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Ad-Hoc Query on 2023.48 Organization of immigration authorities' customer service in a possible crisis or exceptional situation

Requested by EMN NCP Finland on 13 November 2023

Responses from EMN NCP Austria, EMN NCP Belgium, EMN NCP Bulgaria, EMN NCP Croatia, EMN NCP Cyprus, EMN NCP Czech Republic, EMN NCP Estonia, EMN NCP Finland, EMN NCP France, EMN NCP Hungary, EMN NCP Italy, EMN NCP Latvia, EMN NCP Lithuania, EMN NCP Luxembourg, EMN NCP Netherlands, EMN NCP Poland, EMN NCP Slovakia, EMN NCP Slovenia, EMN NCP Sweden (19 in Total)

*Disclaimer:*

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## 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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The Finnish Immigration Service is interested in hearing the solutions and good practices of the member countries' immigration authorities for organizing customer service in a possible crisis or exceptional situation. The goal of the Finnish Immigration Service is to implement a customer service operating model for managing crisis or emergency situations.

The Finnish Immigration Service is interested in what kind of challenges in organizing customer service have arisen in connection with large-scale or sudden immigration and what measures have been taken. In addition, the Immigration Office wants to know how the achievement of strategic goals is ensured in large immigration or other exceptional situations.

The results of the survey will be used as research material in a master's thesis commissioned by the Finnish Immigration Service. The master's degree is a qualitative case study that investigates the readiness of the authorities of EU countries to organize customer service in crisis situations.

The data provided by the respondents is used to analyze the results of the survey. The research material is processed in such a way that the information of the individual respondent does not appear in the published Master thesis. Master 's thesis will not be published on the open network.

**We would like to ask the following questions:**

**1. Does your Member State organize customer service for dealing with immigration and asylum issues in your Immigration and/or Asylum authorities? YES/NO.**

*Available choices: YES, NO*

**2. If you answer YES to Q1, have the immigration/Asylum authorities of your Member State had any challenges in organizing customer service during a situation of large-scale or sudden immigration? YES/NO. If you answered yes, how have you solved these challenges?**

**3. What methods or means have the immigration authorities of your Member State used to coordinate and manage the service offered to customers in a crisis or emergency situation?**

**4. How do the immigration authorities of your Member State support their customer service personnel during a large-scale immigration or other exceptional situation?**

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5. How have immigration authorities of your Member State prepared for a crisis situation affecting customer service personnel? (I.e. contingency plans or preparedness drills)

6. How do immigration authorities of your Member State ensure the achievement of the organization's strategic goals in a large-scale immigration or other exceptional situation?

We would very much appreciate your responses by **11 December 2023**.

## 2. RESPONSES

		Wider Dissemination	
	EMN NCP Austria	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. With the increase in the number of applications, the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum introduced a number of measures to cope with the influx of migrants: Among other things, the "numbering system" was introduced in the physical customer service and all persons were assigned a number. The customer service was divided into several thematic categories, including a distinction between whether a person wished to submit an application or had a general enquiry. Many enquiries are processed by e-mail. Inter alia an e-mail address has been set up just for enquiries.</p> <p>---</p> <p>Source: Ministry of the Interior</p>

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			<p>3. Persons working in this area are usually accompanied by security staff, or security staff is always present. They are also specially trained and have knowledge about the handling of crisis or emergency situations.</p> <p>---</p> <p>Source: Ministry of the Interior</p> <p>4. The first priority is always the management question of whether sufficient human resources are available. If this is not the case, the first measure is to deploy staff within the authority in this area. If the authority's internal human resources are not sufficient, an attempt will be made to recruit new staff through external tendering.</p> <p>---</p> <p>Source: Ministry of the Interior</p> <p>5. Each organizational unit has a fire safety, evacuation and first aid officer. These people are specially trained in their area of responsibility. Contingency plans and preparedness exercises are also in place.</p> <p>---</p> <p>Source: Ministry of the Interior</p> <p>6. As stated under question 5, contingency plans and preparedness exercises are in place. The Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum has its own department that carries out continuous and rigorous controlling. This department reports directly to the Authority's management and informs of any difficulties. It also proposes countermeasures and is responsible for their implementation. In addition, controlling and quality management is carried out within the Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p>---</p> <p>Source: Ministry of the Interior</p>
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	<p><b>EMN NCP Belgium</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2. Each of the Belgian asylum services has measures in place to cope with increased migratory pressure. For instance, the Federal Agency for the reception of asylum seekers has a system of buffer reception places, which can be activated to cope with an increase. With regard to the international protection process, a recurring measure during times of increased migration pressure is the recruitment of additional staff to increase the decision-making capacity and are looking into a system to deploy available employees across various services (staff seconded from other asylum services, staff seconded from other federal public services – so called ‘special forces’), the recruitment of new staff through a joint recruitment website, deployment of EUAA experts...</p> <p>The Belgian government granted budget injections for the implementation of the asylum and migration policy. For Ukraine, the National Crisis Center has been coordinating with all partners to ensure that registration, reception and other forms of support are organised. The organisation consists of an assessment and monitoring of the situation, followed by a coordination of representatives of various departments and authorities that can act upon the forecasting from the monitoring stage. The National logistic hubs supports the various partners in developing emergency housing capacity. The national crisis center developed a housing tool, and the information cell brings together the communication units of the services involved to exchange and coordinate the authorities' communication actions. The federated entities also have dedicated coordination units bringing together the various services concerned at the regional level to coordinate regional actions, identify problems and find solutions.</p> <p>3. see above</p> <p>4. see above</p> <p>5. No general contingency plan in place, as stated above, each immigration service has its own measures in place.</p>
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			6. See above
	EMN NCP Bulgaria	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. There were challenges at the time when massive flows of Ukrainian citizens arrived in Bulgaria. In order to deal with the large number of people, there were open temporary centres for admission, registration and accommodation. These centres were not typical customer services but rather working desks established ad-hoc in reply to the needs of people arriving from Ukraine where officials in charge of both areas asylum and migration were working together. Online platform "Bulgaria for Ukraine" was created, as well as hotline, where people can get up-to-date information. Specific phone lines have been set up to address inquiries related to residence, reception, housing, access to education, and employment. These phone lines have proven particularly valuable for displaced persons who face challenges navigating in government websites. A specific project called 'Solidarity' has been implemented to support the rapid labour integration, providing psychological support, professional guidance, and labour counselling.</p> <p>3. National authorities worked at two playing fields: political and operative. The Government adopted decisions, plans and programmes. A crises centre was also established in due course where different institutions with relevant competences were represented. With a view to coordinate and manage the service offered, an Operational Coordination Group was established, with the task of carrying out optimal planning, organisation and control of the evacuation, reception and accommodation activities, and ensuring the necessary medical and other care for the persons who entered the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. In implementation of the state response plan, regional crisis centres have been established, where coordinated institutions and various civil and non-governmental organisations support the citizens of Ukraine. The operative level fulfilled its duties mainly through common desks where officials from both migration and asylum authorities worked together.</p> <p>4. N/A</p> <p>5. Actually, the customer service personnel consisted of officials from migration and asylum authorities.</p>


