is more of a descriptive nature, rather than trying to convince, entice or invite participants to join. The landing page seems to hold more enticing information, but fails to explain what exactly the Welcoming Programme is.

Examples of this can be seen under the description of the Welcoming Programme, with texts such as: “*The Welcoming programme is aimed at foreign nationals who have legally resided in Estonia for less than 5 years and are one of the following [...]*”<sup>127</sup> or under “How can you register for Welcoming Programme’s training modules?”: “*After registration, participants will be contacted by the instructors to specify the time, place and other details of the training.*”<sup>128</sup>

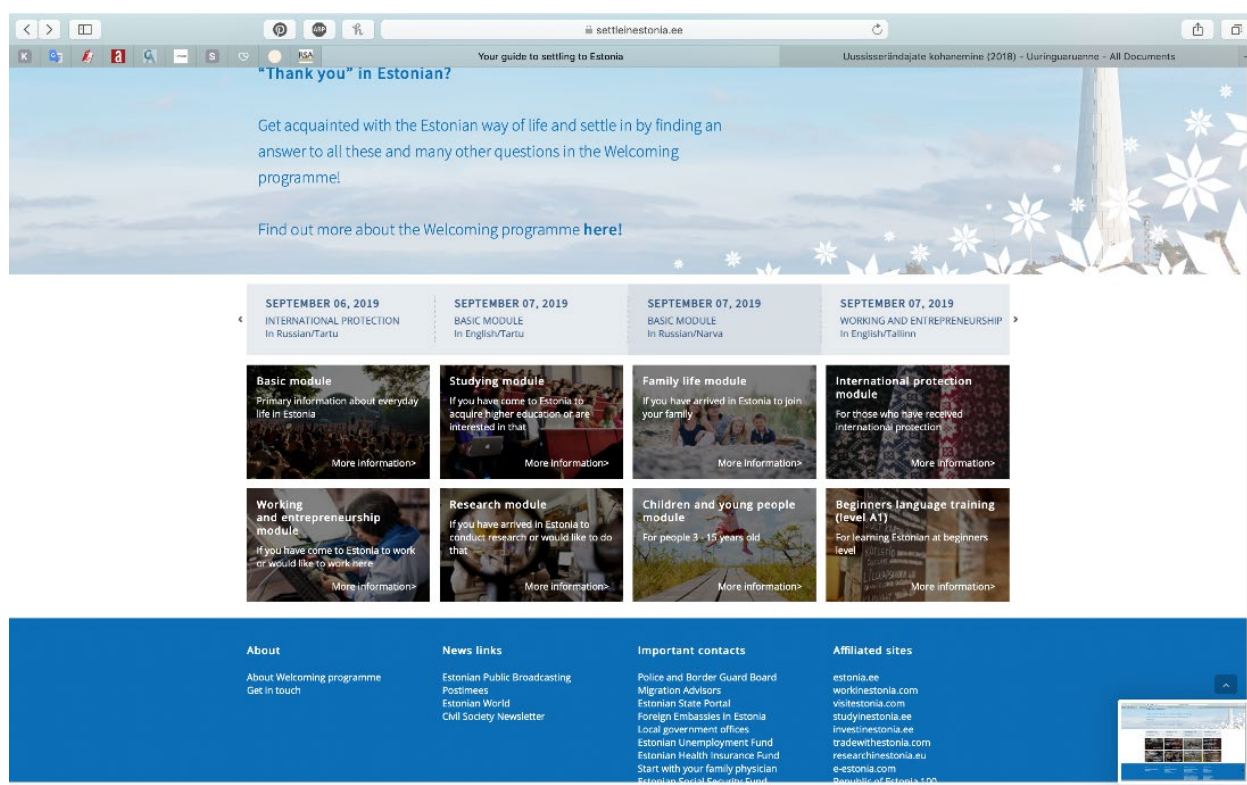
Both these texts are examples of how the website is used to describe the Welcoming Programme, without speaking to the foreigner directly and using dry, direct, and functional language.

## Relevance of information

From the perspective of the Welcoming Programme, the two most relevant pieces of information for participants are a) the information they can use to decide upon their participation or non-participation; and b) the information on the dates and times of courses and modules.

