

Implementation of the EU Trust Funds and the Facility for Refugees in Turkey

Update - March 2021



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Abstract

This paper proposes a factual overview of recent developments in the implementation of the EU Békou Trust Fund for the Central African Republic, the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (Madad), the EU Trust Fund for Peace in Colombia, the EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Facility for Refugees in Turkey.

This document was requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Budgets.

AUTHORS

Alix DELASNERIE

ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBLE

Alix DELASNERIE

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Mirari URIARTE

LINGUISTIC VERSIONS

Original: EN

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Policy departments provide in-house and external expertise to support EP committees and other parliamentary bodies in shaping legislation and exercising democratic scrutiny over EU internal policies.

To contact the Policy Department or to subscribe for updates, please write to:

Policy Department for Budgetary Affairs

European Parliament

B-1047 Brussels

Email: Poldep-Budg@ep.europa.eu

Manuscript completed in 25 March 2021

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EP	European Parliament
EUTF	European Union Trust Fund
FRT	Facility for Refugees in Turkey
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument

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1. INTRODUCTION

“EU trust funds, designed to provide a quick and flexible response to situations of fragility, present a challenge to parliamentary scrutiny, since they are established outside the national budgets or the budget of the EU, while at the same time being funded by them.”¹

Since 2014, the EU has set up four EU Emergency Trust Funds (EUTFs) for emergency and post-emergency actions. The EU intended in this way to respond flexibly to emerging crises and conflicts and to enhance its role as a global actor. In addition, the EU has set up the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRT) as the answer to the EU Member States’ call for significant additional funding to support refugees in Turkey. The Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) is set to allow for more flexibility and responsiveness in the financing of EU external policies in 2021-2027, however its reduced envelope casts doubt on its capacity to respond to EU external challenges.

Recent initiatives of relevance for the implementation of the EUTFs and the FRT include a Communication on the EU’s humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles² and a Joint communication on a renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood - A new Agenda for the Mediterranean³

The present paper does not discuss in detail the nature, advantages/disadvantages, purpose or history of EUTFs, on which literature is already available. It just proposes an update on the most recent developments in the implementation of EUTFs and of the FRT. Readers are invited to refer inter alia to a [March 2020 EPRS briefing](#) on the same topic.

¹ [Understanding development effectiveness, Concepts, players and tools, EPRS, January 2020.](#)

² (COM(2021)110)

³ (JOIN(2021)2)

2. Overview of EU TFs and the Facility for Refugees

2.1. The Bêkou Trust Fund for the Central African Republic

Under its constitutive agreement, the Bêkou Trust Fund, created⁴ in July 2014 for an initial duration of five years, aims to support the “Central African Republic’s exit from the crisis⁵, its reconstruction and development”.

In May 2019, based on “continuing needs”, an 18 months extension was decided after consulting the European Parliament (EP) and the Council, allowing Bêkou to fund new programmes until end 2020. In December 2020 the Bêkou Trust Fund was again extended, until end 2021. This new extension aims to consolidate the results achieved by the programmes and to respond to the COVID 19 crisis.

The Bêkou Trust Fund has 23 programmes which are aligned with the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan and meant to contribute to:

- restoring essential public services and basic social services (health, food security, water and sanitation)
- reviving economic activity (rural development, support to local economic actors, microfinance)
- stabilising the country, in particular through reconciliation, peaceful coexistence between communities and respect for human rights
- re-establishing the legitimacy and restoring the operation of national and local administrative structures

2.2. The EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (Madad)

The Madad Trust Fund was established⁶ in December 2014 to support neighbouring countries hosting Syrian refugees (primarily Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey). Target populations include hosting communities, refugees from Syria and the internally displaced in Iraq.

In view of its strategic Mid-term Evaluation and after consulting the EP and the Council, Commission extended⁷ this Trust Fund until 14 December 2020. In December 2020 the Trust Fund was further extended⁸ until 14 December 2021 in view of the need for a smooth transition of the current Union support to the protracted Syria crisis into the architecture of the new Multiannual Financial Framework (2021 – 2027). At the Trust Board meeting of 22 September 2020 and thereafter, several donors have pledged new contributions to the Trust Fund. The extension will also allow for part of the pledges from the Brussels IV Conference⁹ to be channelled through the Trust Fund.

Sectors addressed are livelihoods, education, health, water and sanitation as well as social protection.

⁴ [Decision C\(2014\) 5019 of 11.7.2014.](#)

⁵ Crisis due to inter-religious and inter-communal fighting since 2013. In January 2021, the capital, Bangui, was attacked by a rebel group, contesting the re-election of the President in December 2020.

⁶ [Decision C\(2014\) 9615 of 10.12.2014.](#)

⁷ [Decision C\(2019\) 7621 of 31.10.2019.](#)

⁸ [Decision C\(2020\) 8749 of 11.12.2020.](#)

⁹ The Fourth Conference on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region" took place on 30 June 2020.