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			6. The main goal was to ensure fast-track admission to people in need of temporary protection who came to Bulgaria. This aim was achieved through establishing a working mechanism for applying smooth procedures and quick measures as well as involving players at both levels: political and on the field.
	EMN NCP Croatia	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. n/a During mass arrivals displaced people from Ukraine, all necessary services were present at reception centers and at centers for collective housing. In addition, web pages were put in place Croatia for Ukraine, where all information are available together with contacts of institutions, service providers and others.</p> <p>3. In order to coordinate all activities related to the reception and care of Ukrainian refugees, the Government has made a decision on the establishment of an interdepartmental working group for the implementation of activities of reception and care of the refugee population from Ukraine.</p> <p>4. n/a</p> <p>5. n/a</p> <p>6. n/a</p>
	EMN NCP Cyprus	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. N/A</p> <p>4. The customer service points may be reinforced with additional staff to cope with large scale arrivals.</p>

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			<p>5. In case of mass refugee arrivals the national contingency plan 'Nafkratis' can be applied. Preparedness drills and trainings are therefore held often.</p> <p>6. Within the EUAA Operating Plan to Cyprus, additional support may be provided (possible amendment of OP) and also flexibility to recruit additional temporary staff in order to deal with an exceptional situation.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Czech Republic</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2. Yes. The main challenges that need to be addressed are the overload of available staff and sudden shortage of human, spatial and financial resources. In crisis situations, such as a sudden migration wave, there is also a growing need for rapid provision of official information and strengthening of communication activities towards a specific community, which is new to the territory and often lacks information about the migration and asylum system, available sources of assistance, etc.</p> <p>Another indisputable challenge is the national coordination of activities among state actors, NGOs, state governmental actors and others (such as volunteers, private sector initiatives), build trust among all actors and ensuring quick quality information transfer among them.</p> <p>A crisis that the Czech Republic still faces is the migration of people fleeing the armed conflict in Ukraine. The Czech Republic was one of the first EU Member States to respond to this situation. In cooperation with state and non-profit actors (and later with the involvement of other international partners), it immediately set up a system of offices dedicated exclusively to the residence agenda of these persons, a system regarding accommodation and provision of objective information from an official source. The Ministry of the Interior was actively involved in setting up a coordination with representatives of other ministries, state authorities, the integrated rescue system, NGOs, etc. Strategic communication platforms have been established at many levels to ensure information transfer between actors and to ensure coordinated approach.</p> <p>3. In a crisis or emergency situation, the provision of services is usually coordinated uniformly by the crisis management authorities. Depending on the scale of the situation, national or local crisis management authorities</p>





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			<p>are involved (their responsibilities are stipulated in the Act No 240/2000 Coll. on crisis management and Act No 239/2000 Coll. on the integrated rescue system). The Czech Republic has an elaborate system of warnings and notifications informing the population about restrictions and measures resulting from the declaration of a state of crisis. This includes telecommunication and social networks, or the establishment of hotlines within individual ministries.</p> <p>All activities are coordinated by strategic or coordination groups at various levels, involving all relevant actors. These for instance include the Strategic Communication Group (between the relevant ministries, the integrated rescue system and other actors) or the Information Lines Coordination Group, which was set up to coordinate the provision of information among the hotlines of the relevant ministries, health insurance companies, labour offices, etc.</p> <p>4. In the event of crisis situations affecting the Department of Asylum and Migration Policy (Ministry of the Interior), particular attention is paid to staff reinforcement. The staff is reinforced by volunteers, members of NGOs, interpreters, and possibly members of the integrated rescue system. Necessary support to staff is secured by meetings, workshops and consultations with management and the preparations of various types of materials. These can be used to train new employees or to provide more detailed information to foreigners who subsequently do not need such extensive assistance. At the same time, employees can request psychological support that is offered on behalf of the office.</p> <p>5. The crisis plans (contingency plans) are used to deal with crisis situations and they have been developed on the basis of an analysis of threats to the Czech Republic. The Contingency plan "Large-scale migration wave" is related to migration. This plan is under the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior and its aim is to establish standard procedures and principles for dealing with a large migration wave. Communication aspects regarding crisis situations have not been described in detail in our plan so far, but we are preparing an update where the experience of the last crises (with refugees fleeing Ukraine) will be reflected.</p> <p>6. In the event of a large-scale migration wave or other exceptional situation, it is important to ensure the accuracy of information provided to the population and to avoid misinformation by coordination of all actors. This is one of the tasks of the Crisis Information Team of the Ministry of the Interior.</p>
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	<p>EMN NCP Estonia</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2. Most challenging was the lack of trained workload. In the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board (the PBGB) there are about 200 PBGB reserve officials who are prepared and trained to react within short-time period. The beginning of the 2022 crisis showed that this was not sufficient and the PBGB started to reorganize its structure and used resources from its donor services (e.g criminal police officers were involved to handle with asylum applications or were involved in reception of persons in hotspots at the border). In 2022, the PBGB rapidly increased its capacity to handle with the surge of applications. For example, in order to handle with large-scale immigration and applications, the PBGB established in all its prefectures across Estonia such capacity. Previously this competence was only in one prefecture of the PBGB.</li> <li>3. To handle with the surge of applications, the PBGB opened exceptionally its services at the weekends. Also, the mobile spots were organized by PBGB for these Ukrainian applicants, who couldn't visit local services.</li> <li>4. Extra psychological support was provided to customer service personnel.</li> <li>5. Yes, in order to be better prepared for any future influx, the PBGB has trained regularly officials and actively collected experience from joint operations and from the experience of other Member States who are currently dealing with the significant influx of migrants.</li> <li>6. The main goal was to ensure smooth and fast-track admission to Ukrainians and their family members in need of temporary protection. This aim was achieved through establishing a well-working application mechanism - it took a maximum of 1 hour from submitting the application to receiving temporary protection.</li> </ol>
	<p>EMN NCP Finland</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2. YES. The Finnish Immigration Service has developed its information and instructions for customers with partners. A lot of cooperation has also been done with other authorities, immigration organizations and other</li> </ol>