Although this information is briefly shown on the landing page, it is obscured by the lack of UX (user-experience): the next available trainings are shown in what is known in web design as a carousel (**Figure 14**), and are shown in the lower section of the website, thus not being prioritised. A carousel element being used to show the next trainings poses a problem since there is no moment where the user has an overview of all the next available trainings at the same time.

**Figure 14.** Screen image of the Welcoming Programme’s website showing the next available trainings in a carousel of information.



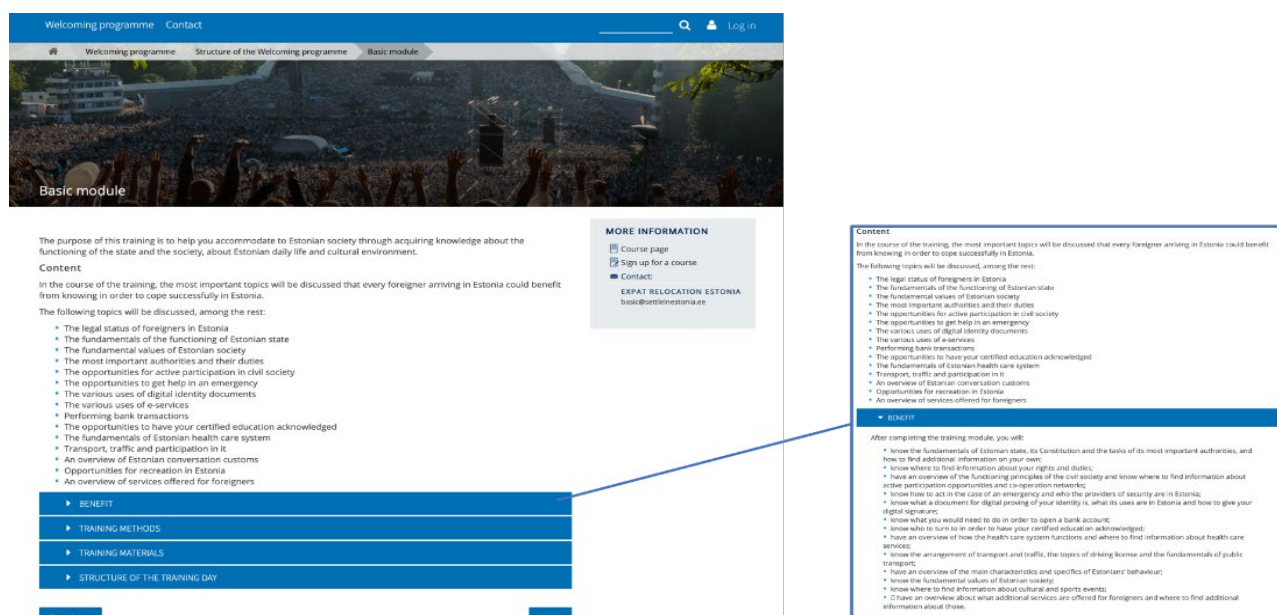
Another example of relevant information not being prioritized is in the description of the modules. The focus is on the content of the course, while the benefits for foreigners are “hidden” under a menu that needs to be

<sup>127</sup> <https://www.settleinestonia.ee/mod/page/view.php?id=123>.

<sup>128</sup> <https://www.settleinestonia.ee/mod/page/view.php?id=121>.

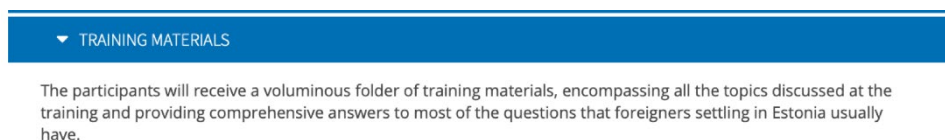
clicked on to be displayed (Figure 4.14). While the content of the modules is important, the way to present it could involve a mix of benefits and content, making the course more relatable to the lives of the participants.

**Figure 15.** Screen image of the Basic Module page and its accordion menus.



Each of the module's pages contains a sub-menu for materials, but instead of linking it directly to the course's materials (which are available on the website), it only refers to their existence (Figure 4.15.) The training materials are accessible through the "course page", under "more information" on the right hand of the webpage. Thus, there are no hints on the website as to how to reach the training materials and, therefore, people may not find these even though they know these should be present.