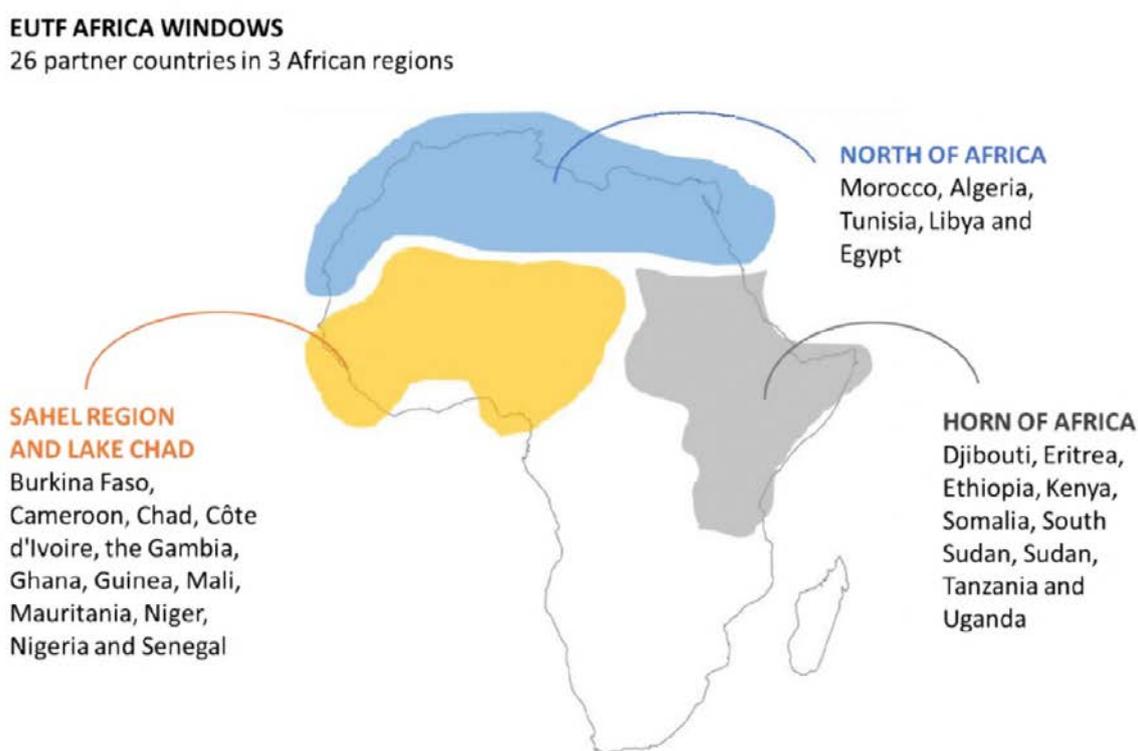
2.3. The EU Trust Fund for Africa

This trust fund was established in November 2015¹⁰ for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. On 10 December 2020, its mandate was extended until 31 December 2021.

Its four main objectives are employment, basic services (food, security, health, education, social protection), migration management and improved governance and conflict prevention.

The EU Trust Fund for Africa is organised in three windows covering 26 countries, as shown in Figure 1 below. Donors can ask to channel their contribution to one or several of the windows.

Figure 1: Geographical windows of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa



Source: Working Document Part XI on EU trust funds accompanying the EU draft budget 2021 - COM(2020)300

2.4. The EU Trust Fund for Peace in Colombia

The EU Trust Fund for Colombia was established¹¹ in December 2016 in response to the request of the Colombian Government to receive technical and financial support from the EU for implementing the Peace Agreement. Unlike the other EUTFs, it is a post emergency EUTF.

On 15 December 2020, this EUTF was extended until 31 December 2021.

Priority is given to rural areas, which have been disproportionately affected by 50 years of conflict.

¹⁰ [Decision C\(2015\) 7293 of 20.10.2015](#).

¹¹ [Decision C\(2016\)1653](#) and [Constitutive agreement](#).

2.5. The Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRT)

The EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan of October 2015 aimed to address the migration crisis in two ways:

- (1) by supporting Syrians and their Turkish host communities;
- (2) by strengthening cooperation to prevent irregular migration.

The FRT was established¹² by the Commission in November 2015 in answer to the call from EU Member States for significant additional funding.

It is a mechanism to coordinate the mobilisation of resources made available under the EU budget and additional contributions from Member States. These resources are integrated into the EU budget as external assigned revenue pursuant to Article 21(2) of the Financial Regulation and assigned almost entirely to the IPA II and HUMA budget lines.

The Steering Committee of the FRT defined as priority areas for spending: humanitarian assistance, migration management, education, health, municipal infrastructure, socio-economic support, protection, basic needs.

¹² [Decision C\(2015\) 9500 of 24.11.2015](#) on the coordination of the actions of the Union and of the Member States through a coordination mechanism – the Refugee Facility for Turkey.

3. Implementation: state-of-play

All four EUTFs' formal closure date is now end of 2021. The full implementation of ongoing projects is however expected to last until 2025 (the FRT, being a coordination mechanism within the EU budget, does not need an end date).

The Commission reports on a monthly basis to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the EUTFs in accordance with Financial Regulation Article 235(5), on the basis of cumulative figures. More in-depth information on the performance of each EUTF may be found in the individual annual reports as required by Financial Regulation Article 252.

As of the end of 2020 the total pledges to all the EUTFs (Table 1) amounted to EUR 7 691 million¹³, approximately 12,5% of which came from Member states, 43% from the EU budget and 44,5% from the European Development Fund (EDF) (Figure 2). The 11th EDF has a reserve of non-programmable aid, which is an unallocated amount to fund bilateral and regional support that can be used for unexpected needs. It was used in particular to establish the EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Bêkou Trust Fund for the Central African Republic.