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			<p>actors. Enhanced communication has been made for customers on social media channels and websites. Customer service points and written instructions have organized for the airport and passenger harbour. Reception activities and services have been expanded as needed. The Finnish Immigration Service has also expanded customer service and communication to the necessary languages. Customers were created their own telephone service number and email address, where they can get instructions for their own situation.</p> <p>3. The Finnish Immigration Service established a temporary customer service coordination group with representation from several service channels. The group to solved the identified challenges and ensured the internal flow of information. The Finnish Immigration Service participated in cross-administrative authority groups of various ministries and administrative branches that meet regularly. The Finnish Immigration Service also cooperated a lot with other authorities, immigration organizations and other actors in order to provide various services. The Finnish Immigration Service served customers arriving in Finland at the service point in the harbour together with the Finnish Immigration Service served customers arriving in Finland at the service point in the harbour together with the Helsinki Police Department, the Finnish Border Guard, the Finnish Customs, the City of Helsinki, the Finnish Food Authority, the Save the Children and the Finnish Red Cross. The Finnish Immigration Service ordered a service from the Finnish Red Cross that received, processed and further delivered the grants intended for Ukrainians (e.g. clothing, supplies) offered to the Finnish Immigration Service.</p> <p>4. The customer service staff of the Finnish Immigration Service will be informed about the changes and updated instructions. Model answers are made for the personnel to support customer service. If necessary, emotional crisis support is arranged for the personnel to manage the load caused by customer service situations.</p> <p>5. The Finnish Immigration Service participates in preparedness exercises every year and maintains readiness for multilingual communication skills in major immigration situations. In the spring of 2024, we plan to add customer service and customer communication topic to the registration centre exercise. We also use previous lessons from similar situations. We will create a customer service operating model for managing crisis or emergency situations in December 2023.</p>
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			6. The Finnish Immigration Service strives to act also in exceptional situations in accordance with the strategic values (openness, reliability, courage). This is realized in individual solutions and serves as a guideline when making decisions related to the situation.
■	EMN NCP France	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. Among the main challenges identified in organizing services during a crisis by the stakeholders in charge of migration and asylum in France, there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges in crisis management by national authorities: several stakeholders insisted on the need to update the zonal plans of mass arrival, which are operational guides (documents for internal use) in the event of mass arrivals at external borders, adapted to the specific needs of each defense zone. They include measures to strengthen coordination between services and resources, the fight against irregular migration networks and smuggling, the surveillance and security at arrival points, and awareness-raising measures; but also to ensure a fluidification of the accommodation scheme, with a better distribution of asylum seekers across the territory. Some stakeholders also highlighted the need to provide a comprehensive response, as homogeneous as possible across the regions, with the involvement of all stakeholders, both at central and local level.</li> <li>• Challenges in terms of accommodation services: saturation of accommodation capacity in the Paris region and in certain regions There is a delicate balance to be struck between the desire to develop dedicated emergency services so as not to put under pressure pre-existing systems that have already been saturated (national reception system, emergency accommodation, etc.) in the event of major arrivals, and the search for services that do not exacerbate a feeling of competition between the public targets</li> <li>• Challenges related to the dissemination of information: Several civil society actors stressed the need of increasing information when people arrive, in order to avoid confusion and misunderstandings. The role of a cultural mediator or interpreter, trained and fluent in the language of those arriving, as well as having a bank of multilingual pictograms and signs is particularly important in emergency situations in order to provide them with the necessary information</li> </ul>