**Figure 16.** Screen image of the information regarding materials under Basic Module



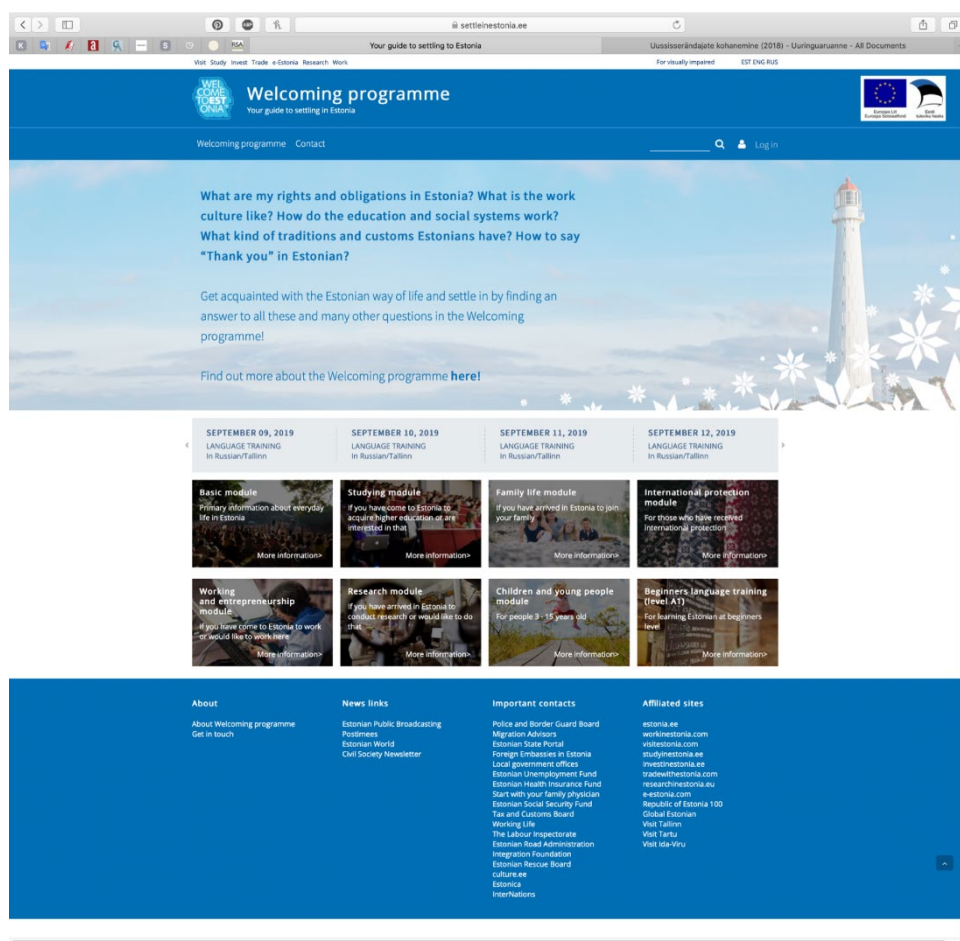
## Practical tool for registering to the Welcoming Programme

The website functions as the platform through which participants register to the course. The current chapter covers aspects related to registration and profile creation, which allows a registered person to access and view all attended trainings, and to use the forum.

### Registering

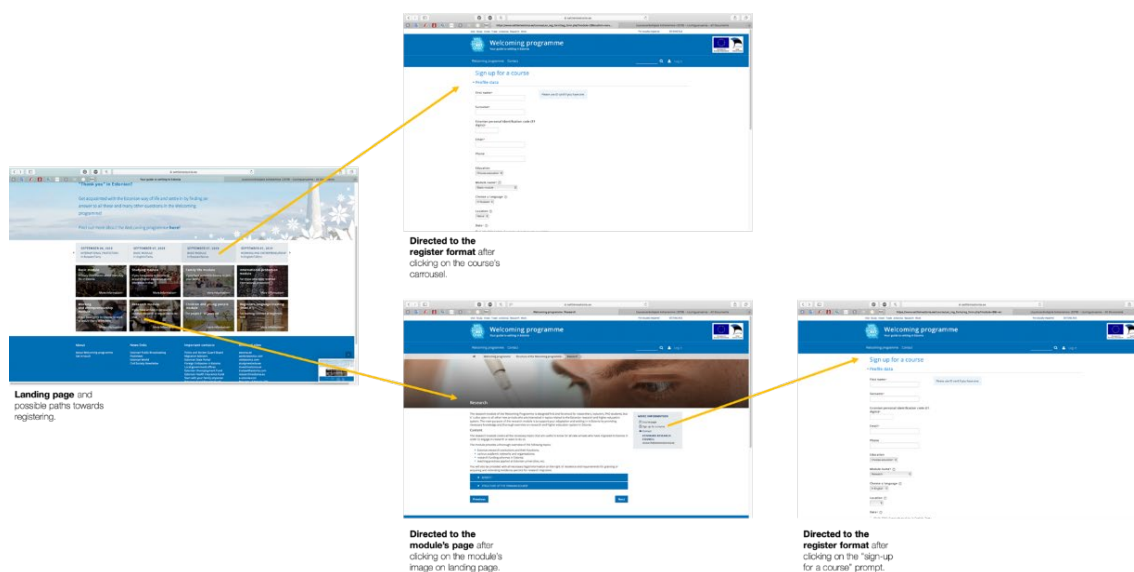
The registration process is one of the most important aspects of the service and this is provided solely through the website. Even though it is the most important action the user should be doing while visiting the website, the option to register is not provided nor mentioned on the landing page.