The overall implementation rate for commitment appropriations for all EUTFs was 98 % at the end of December 2020.

Table 1:EUTFs: total pledges and origin of funds at 31/12/2020 - EUR million

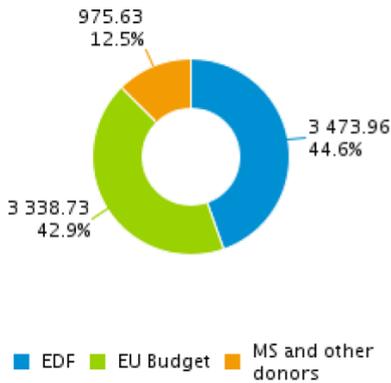
Name	Origin of funds (total pledges)			Total
	EU budget	Member states and other donors	EDF	
EU TF Africa	1 052.66	619.66	3 385.84	5 058.16
EU TF Bêkou	71.36	88.93	148.00	308.28
EU TF Madad	1 951.78	244.23	-	2 196.01
EU TF Colombia	93.89	35.13	-	129.02
Total	3 169.69	987.95	3 533.84	7 691.48

Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

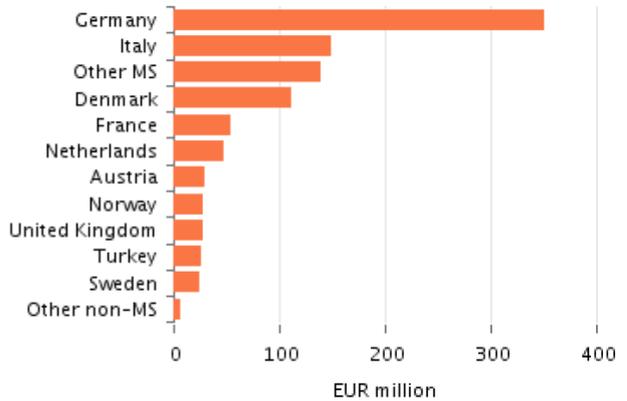
¹³ For setting these figures in context, in 2019 alone the collective Official Development Assistance (ODA) from the European Union and its Member States amounted to €75.2 billion, representing 55.2% of global assistance (source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC).

Figure 2: EUTFs - Origin of amounts available at 31/12/2020

All trust funds: origin of funds



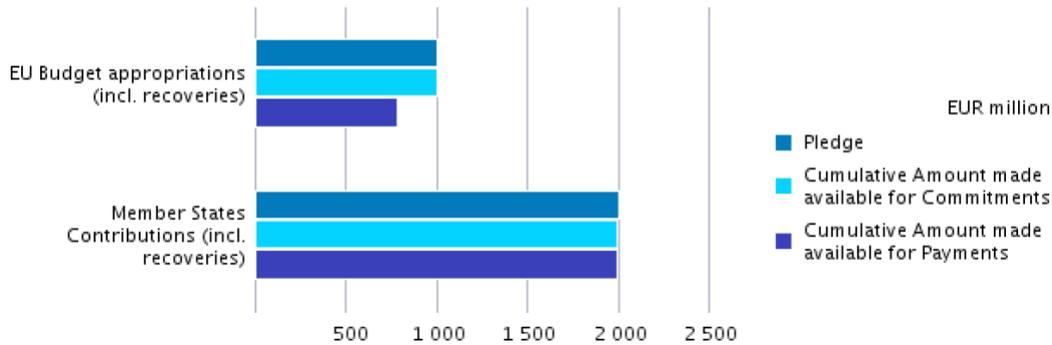
Contributions from Member States (MS) and other donors



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

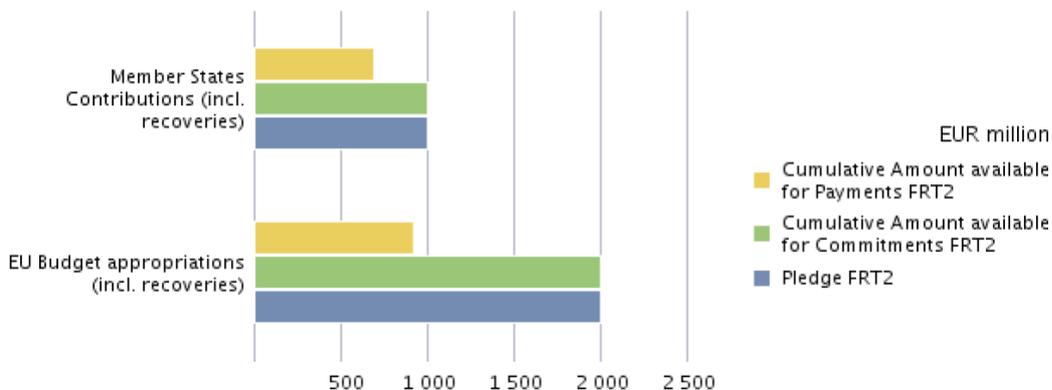
The **FRT** counts €6 billion: 3 billion from the EU budget and 3 billion from Member states, in two successive tranches of 3 billion each. The amounts coming from the EU budget and from Member states in the first and second tranches are shown in figures 3 and 4 respectively. The Commission reports on a monthly basis to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the FRT. More in-depth information may be found in the annual report on the FRT provided under Article 8(2) of the Commission Decision of 24 November 2015 creating the FRT.