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			<p>The Covid-19 and Ukrainian crises have demonstrated the urgent adaptive capacities of the French authorities to meet the needs of customers.</p> <p>In the context of the Covid-19 crisis, France's priority was to maintain its capacity to deal with the most urgent situations, whether in terms of asylum, residency, issuing visas or combating illegally-staying immigrants, as well as securing the legal situations of the public, in compliance with health regulations and despite the severe constraints created by the health crisis. Therefore, customer services have been quickly adapted to the urgent need of the situations as in person appointments have progressively been possible again as from May 2020 for residence permit first and renewal applications, interviews for citizenship and asylum applications. Online services were also open as from June 2020 for procedures of renewal of receipts of residence permit, circulation document for children and change of home address.</p> <p>In the context of the Ukrainian crisis, France has rapidly opened up rights and services to beneficiaries of temporary protection, such as: reception and accommodation, access to medical care and personalised housing support, social support (including the right to asylum seeker's allowance), right of residence, access to work, and schooling. An inter-ministerial crisis unit has been rapidly implemented to coordinate all measures dedicated with the various competent ministries (e.g. ministry of the Interior for residence permits, labour authorities, ministry of education, ministry of health, etc.).</p> <p>A new dedicated portal for issuing temporary residence permits to Ukrainians applying for temporary protection has been created in the App AGDREF (App for managing the files of foreign nationals in France - Application de gestion des dossiers des ressortissants étrangers en France the system for registering foreign nationals' files, in order to better coordinate the action of departments responsible for implementing procedures concerning foreign nationals.</p> <p>In order to quickly disseminate information, French authorities developed websites providing information in French, English and Ukrainian (<a href="https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/actualites/dossiers/situation-en-ukraine/information-">https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/actualites/dossiers/situation-en-ukraine/information-</a></p>
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		<p><a href="#">for-ukrainian-citizens-wishing-to-enter-french</a> and <a href="https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/actualites/dossiers/situation-en-ukraine/information-for-ukrainian-displaced-people-and-seeking-to">https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/actualites/dossiers/situation-en-ukraine/information-for-ukrainian-displaced-people-and-seeking-to</a> . The Ministry of the Interior has also disseminated 'A welcome handbook in France for displaced persons from Ukraine', in which one page is dedicated to the application for temporary protection in France, presenting the categories of beneficiaries and the conditions for obtaining such protection, and also indicating where the administrative steps can be undertaken and with which supporting documents. The booklet then describes the rights which holders of temporary protection may enjoy, in particular as regards housing, health, work, transport and driving licences.</p> <p>A flyer was also published by the Directorate-General for Foreign nationals in France (DGEF) of the Ministry of the Interior. This flyer contains the same information as the welcome handbook mentioned above and summarises it in one page.</p> <p>The platform "I commit to Ukraine" (<a href="https://parrainage.refugies.info/ukraine">https://parrainage.refugies.info/ukraine</a>) was also developed to allow citizens to easily mobilise for the reception of refugees and displaced persons in France. It contains information for Ukrainians in French and Ukrainian on administrative procedures, rights, useful contacts, as well as prevention messages for unaccompanied minors, vulnerable persons, etc.</p> <p>3. France has several flow management measures/tools with adaptive capacities in case of massive flows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased accommodation capacity and regional distribution of applicants for international protection</li> <li>• Strengthening human and financial resources within the competent services in direct contact with customers</li> <li>• Budget forecasts/scenarios</li> </ul> <p>These tools include measures to increase France's capacity to handle a surge in applications lodged in the international protection system, such as the National plan for the reception of asylum seekers and the integration of refugees (Schéma national d'accueil des demandeurs d'asile et d'intégration des réfugiés – SNADAR), implemented since 1 January 2021, providing for the regional orientation of asylum seekers to alleviate the burden on the Ile de France region (under renewal for 2024 and onward).</p> <p>And also measures to strengthen the capacity to respond to the human resources and procurement needs of the</p>
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			<p>competent immigration, reception and return authorities (e.g. staff increase required/planned), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reinforcement of staff at the OFII, the OFPRA and the CNDA.</li><li>• Request for support to Frontex.</li></ul> <p>France also has the capacity to manage flows of migrants in unexpected situations (Apagan operation, Ocean Viking etc).</p> <p>In the context of the crisis arising from the fall of Kabul in Afghanistan, the "APAGAN" operation was launched. As part of this operation, the Inter-ministerial Delegation for the Reception and Integration of Refugees (Délégation interministérielle à l'accueil et à l'intégration des réfugiés - DIAIR) organized and ensured the management of arrivals by an associative operator (France Terre d'Asile), by piloting the orientation and routing of arrivals to various reception sites previously identified in collaboration with the DGEF and in liaison with the Central Border Police Directorate (Direction centrale de la Police aux frontières - DCPAF). For several months the DIAIR managed a multitude of individual emergency situations, requiring an urgent care solution. A safety network has been set up in conjunction with the DCPAF, the Préfecture de police responsible for Paris airports and the DGEF, involving the distribution of a Dari flyer containing all the information needed to help people find accommodation. Another situation led the exceptional reception by France of a vessel from the NGO Ocean Viking which was also an opportunity to implement the steps taken to manage a significant arrival of migrants, through a one-off measure. In view of the humanitarian situation on board of the vessel, the French authorities decided, exceptionally, to allow it to dock at the military port of Toulon on 11 November 2022. The 234 passengers of the Ocean Viking were picked up and driven into the waiting area set up by the State services. To organize the care of passengers, the State has mobilized almost 600 people divided between internal security forces, emergency and health workers, administrative staff, local authorities and associations. This support first consisted of a medical examination during the disembarkation of the ship's passengers and the first administrative formalities. The adult persons were then taken to a waiting area where, after a security interview, they were able to carry out the administrative formalities related to asylum. The 44 unaccompanied minors (UAMs) were taken into care by the Social child and youth care services of the Var Departmental Council and were taken to a specific reception area.</p>
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		<p>4. In response to <b>the Covid-19 crisis</b>, the DGEF (General Directorate for Foreign nationals in France - Direction générale des étrangers en France) activated a continuity plan. In conjunction with all relevant stakeholders including State operators, prefectures, consulates, etc., a series of strategic measures have been taken: extension of the validity period of residence permits, extension of the asylum seeker's allowance, sheltering of all migrant populations on the streets, promotion of online training for integration, etc. Operational instructions have been issued to all prefectures/local agents to enable them to deal with urgent situations, by granting temporary residence permits of three months. An instruction organizing the gradual resumption of activity at the prefectures has enabled local authorities to set priorities in terms of stock management, delivery of documents held at the prefectures, rescheduling of appointments and reopening to the public, in order to provide the best possible service to customers, despite health safety constraints. The DGEF, in conjunction with the Territorial Administration Management Directorate (Direction du management de l'administration territoriale - DMAT), moreover remained at the disposal of prefectures to provide technical solutions to facilitate the resumption of activity and support the expected increase in activity in autumn 2020.</p> <p>In response to <b>the Ukrainian crisis</b>, a circular dated March 22, 2022 was sent to prefectures in anticipation of the large volumes of people arriving from Ukraine. It gave details of reception and accommodation arrangements for regional distribution, including the steering and coordination of emergency reception arrangements at national level by the DIHAL (Interministerial delegation for accommodation and access to housing - Délégation interministérielle à l'hébergement et à l'accès au logement), Diair (Interministerial Delegation for the Reception and Integration of Refugees - Délégation interministérielle à l'accueil et à l'intégration des réfugiés) and DGEF. Exceptionally, it provides for possible contributions or financing of housing by the State for local authorities.</p> <p>5. The design of the massive arrival contingency plan is expected to be finalised in 2023 and the test should take place before June 2024, in line with Frontex recommendations.</p> <p>6. The operational guide to the reception and management of migration flows at the external borders is assessed by Frontex as part of the vulnerability assessment.</p> <p>The SNADAR is not assessed as such, but monitoring is carried out twice a year by the Strategic Committee. The SNADAR covers a reduced frequency (for example currently: 2021-2023). It is not a frozen document. The</p>
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			SNADAR 2024-2026 is being developed. It allows measures to be put in place and to adapt to the migration context.
	EMN NCP Hungary	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2. Yes, by using work organisation tools, reinforcement, etc</li> <li>3. Involving other government customer services in addition to the immigration customer services, also routing customers between different customer services according to the type of case.</li> <li>4. Using work organisation tools, reinforcement, etc.</li> <li>5. There are crisis management plans.</li> <li>6. The strategic objectives of the organisation may be redefined in the event of a sudden large-scale influx</li> </ol>
	EMN NCP Italy	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2. The impact of the migrants' flow via the Mediterranean routes has been very significant during 2023. Consequently, on the 11th of April 2023, a six-month national state of emergency has been declared, which later has been extended for another six months. The declaration has been followed by several civil protection ordinances that provided for urgent measures to increase reception capacity. In particular, with the decision of 16th April 2023, the Head of the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior has been appointed as Delegate Commissioner for the management of the emergency, with the task of coordinating the activities aimed at expanding the capacity of the reception system. Special attention has been dedicated to hotspots, governmental centres, extraordinary reception facilities and temporary facilities, in which the assistance concerning food, accommodation, clothing, health care and linguistic-cultural mediation have been ensured (also as an exception to the provisions included in the contract specifications).</li> </ol>



