

Asylum seeker centre

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Information on the foundation of the Accommodation Centre for Asylum Seekers

Based on international practices, the work on the development of the accommodation centre for asylum seekers (hereinafter - the Centre) was commenced in Latvia in 1997. The Centre has been established in Mucenieki, Ropaži Rural Territory, at the distance of 17 km from Riga, at the former military base of the Soviet Army. The repairs of the building were completed at the end of 1998 and the first asylum seekers were accommodated there already in December. The official opening ceremony of the centre was held on 17 February of 1999.

Up to 400 persons can be accommodated at the Centre. The principal task of the Centre is to ensure the asylum seekers with accommodation during the time, when their cases are being examined and the decisions on the asylum cases on the granting of international protection status are made.

On 17 March 2017 the Centre was expanded by adding one more building, as a result of reconstruction of the real estate *Bunduliši*. The building of the new accommodation centre for asylum seekers is equipped with residential rooms, common use kitchens and classrooms for the conduct of socio-economic inclusion measures. The additional premises ensure more comfortable accommodation conditions of asylum seekers, considering their needs. A multifunctional centre for local residents and asylum seekers was also opened in the village of Mucenieki.

Funding of the accommodation centre for asylum seekers and multifunctional centre

The development of centre was supported by the US government, the Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the government of Sweden. The total costs of the renovation of the buildings and construction of external communications networks amounted to approximately EUR 119,5212.32. After the foundation of the Centre, it is funded from the state budget. Every asylum seeker (except for the cases, where the asylum seeker is sufficiently well off) receives daily allowance in the amount of EUR 3.00.

The renovation of the multifunctional centre lasted for almost a year to ensure that it is completely suitable for the needs of residents and asylum seekers. The funds required for the reconstruction of the building were granted by the state budget programme *Funds for Unforeseen Events*. The funding used amounts to EUR 1,845,459 (excluding VAT).

Information on the asylum seekers present at the accommodation centre for asylum seekers

Asylum seekers from the following countries have been accommodated at the Centre: Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Belarus, Iraq, Kenya, Kazakhstan, Kongo (Zaire), Russia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Slovakia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Syria and Eritrea.

Organisation of daily life at the Accommodation Centre for Asylum Seekers

Kitchen, laundry, creche, TV room, classroom with internet access, sports gym, library and additional residential space, are available for the asylum seekers. The rules of internal procedure of the Centre must be observed asylum seekers.

Premises that are specially adapted for the needs of disabled (ramps, toilets, showers) have been equipped at the Centre within the framework of the *Alfa* project funded by the European Refugee Fund.

The liability for the maintenance of the premises of common use is distributed among all residents of the Centre.

<https://www.pmlp.gov.lv/en/asylum-seeker-centre>