Figure 3: FRT - 1st tranche - Overview and Origin of Funds at 31/12/2020



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the FRT - 10 February 2021

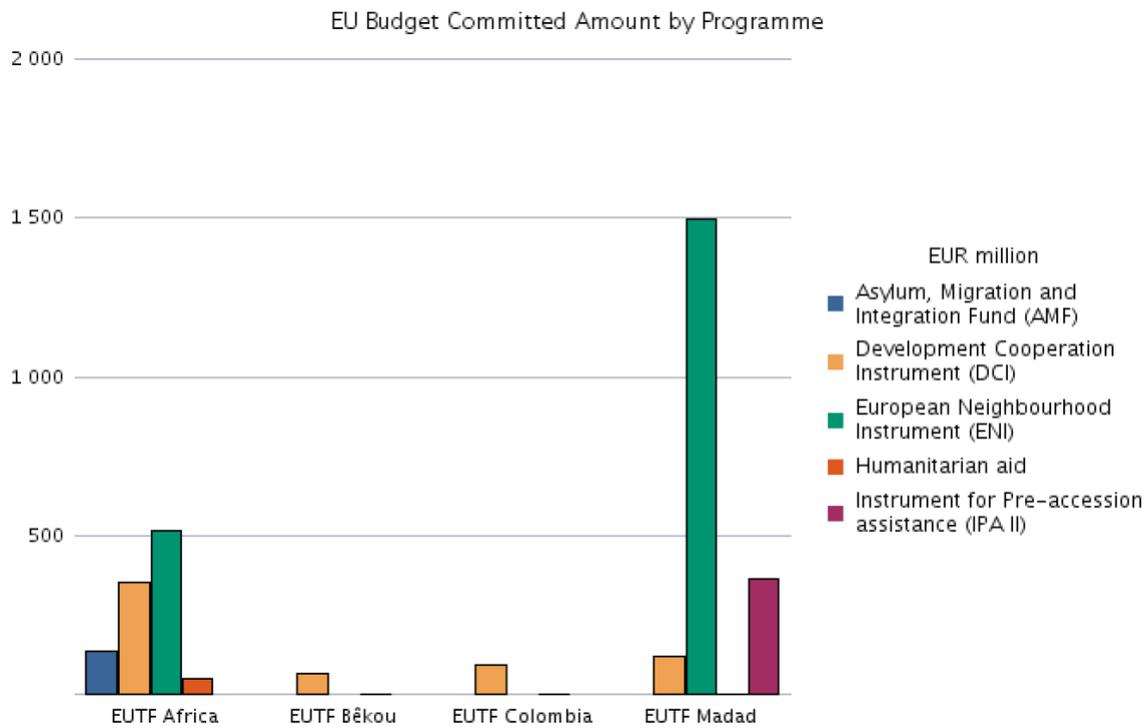
Figure 4: FRT - 2nd tranche - Overview and Origin of Funds at 31/12/2020



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the FRT - 10 February 2021

Figures 5 to 7 below show in more detail which existing EU budget instruments feed the individual EUTFs and the FRT.

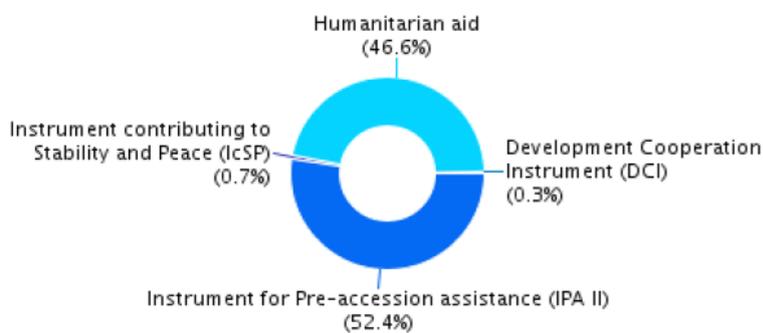
Figure 5: EUTFs - Origin of the EU budget contribution at 31/12/2020



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

Figure 6: FRT First tranche - Implementation by programme

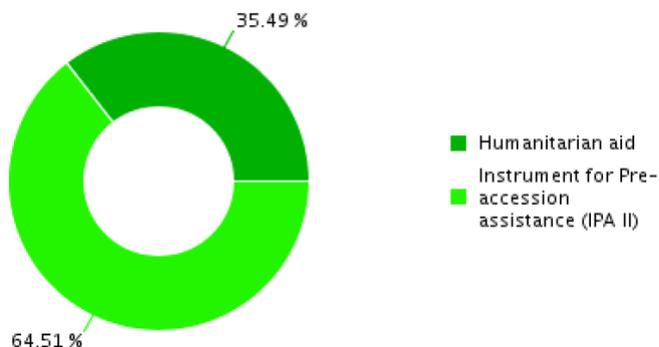
Commitments by Spending Programme



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the FRT - 10 February 2021

Figure 7: FRT Second tranche - Implementation by programme

Commitments by Spending Programme



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the FRT - 10 February 2021

While **an overall equal share of EUTFs is implemented by the European Commission and by international organisations** (around 36% each), there has been a sharp rise of the share implemented by international organisations in 2020 (Figure 8). About **a quarter of the funds are implemented by Member state agencies**¹⁴.