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			<p>Furthermore, it is responsible for identifying solutions to ensure the continuous provision of maritime and aerial transportation services, from the hotspots to the areas where reception centers and facilities will be identified, and for the adoption of the consequent administrative and managerial acts. In cases of extraordinary emergencies, the regulatory framework allows authorities to implement transportation services even through carriers other than the regular ones.</p> <p>3. The latest changes in legislation for reception (DL 20/2023) introduces the possibility of adopting extraordinary measures on the management of migrant centres (Art. 6). Existing provisions allow for quick openings of accommodation facilities that can receive large numbers of migrants by guaranteeing essential services, health and language mediation as an exception to the provisions in the contract specifications.</p> <p>4. The primary service staff carries out the instructions provided by the specifications. As the number of migrants being received has increased, there is an adaptation of the dedicated staff in terms of hours per week.</p> <p>5. N.A.</p> <p>6. N.A.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Latvia</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2. After influx of Ukrainian nationals in Latvia seeking temporary protection, the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) had to rearrange procedures, resources to cope with large increase of demand for services, internally employees were reassigned to support certain functions, and other state institutions temporary assisted to the OCMA.</p> <p>3. The Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) had to rearrange procedures, resources to cope with large increase of demand for services, internally employees were reassigned to support certain functions, and</p>

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			<p>other state institutions temporary assisted to the OCMA. In capital of Latvia, new one stop agency was created to provide necessary services to Ukrainian nationals.</p> <p>4. Additional personal and resources, motivation measures</p> <p>5. Contingency plans, preparedness drills</p> <p>6. State level contingency plans for large-scale immigration events</p>
	EMN NCP Lithuania	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. Yes. Solutions included extending the opening hours of customer service points, providing services at weekends (with overtime pay), and reallocating internal resources.</p> <p>3. Legislation is drafted as needed, and there is an action plan describing the procedures for managing flows and identifying the responsible authorities.</p> <p>4. Detailed instructions are provided.</p> <p>5. There is an action plan and tabletop exercises are organised.</p> <p>6. Where necessary, additional funding, registration centers, workplaces and other institutions are being put in place to help manage the crisis.</p>
	EMN NCP Luxembourg	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. N/A.</p>


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		<p>3. N/A.</p> <p>However, in order to optimise and accelerate the administrative and decision-making process for the massive influx of applicants for temporary protection, the involved Luxembourg government agencies set up a One-Stop-Shop called “guichet unique – enregistrement Ukraine” in the heart of Luxembourg’s city-center within two weeks.</p> <p>This One-Stop-Shop, which deals exclusively with displaced persons from Ukraine, houses the Directorate of immigration and the National Reception Office (ONA) of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the Luxembourg Police, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and a Luxembourg bank/telecommunication service provider POST in one building. All these actors are cooperating very closely to provide applicants for temporary protection with a smooth, efficient and quick decision-making process within just a few hours, as applicants get answers to all their questions from professionals they meet in the same building.</p> <p>As already mentioned above, the main objective of the creation of the One-Stop-Shop was to bring together the different government agencies in one and single location in order to provide all necessary information to the displaced persons from Ukraine in order to facilitate their integration in Luxembourg.</p> <p>Specialists of every actor are covering following missions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Directorate of immigration has the responsibility to manage the application forms sent by displaced persons from Ukraine, to organise an appointment, to conduct the interview and to check if the criterias set by the EU for granting temporary protection are met.</li> <li>- The Luxembourg Police does an additional interview and fingerprint checks in order to complete the personal information files.</li> <li>- The National Reception Office (ONA) of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs provides all necessary information regarding social and accommodation aspects.</li> <li>- The Ministry of Health provides information about the required medical check-ups for new arrivals in Luxembourg.</li> <li>- The Ministry of Education provides all required information about childcare organizations and the education system in Luxembourg.</li> </ul>
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			<p>The Luxembourg bank/telecommunication service provider POST supports the displaced persons with the opening of a bank account and a Luxembourgish mobile phone subscription, which is necessary for facilitating further administrative activities in Luxembourg.</p> <p>4. N/A.</p> <p>5. N/A.</p> <p>6. In general, it has to be said that Luxembourg, as a small country, faces different challenges than big countries. But thanks to the small size of the country and short distances between the involved public entities, most decision-makers of the different entities know each other and are, also during non-crisis periods, in contact on a regular basis. Consultation meetings can be set up very easily and ensure that the strategic goals of every entity are achieved. Luxembourg authorities have shown during the past months their capacity to react very quickly and find adapted solutions to exceptional situations. The specialists of each involved public actors had to find solutions and set up procedures very quickly, coordinate their actions and cooperate tightly so that the arrival of the many displaced persons from Ukraine could be handled properly. For example, a dedicated website for displaced persons from Ukraine was also created and a FAQ was set up and continuously adapted in order to provide quick answers to standard questions. This mindset and way of cooperation will be required in order to overcome future large-scale immigration or exceptional situations.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Netherlands</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2. YES. The department of customer communications of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst – IND) organised customer service and information for the applicant during the Afghanistan crisis and the war in Ukraine.</p> <p>When a crisis happens this department first makes an analysis of all the stakeholders and where the customer is</p>

