

The Organization of Asylum and Migration Policies

Factsheet: Latvia

1. Introduction

This factsheet provides an overview of how asylum and migration policies are organized in Latvia, including the organization of institutional and regulatory context and framework for dealing with legal migration, illegal migration and in the area of international protection. It is based on information provided in Latvia National Report of the EMN Study *The Organization of Asylum and Migration Policies in EU Member States*¹, as of October 2016. The Report was based on desk research: key sources were State institutions websites, data of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) and various previous research studies. Also studies performed by the Latvia EMN NCP and data published by the Central Statistical Bureau have been used.

2. Overview of organization of political, legislative and institutional framework

2.1. The political system and institutional context

The Ministry of the Interior develops, organizes and coordinates the implementation of interior policy, which also includes the subsectors of migration and asylum. The OCMA which is subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior, develops, implements migration and asylum policy, determines the legal status of individuals, keeps population records, issues personal identity documents and travel documents, as well as examines the applications of individuals on admission into Latvian citizenship through naturalization procedures. The State Border Guard also implements migration policy, including combating and prevention of irregular migration, and asylum policy. Other key state institutions in the area of asylum and migration include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture, Ombudsman, as well as non-governmental organizations.

2.2. The legal framework

The main legal acts regulating the area of asylum and migration in Latvia are the Immigration Law² determining the procedure for entry, stay, transit, exit and detention of third country citizens. Asylum Law³ ensures the rights of persons in the Republic of Latvia to receive asylum, acquire refugee or alternative status or receive temporary protection. Furthermore, the Law on the Status of a Long-Term Resident of the European Union in the Republic of Latvia determines the procedure for granting and losing status of long-term resident of the European Union.

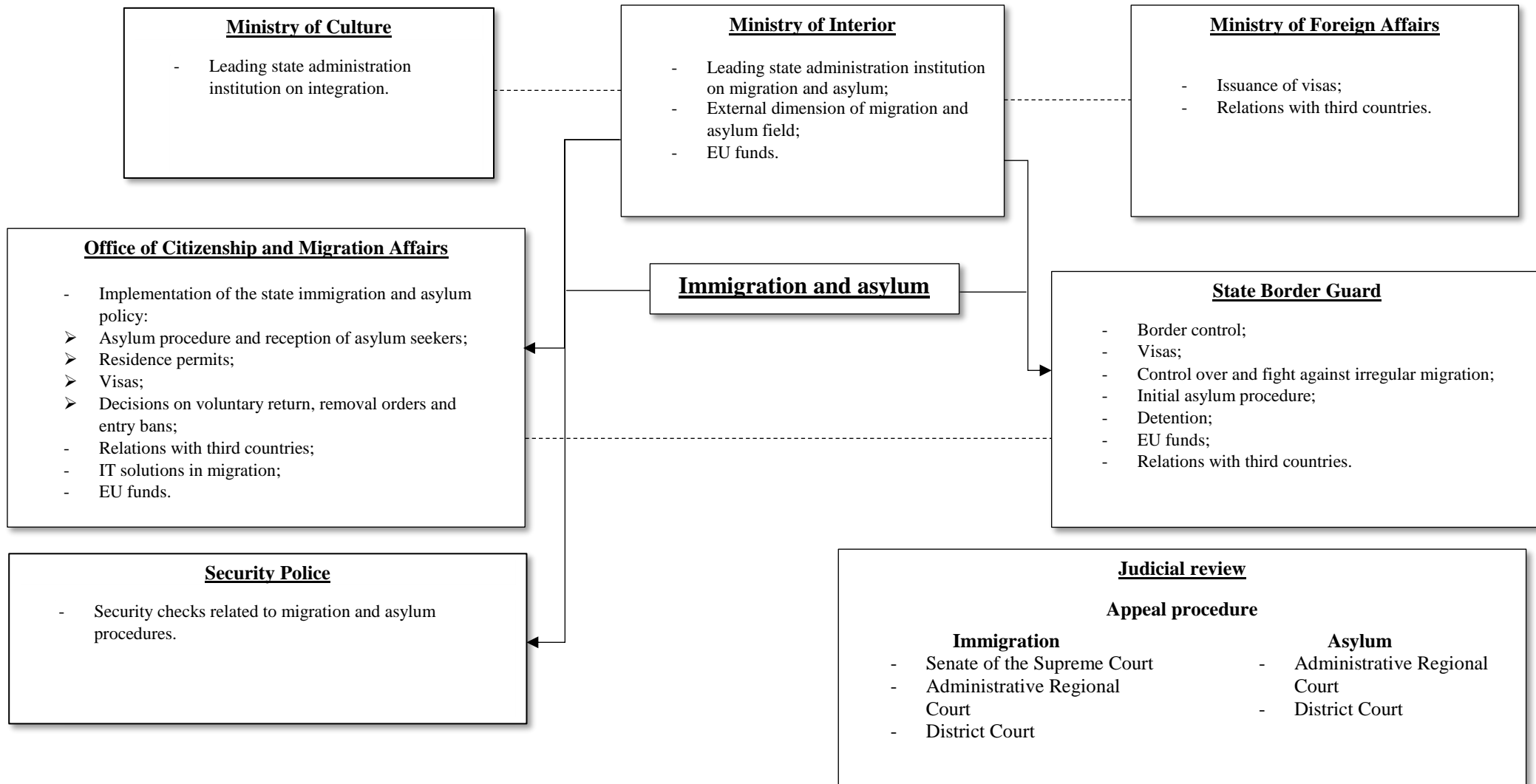
¹ Available on the LV NCP EMN website, www.emn.lv

² Law "Immigration Law". - Latvijas Vēstnesis, No. 169 (2744), 20.11.2002 [entered into force on 01.05.2003]

³ Law "Asylum Law". - Latvijas Vēstnesis, No. 2, 05.01.2016 - [entered into force on 19.01.2016]

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Institutional Framework for Immigration and Asylum Policies*



*This institutional chart provides an indicative overview of the asylum and migration system in Latvia. As such it does not represent its complete structure.