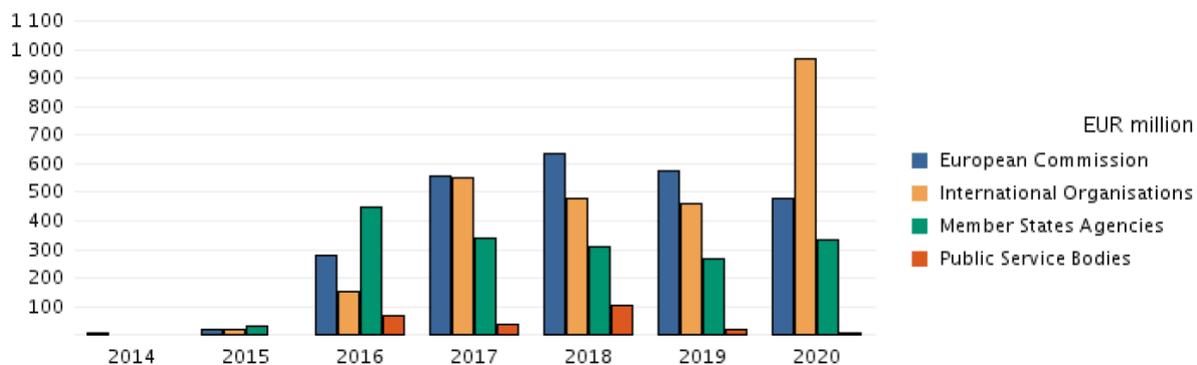
Table 2: EUTFs Breakdown of contracted amounts by implementing actor at 31/12/2020

Implementation Actor	EUR million	
	Contracted Amount	%
International Organisations	2 625.12	36.8%
European Commission	2 545.94	35.7%
Member States Agencies	1 725.83	24.2%
Public Service Bodies	243.79	3.4%
Total	7 140.68	100.0%

Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

¹⁴ More information on the key partners involved in implementing EUTFs can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/our-partners_en.

Figure 8: EUTFs - Implementing actor by year

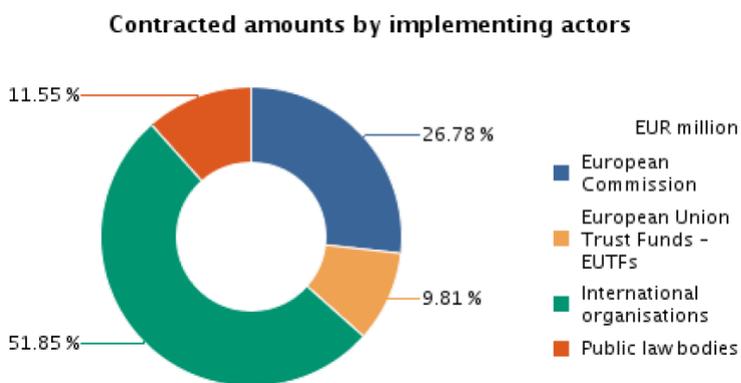


Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

In 2019, the top three international organisations contracted by the EUTFs were the International Organization for Migration (41 %), United Nations Children's Fund (24%) and the World Food Programme (11 %). The three main reasons for implementing the EUTFs' activities through international organisations were stated to be the organisations' specific expertise (44 %), the continuation of existing programmes (31 %) and contributions agreements linked to international mandates (24 %).¹⁵

The share of FRT funds implemented by international organisations is higher still (approximately 52% of the first tranche and 50% of the second tranche). Figures 9 and 10 show the FRT contracted amounts by implementing actor.

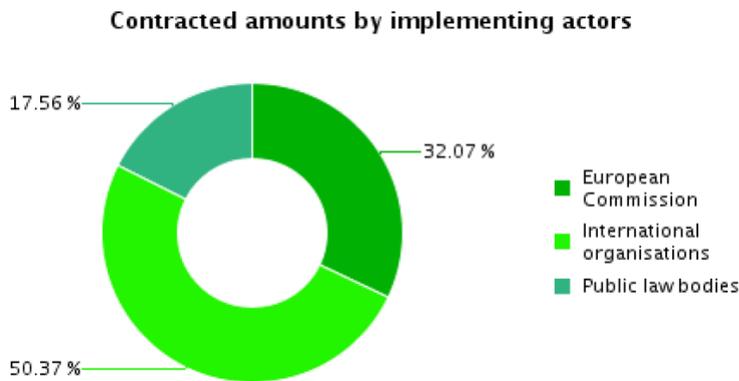
Figure 9: FRT 1st tranche Implementing Actors at 31/12/2020



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the FRT - 10 February 2021

¹⁵ Funding to international organisations COM(2020)300 - June 2020 - Draft Budget Working Document Part IX

Figure 10: FRT 2nd tranche Implementing Actors at 31/12/2020



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the FRT - 10 February 2021

More comments on implementing actors can be found under "Other stakeholders" below.