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			<p>located. And how the customer can best be reached in a way that is natural to the person (i.e. not any new apps, steps, or downloads, what are they already using as a source of information?). The IND chooses to work with agencies that support refugees, such as the Dutch Council for Refugees (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland - VWN), local municipalities that play a role in providing reception to those in need and the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Centraal Orgaan opvang asielzoekers - COA). Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs played a major role in the Afghanistan crisis.</p> <p>If it has not already happened the department brings all these organisations together and organises a meeting structure. Together with all stakeholders the department makes sure that there is one message they radiate to the targeted group and not ten different ones at different times. Even when the stakeholders have different interests, which is the main challenge in organising customer service during a crisis or exceptional situation. To overcome this challenge, the IND wants to put the customer first. For this, it is important to appoint a customer service representative (the department has communication advisers who are assigned with this task) who will be present during the meetings with policy makers and spokespersons. Most times the customer representative is involved from the start of the crisis. This representative does not always have an eye for the feasibility of policy, but does have the know-how and instruments make decisions quickly and convey them clearly to the target group and act accordingly.</p> <p>3. As indicated above, it is important to set up a meeting structure with stakeholders of each organisation involved. These stakeholders must have knowledge of the policy/choices made within the organisation regarding the crisis at hand and knowledge of how to best inform the customer and have the ability to also do this.</p> <p>In the case of Ukraine, the IND has set up counters in places such as event halls. The department of customer communications does this together with business operations (from the IND), security and other organisations that play a role in arranging that the customer can legally stay in the Netherlands. At these counters senior colleagues work, who can oversee the process and have knowledge about legally staying in the Netherlands, together with temporary employees. In addition, the department of customer communications sets up a telephone line with colleagues who speak the language of the customer and launches a special page on the IND website. Likewise,</p>
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		<p>collaborations are set up with other organisations regarding their websites where the customer can find information (f.i. <a href="http://refugeehelp.com/mycoa.nl">refugeehelp.com/mycoa.nl</a>). Furthermore, the department of customer communications uses the already existing channels that customers already use such as Telegram groups. As a governmental organisation, the IND does not directly post in Telegram groups but has done this through aid organisations. For instance, the IND has collaborated with the Red Cross as a trusted partner for this communication.</p> <p>Internally, the department of customer communications sets up a meeting structure with a policy group, a reflection committee and different working groups. From those groups is it possible to manage and coordinate all the resources and information that is needed for the customer to be informed. In summary, the IND has telephone lines, counters where the target group can go to, communication in the form of letters, and working with the resources from the aid organisations (website, Telegram, Signal) as means to coordinate and manage the service offered to customers in a crisis or emergency situation.</p> <p>4. The department of customer communications has an internal knowledge base that immediately shows the latest information and news in order to help the customer. This requires an up-to-date editor in the policy group.</p> <p>During a large-scale immigration or other exceptional situation, new internal structures are established (with management, one manager is responsible). In these structures also teams with customer contract are integrated, providing that knowledge and signals from the customer can be shared and further promoted within the relevant departments.</p> <p>5. The IND does not train customer communications' staff on crisis situations. The organisation ensures that the colleagues that are involved are well informed, providing information is the core business of customer service. When necessary, the department of customer communications asks for assistance, from colleagues that can work at the counters or on the telephone. To, for example, help with issuing or collecting documents, or answering questions. Every crisis has different communication needs. The department of customer communications has a crisis manual and structure that starts operating as soon as a crisis starts. This mainly concerns how information is obtained, customer service is then linked to this.</p>
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			6. Depending on the size of the crisis, a general director is appointed at central government level. Its task is to bring all ministries that are affected and local stakeholders together. Most of the times a separate communications group will be set up with all the relevant stakeholders to proclaim the same message at every level (internally en externally).
	EMN NCP Poland	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. Q 1: Yes, clients are served the in reception facilities for foreigners seeking international protection and benefiting from temporary protection in the Republic of Poland (based on the Act of granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland) and at the customer service point at the Office for Foreigners. The service includes social assistance and medical care for applicants of international protection and persons benefiting from temporary protection.</p> <p>Q 2: Yes, during the evacuation of the co-workers of the Polish military contingent and NATO from Afghanistan (1145 people) in August–September of 2021 Office for Foreigners did not have enough staff speaking Dari and Pashto. Translators and intercultural assistants were hired to support the staff in their daily work in the facilities for foreigners.</p> <p>In addition, additional facilities were then put in place where evacuated Afghans were quarantined due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After quarantine, they were transferred to the facilities run by the Office for Foreigners. In addition, the Office concluded contracts for two temporary accommodation facilities for foreigners and temporarily increased accommodation capacity in existing ones.</p> <p>In addition, following Russia's attack on Ukraine on 24 February 2022, employees of the Office were deployed to reception points, where they supported local authorities in organising and receiving refugees from Ukraine.</p> <p>In the first hours after Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the Office launched a dedicated hotline for foreigners escaping from Ukraine. The hotline was staffed by personnel who spoke Ukrainian and Russian. Foreigners were able to obtain information regarding their stay in Poland.</p> <p>Customer service at the Office for Foreigners works in 3 main areas. One could come to the office in person, call</p>