**Figure 17.** Landing page of the Welcoming Programme



There are several paths to arrive to the registration form from the landing page. The first one is to click on the carousel of available courses, which directly leads to the registration form. The major drawback of choosing this path is that participants do not receive almost any information or overview of the course's contents (topics, goals, objectives).

**Figure 18.** Diagram showing the possible paths to register



The second path to registration is through the course's page. With this option, however, finding the registration form is faded/submerged within the other elements on the page and is almost completely the least prioritised from the perspective of the User Interface design (UI) principles.

### **Profile creation**

Creating the user profile (the user account) on the website provides little additional value or benefit to the user, besides listing the courses the participants have taken, allowing them to review their personal data, and providing access to the forum (which is not actively used by users and in which there is no information or topics (Figure 4.19)).

One of the issues with the creation of the account is that, while logged-in to the account, the full names of all the people who have ever registered to participate in the Welcoming Programme are accessible through the website. This is important not only regarding the (possible violation of) GDPR regulations, but also due to the reason that most of the people who have participated on the courses have not given their consent to share this information with other actors than governmental bodies (i.e. with the public).

Figure 19. Still image of the website showing the participant's "dashboard"

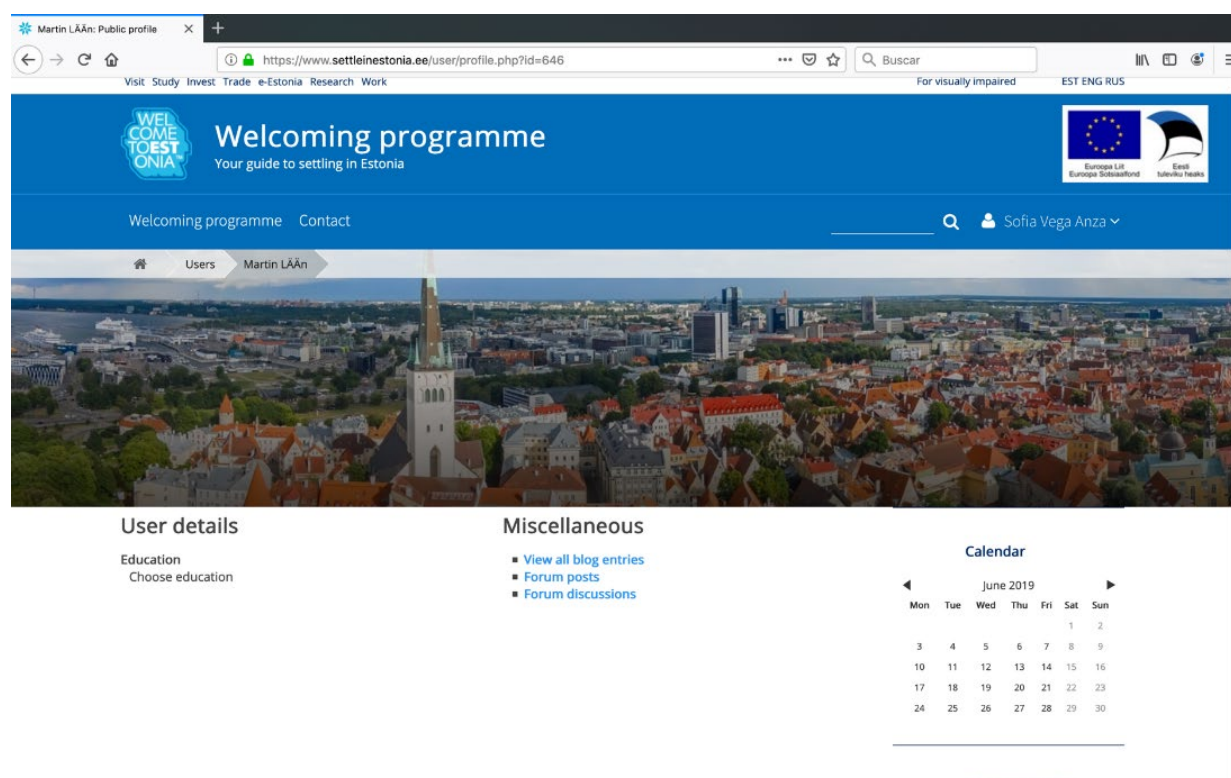
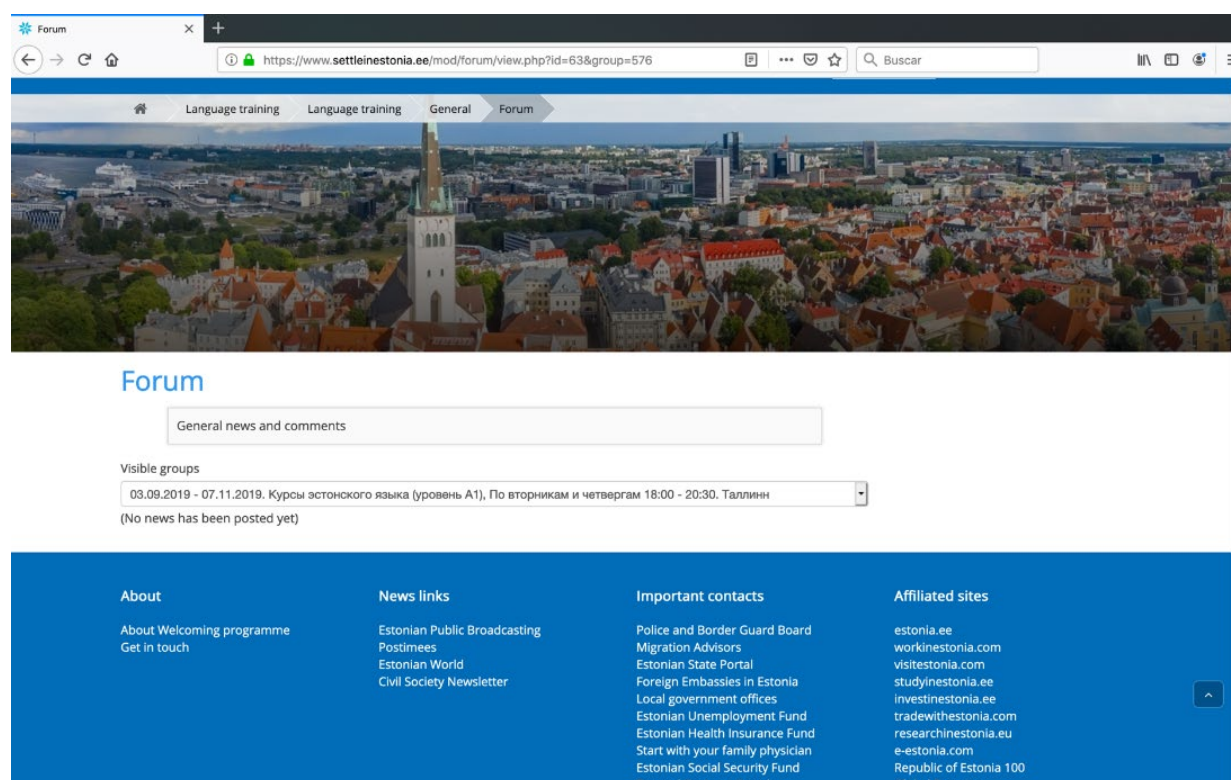


Figure 20. Still image of the website depicting the forum



6.

## Welcoming Programme: mid-term evaluation