3.1. Implementation of the Bêkou Trust Fund

Table 3: Bêkou Trust Fund: origin of amounts available at 31/12/2020 - EUR million

Origin of funds	Total pledge	Cumulative amount made available for commitments	Cumulative amount made available for payments
Contribution from EU Budget	71.36	70.88	58.03
Contribution from Member States and other donors	88.93	77.93	77.93
Contribution from the EDF	148.00	148.00	68.00
Sub-total	308.28	296.80	203.96
Interests and project-related recoveries		0.30	0.30
Total	308.28	297.10	204.25

Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

At the of end December 2020, the implementation rate of commitment appropriations for the Bekou Trust Fund was 99% and 270 million had been contracted.

Since its creation in 2014 **the Bêkou Trust Fund reached 2 900 000 beneficiaries out of a total population of 5 000 000.**

At the management board meeting of 11 December 2020 a 23rd programme endowed with EUR 4 million was adopted to support the deployment of CAR Civil protection and EUR 10 million were added to the third phase of the Health programme.

The Bêkou Trust Fund has invested one third of its budget in the health sector (over EUR 100 million). Through it, 40 % of the CAR population receives primary healthcare and the national health system has been reinforced at all levels.

Other results include:

- 20 000 income -generating activities supported
- 40 000 refugees, forcibly displaced persons, people from host communities protected or assisted
- 1 million small-scale farmers supported

- 68 000 women assisted in their socio-economic integration
- 107 000 participants in conflict prevention and peace-building activities.

According to the DB2021 Working Document Part XI EU - Trust Fund “the Bêkou Trust Fund remains an **appropriate tool to respond to a still highly volatile context** and weak state presence outside the capital. Since the elections, the establishment of a government and the beginning of normalisation, **the trust fund has evolved, introducing a programmatic/sectoral approach.** (...)The trust fund is the only instrument that simultaneously targets the macro, meso and micro levels in its actions. At the macro level the trust fund supports policy formulation, national strategies and sectoral coordination, through technical assistance at the level of the Ministries; at the meso level it supports capacity building of decentralised sectoral institutions, prefectures, etc., and at the micro level it provides direct support to local communities and actors. Moreover, (...) the Bêkou Trust Fund is able to act quickly, but above all to adapt to changing situations. Consequently, **projects have evolved over time, both in terms of duration (now 30/36 months compared to the initial average of 18 months) but also in their nature**, becoming systemic -promoting not only the resilience of the communities but also the resilience of the state. “

According to the Bêkou Trust Fund [Annual report 2019](#) half of the CAR population needs assistance, with 1,7 million people having acute physical and mental survival needs. The report notes that the evaluation of the Bêkou Trust Fund internal control systems detected no major weakness.

3.2. Implementation of the Madad Trust Fund

Table 4: Madad Trust Fund: origin of amounts available at 31/12/2020 - EUR million

Origin of funds	Total pledge	Cumulative amount made available for commitments ¹⁶	Cumulative amount made available for payments
Contribution from EU Budget	1 951.78	2 119.18	1 298.62
Contribution from Member States and other donors	244.23	244.23	244.23
Sub-total	2 196.01	2 363.42	1 542.85
Interests and project-related recoveries		1.95	1.95
Total	2 196.01	2 365.36	1 544.80

Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

At the end of December 2020, the implementation rate of commitment appropriations for the Madad Trust Fund was over 95% and EUR 2 093 million had been contracted.

¹⁶ The cumulative amount made available for commitments and for payments through a contribution from the EU Budget includes an amount of EUR 139.68 million paid by the Commission to reimburse a contribution made by Turkey to the Madad EUTF under IPA operational programmes (indirect management).

When extending this EUTF in December 2020, the Commission noted that as of November 2020, there were over 5.5 million Syrian refugees registered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the region. This represents an increase of more than 2.3 million since the Trust Fund was established. More than nine years into the crisis, many refugees have depleted their resources and exhausted their coping mechanisms, further increasing their vulnerability. The impact of the crisis is also heavily affecting the already overstretched host communities, in particular in Lebanon and Jordan that host the largest numbers of registered refugees per capita in the world. The coronavirus pandemic is further exacerbating the situation. Following the blasts of 4 August 2020 in Lebanon, ongoing interventions in this country under the Madad Trust Fund had moreover to be adapted to better address social protection, sanitary and health needs.

The Union and its Member States have collectively mobilised more than EUR 20 billion in response to the Syrian crisis since 2011 and re-confirmed their continued engagement with significant pledges for 2020 and 2021 at the Brussels IV conference held on 30 June 2020. A large part of the non-humanitarian funding has been provided through the Trust Fund.

Commission's extension decision further noted that over the past five and a half years, the Trust Fund has mobilised EUR 2.2 billion, including over EUR 240 million in voluntary contributions from 21 Member States, Turkey and the United Kingdom, and EUR 2 billion from various instruments of the EU budget. The available budget has been fully allocated by the Board and out of that, **EUR 2 billion has already been contracted to more than 85 projects**. The Trust Fund is **supporting more than 7 million people**, both refugees and vulnerable people in the host communities, with access to education, livelihoods, health care, water and sanitation, child protection and social assistance.