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			<p>our helpline or write an e-mail.</p> <p>In the last 2 years the biggest crisis in the customer service that we had was caused by Russian aggression on Ukraine. That situation challenged the Office in all 3 areas. Many Ukrainian citizen run from the war to Poland and looked for help in our Office.</p> <p>3. Following Russia's aggression against Ukraine, a special law was launched to help Ukrainian citizens, which introduced solutions legalizing the stay and the rules for providing social assistance to these group of beneficiaries of protection (the Act on Assistance for Citizens of Ukraine in connection with an armed conflict in the territory of that state).</p> <p>This law empowered local authorities as responsible for providing social assistance to Ukrainian citizens, decentralizing the system of providing assistance. At the same time, the Office for Foreigners as reception authority remained responsible to deal with non-Ukrainian third-country nationals coming from Ukraine under temporary protection and persons applying for international protection.</p> <p>During the situation describe above Office for Foreigners proposed the solution to divide helpline and e-mail to two canals. One for the Ukrainian citizen, second for other foreigners. Thanks to that solution the Office could've control situation and has the exact data about how many people needs our help. On the other hand there was still a person that was helping foreigners in other cases so the work went smoothly.</p> <p>4. Office for Foreigners supports employees by organising substantive training on, for example professional burnout. To be better prepared and to answer questions faster the Office created materials with response templates. The customer service personnel had extra paid shifts and catering provided.</p> <p>5. In case of a massive influx of asylum applicants there is a consistent hierarchy of actions plans: Standard Operational Procedure – “Actions undertaken in case of a massive influx of foreigners on the territory of Poland” (at the national level), action plan of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration (stipulating responsibilities of all agencies supervised by the abovementioned ministry), action plan of the Office for Foreigners, and internal procedure – action plan of the Department for Social Assistance in the Office for Foreigners. Each plan is a clarification of the superior plan therefore this structure allows to keep an appropriate scope of details for each</p>
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		<p>level.</p> <p>Poland has identified and foreseen actions to be taken by the central/local administration in the case of mass influx of refugees/migrants to the Polish territory. Those actions are secured by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, the Office for Foreigners, Voivodes, State Border Guard, Police, State Fire Service with the support from the military forces. All arrangements are formalised with pre-identified roles and responsibilities (stipulated at the national level in Standard Operational Procedure – “Actions undertaken in case of a massive influx of foreigners on the territory of Poland”). The a/m procedure describes areas of responsibility and operations of the state bodies and the rules of mutual cooperation.</p> <p>Exercises on national level are also held to simulate operations in the event of a mass influx of foreigners into Poland.</p> <p>Moreover, customer service personnel issues in the Office for Foreigners are regulated in the lowest-level procedures, i.e. internal one, which include, for example, provisions regarding deployment of employees in order to secure tasks in a crisis situation involving a mass influx of migrants.</p> <p>In case of crisis in every area of the customer service, there have been prepared extra equipment such as helpline telephones and computers, an extra window in case of increasing the numbers of foreigners that would be able to provide any information on customer hall in our office.</p> <p>The coordinator of the customer service team also is taking part in workshops about work in difficult conditions.</p> <p>6. Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, the Polish State has been involved in helping refugees from Ukraine staying in Poland by providing accommodation, social or legal assistance. Through the use of relevant procedures (as above-mentioned), the continuity of the Office's operations and the implementation of its main task – as reception authority – is maintained, i.e. the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accommodation and meals in reception facilities for applicants of international protection;</li> <li>• cash benefits for persons staying outside the reception facilities;</li> <li>• medical care;</li> <li>• other benefits for foreigners applying for international protection, e.g. learning the Polish language,</li> </ul>
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			<p>organising activities for children.</p> <p>A Special Act on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with an armed conflict in the territory of this country has been prepared (Journal of Laws of 2022, item 583, as amended), thanks to which the legal stay of Ukrainians in Poland is possible.</p> <p>In order to provide efficient assistance and information to people fleeing war in this crisis situation, Poland has implemented extraordinary measures by opening reception, information and assistance points.</p> <p>Reception points</p> <p>Reception points were established in all voivodeships to provide care for people crossing the Ukrainian-Polish border. Food and a place to rest were provided, basic medical care and information about available forms of assistance, as well as the rules for legalizing stay in Poland.</p> <p>At its peak, there were 39 reception points for Ukrainian citizens fleeing the war. By November 29, 2023, the reception points served a total of 1,472,358 people, of which nearly 487,000 people used them at the peak in March 2022. people.</p> <p>Information points</p> <p>Information points have been opened in all voivodeships, where Ukrainian citizens receive information on possible help and other tips important for their further stay in Poland. At the peak, there were 28 provincial information points for foreigners, established at railway/bus stations, as well as 121 information points organized by local government units.</p> <p>Aid points</p> <p>Points for collecting and distributing material aid provided by institutions, companies and citizens to needy war refugees were organized in all voivodeships. Additionally, voivodes have started cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government Agency of Strategic Reserves in the distribution of gifts to those in need in Ukraine.</p>
	EMN NCP	Yes	1.


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	Slovakia		<p>2. The Slovak Republic had only experienced large scale sudden immigration after the beginning of the war in Ukraine. Also at that period the information lines of the Ministry of Interior (as mentioned in question 1) were available. The biggest challenge was keeping and providing updated information as lot of issues were changing fast.</p> <p>3. Based on the experiences from the first month of the war in Ukraine the employees from various relevant institutions were present in the so called large capacity centres which enabled the complex provision of information to the temporary protection beneficiaries.</p> <p>4. NA</p> <p>5. There were no preparations done in this regard.</p> <p>6. NA</p>
	EMN NCP Slovenia	Yes	<p>1.</p> <p>2. /</p> <p>3. /</p> <p>4. /</p> <p>5. /</p> <p>6. For the cases of large-scale immigration or other exceptional situations, we put our contingency plans in place. They contain all the necessary elements of crisis management relevant for law enforcement. They do not contain any provisions related to customer service.</p>

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	 EMN NCP Sweden	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Yes</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2. During times of sudden change in the patterns of the amount of applications linked to immigration or asylum, challenges will occasionally arise in relation to customer service. The demand for customer service can change suddenly, meaning that the amount of e-mails and or phone calls or visits to service centers may sometimes be limited. Where possible the Swedish Migration Agency will try to ensure the highest possible level of services in response to requested customer service, depending on our available resources at the specific time. One quite recent example is the activation of the temporary protection directive in response to the war in Ukraine. In this situation the need to answer “new” types of questions became a focus for customer-service related departments within the agency. Challenges included securing correct information to be provided both internally and externally, for instance regarding requirements in order to be able to make an application or how the process would work organizationally from an inside perspective. On a more practical level, there were also issues to be solved regarding housing and reception, communicational with other relevant government agencies to plan a coordinated reception among other things</p> <p>In the event of a large and sudden influx, it is primarily units that normally meet asylum seekers (to register applications and provide accommodation) that are initially affected. The units that handle applications for asylum also support the registration of asylum applications in the event of a large influx. If the influx is so great that these resources are not enough, resources from other parts of the organization must also be brought in, mainly from other operational units. Employees at units that work with general housing issues support the unit that initiates housing for asylum seekers. Our customer service unit does not handle any in person visits and the impact on them thus comes at a later stage in relation to the units that actually meet asylum seekers.</p> <p>3. The Swedish system for crisis management is based on what are usually called the three principles; the principle of responsibility, the principle of equality, and the principle proximity. Based on these principles, actors at local, regional and national level have a responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient crisis preparedness to handle the various crises that may arise, both within every actors' area of responsibility and together in the system as a whole.</p>
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		<p>The purpose of Swedish crisis preparedness is to protect the life and health of the population, the functionality of society and the ability to maintain basic values such as democracy, the rule of law, and human freedoms and rights.</p> <p>Crisis preparedness is primarily based on actors' normal, daily activities to prevent and manage accidents and disruptions that occur in ordinary operations. Generally, Swedish authorities have a capacity to handle variations in pressure and a crisis situation is something that should be handled by the regular operation. Types of events such as a high migratory pressure is though generally handled as a special event, i.e. an event that deviates from the normal and is a disruption to operations. The authorities regular operations are not adapted to a special event and should therefore be handled separately with a special organization and management. To handle such special events, the SMA uses a staff and management method adapted to crises management.</p> <p>The Swedish Migration Agency has a contingency plan that is built on principles and guidelines that are outlined in the agency's instruction on crisis management. The system is based on alert levels with corresponding actions. The agency also relies on what could be described as a preparedness framework with processes and procedures for increasing capacity, whether technical, physical or human, or prearranged frameworks. This enable a quick response and have operational readiness to major organisational threats or challenges. The so-called preparedness framework refers to all actions to increase knowledge and capacity to anticipate, respond to and recover from the impact of one or more events.</p> <p>Different functions at the agency can work with a crises in different ways. If a crisis should arise that affects the type of cases that the Swedish Migration Agency works with, it can often lead to a higher influx of phone calls and e-mails. If the number of questions becomes greater than we can handle, we may end up in situations where we have to choose which functions to focus on in the first place. If a crisis occurs, it also becomes very important for us to get the latest information from other units at the agency.</p> <p>4. The Swedish Migration Agency has contingency plans and plans to deal with special events. So called "first-line"</p>
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		<p>customer service related personnel and departments will pick up on issues and questions regarding establishing procedures or answers to not before asked questions. This is first discussed between colleagues working in “first-line” but divided between the physical service channels (service centers) and for example service offered via phone /e-mail. Each group would then inform the responsible manager who in turn would report and ask for support / resources / information from other departments depending on the exact nature of the question. Requests for internal support could be directed to the legal department or to the process networks consisting of experts, addressing certain types of applications.</p> <p>5. The Swedish Migration Agency's contingency plan is outlined as a generic preparedness framework in order to be operational in various situations. In a situation of a sudden increase in migratory pressure/or a persistently high migratory pressure it is important to activate larger parts of the societal and governmental structure in the response. The Swedish Migration Agency is divided into three operational regions (South, West and North). Each region have their plans to deal with various types of crises, including an increased influx of asylum seekers. Each separate unit at our Contact Centre has a local plan that is reviewed and updated once a year. The Contact Center follow the general standards/guidelines within the Swedish Migrations Agency.</p> <p>6. The Swedish Migration Agency is responsible for considering applications from people who want to take up permanent residence in Sweden, visit, seek protection from persecution or get Swedish citizenship. Within the mandate of the agency is also resettlement, voluntary return and accommodation. The agency currently employs approximately 6 000 staff. Given the <u>size of operations and the diversified mission and mandate, the government institution has the capacity and capability to handle a rather large scale crisis within the own area of responsibility.</u> The scale of the operations enables greater national resilience. In addition, the organization needs to <u>be flexible to enable allocation of resources between different work processes and braches.</u> With a <u>decentralized structure for decisions</u> the organization enables direct and immediate actions in proximity to identified operational challenges.</p> <p>The Swedish Migration Agency constantly reprioritizes, and try to maintain regular workflows. The strategic goals are important to guide the Swedish Migration Agency when maintaining regular work as far as possible. In an</p>
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			<p>exceptional situation, the focus would be to register asylum applications and arrange accommodation for new arrivals.</p> <p>For the Contact Centre, times of sudden changes in the patterns of amounts of applicants linked to immigration or asylum means that the amount of e-mails, phone calls or visits to service centers may sometimes be limited. Where possible the Swedish Migration Agency will try to ensure the highest possible level of services in response to requested customer service, depending on the available resources at the specific time.</p>
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