The Trust Fund's **results monitoring of 73 projects has shown** the following results¹⁷:

- 470,000 children have access to quality basic education
- 6,900 youth scholarships
- 530,000 have access to improved economic self-reliance and livelihood opportunities
- 4,200,000 have access to medical care and health services
- 400,000 have access to water and sanitation services
- 560,000 have access to protection services, ranging from mine clearance actions to psychosocial support
- 1,000,000 benefit from social cohesion support

According to the last performance reviews of the Madad Trust Fund¹⁸ almost all projects reviewed are **relevant or highly relevant**, a majority have been **effective but with some issues** (concerning delays, visibility, reporting, transparency, governance,..) and have produced **positive outputs**. It has been **difficult to assess their impact** on the other hand and the **prospects for their sustainability are on the whole seen as weak**.

¹⁷ [Seventh Results Reporting – EUTF Syria & Region – September 2020](#)

¹⁸ [EUTF Syria Results-Oriented Monitoring \(ROM\) - Reviews completed until 15/09/2020](#)

3.3. Implementation of the EU Trust Fund for Africa

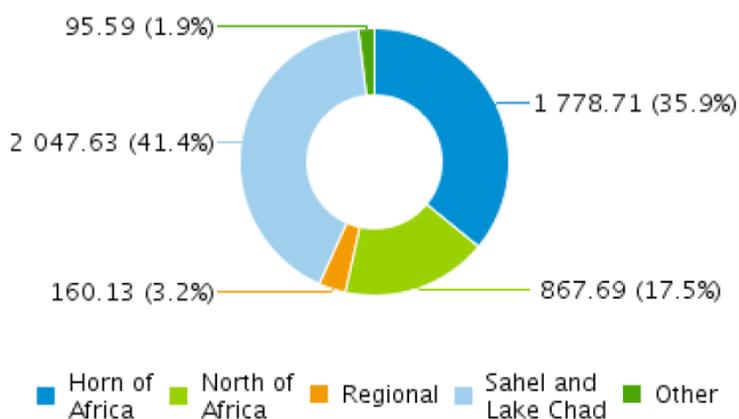
Table 5: EUTF for Africa: origin of amounts available at 31/12/2020 - EUR million

Origin of funds	Total pledge	Cumulative amount made available for commitments	Cumulative amount made available for payments
Contribution from EU Budget	1 052.66	1 052.66 ¹⁹	535.56
Contribution from Member States and other donors	619.66	619.66	619.66
Contribution from the EDF	3 385.84	3 325.84	1 994.34
Sub-total	5 058.16	4 998.16	3 149.56
Interests and project-related recoveries		0.24	0.24
Total	5 058.16	4 998.40	3 149.80

Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

At the end of December 2020, the implementation rate of commitment appropriations for the EUTF for Africa was 99% and EUR 4 669 million had been contracted. The share of each geographical window in the commitments is shown in Figure 11.

Figure 111: EUTF for Africa - Commitments by geographical window at 31/12/2020 - EUR million



Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

Delivered in October 2020, the [mid-term evaluation of the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) included over 200 out of 600 contracted projects implemented between 2016 and 2019. The review process involved a large consultation, including EU Member States, European Commission services, the European External Action Service and EU Delegations across the three regions. To ensure

¹⁹ Includes an amount of EUR 139.68 million paid by the Commission to reimburse a contribution made by Turkey to the Madad EUTF under IPA operational programmes (indirect management).

the coverage of key dimensions of the EUTF for Africa, field visits were conducted in Ethiopia, Libya, Morocco, Niger, Senegal and Somalia.

The mid-term evaluation of the EUTF for Africa reached the following conclusions:

C-1: The EUTF focuses on some of the world's most vulnerable groups.

C-2: The EUTF, being a short-term emergency instrument, had too wide a mandate.

C-3: There are challenges in keeping results frameworks in sync with evolving needs in rapidly evolving situations.

C-4: The information base for resource allocations in the EUTF slowly improved over time.

C-5: EUTF investment in complex situations resulting from fragility and conflict may yield important long-term returns.

C-6: The EUTF governance and management structure was flexible and efficient

C-7: The EUTF knowledge production and quality assurance are highly value-adding

C-8: The EUTF has made modest contributions to increased economic opportunities and employment.

C-9: The EUTF has ensured increased local and international attention to the migration issue

The evaluation recommends:

R-1: During the remaining implementation period, the EUTF should focus on generating further knowledge and understanding of its interventions and do this in a collaborative manner with other international bodies. To better capture outcomes and impacts, an ex-post evaluation should be conducted at least one year after all EUTF activities have been completed.

R-2: The EU should consider programming all its interventions in a country or region within one common (analytical) framework

R-3: The EU should have differentiated results framework structures depending on the development challenges in the partner country/region

R-4: The EU should strengthen the treatment of migration in its bilateral and regional programmes, ensuring that the entire Valletta Action agenda is covered.

R-5: The EU should develop differentiated contracting and implementation regulations for fragility, conflict and violence contexts

R-6: The EU support to economic opportunities and employment creation should be embedded within larger market development efforts and private sector involvement

R-7: The EU should provide "whole of community"²⁰ resilience interventions particularly when addressing situations of natural resource fragility

Overall, the Commission services agreed with the recommendations of the mid-term review, noting that some of the issues highlighted are already being tackled through the EUTF for Africa programmes. Moreover, they pointed out that some suggestions for actions could be taken up in the future under the NDICI²¹.

²⁰ World Bank (2020), "Group Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence 2020-2025".

²¹ 2020 annual report, EU Trust Fund for Africa.

The Commissioner for Development answered MEP questions in 2020, indicating that:

“The Commission has implemented a majority of the recommendations of the European Court of Auditors through inter alia: the revision of operational frameworks of each region to reflect new challenges and needs; the introduction of Monitoring and Learning Systems in each region; the revision of the Action Fiche template to reflect the comparative advantage of financing a project under the EUTF; the use of accelerated procedures: negotiated procedures and direct awards.”

“In addition to the monitoring set by projects implementers and EU delegations, independent experts put in place a Monitoring and Learning System to measure the progress of projects and publish periodical progress reports on the EUTF website. The external monitoring and evaluation comes in addition to internal evaluations at programme level.”

Since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, the EUTF for Africa has allowed in particular for a quick re-allocation of resources to address the health and economic crisis in several countries across the EUTF three regions²².

3.4. Implementation of the EU Trust Fund for Colombia

Table 6: Colombia Trust Fund: origin of amounts available at 31/12/2020 - EUR million

Origin of funds	Total pledge	Cumulative amount made available for commitments ²³	Cumulative amount made available for payments
Contribution from EU Budget	93.89	93.89	48.89
Contribution from Member States and other donors	35.13	33.61	33.61
Sub-total	129.02	127.50	82.50
Interests and project-related recoveries		-0.04	-0.04
Total	129.02	127.46	82.46

Source: Commission monthly Report on the Multiannual Implementation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) - 10 February 2021

At end December 2020, the implementation rate of commitment appropriations for the EUTF for Colombia was 94% and EUR 109 million had been contracted.

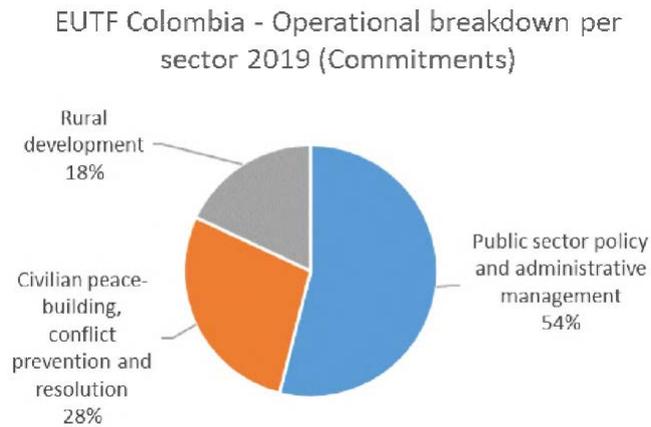
According to the Commission, the EUTF for Colombia focuses on “territories highly affected by the internal armed conflict” and “articulates ethnic, territorial and rural components, which are considered drivers for peace-building and territorial transformation. In 2019, it contributed in particular to the strengthening of national and local institutions, of local actor’s capacities, and to the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices.”²⁴

²² 2020 annual report, EU Trust Fund for Africa.

²³ The cumulative amount made available for commitments and for payments through a contribution from the EU Budget includes an amount of EUR 139.68 million paid by the Commission to reimburse a contribution made by Turkey to the Madad EUTF under IPA operational programmes (indirect management).

²⁴ [DB 2021 Programme statement](#)

Figure 122: EUTF for Colombia - Operational breakdown by sector (2019)



Source: Working Document Part XI Draft Budget 2021- EU Trust funds

As of June 2020, 28 projects, most of which started in 2018 or later, were being implemented. Presentation of results²⁵ is structured around 28 common indicators belonging to 12 categories²⁶: inclusive economic development, food security, market access, public infrastructures/goods/services, strengthening of institutions, organisational support, citizen participation, support to territories, knowledge management, reconciliation, reintegration of former combatants, environment.²⁷

Parliamentary questions in 2020 underlined that four years after the signing of the peace agreement in Colombia, the violence has intensified and various issues covered by the peace agreement remain unresolved. Commission was asked to assess the practical results obtained through the deployment of EU funding for the promotion of peace, stability and support for human rights defenders. Specifically it was asked whether EU funds intended for promoting peace are instead being used for defence and military purposes. The Commissioner for international partnerships answered on behalf of the Commission that it was not the case as funds “are channelled through civil society organisations, EU Member States agencies and the United Nations (UN)”, who “maintain a regular dialogue with the EU Delegation in Bogota and report every three months in detail on their ongoing actions on the ground, in line with an agreed results-based action plan.”

²⁵ https://www.fondoeuropeoparalapaz.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/6_Reporte-Junio2020.pdf

²⁶ https://www.fondoeuropeoparalapaz.eu/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2021/02/1.-Bater%C3%ADa-de-indicadores-vigencia_JUNIO2020-ok.pdf

²⁷ More information on results can be found in Working Document Part XI accompanying the Draft Budget 2021, page 23.

3.5. Implementation of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey

The first tranche of the FRT serves to fund projects that run until mid-2021 latest (most projects will finish earlier). The second tranche serves to fund projects which run until mid-2025 latest (most projects will finish earlier).

The full operational budget of €6 billion has been committed by the end of 2019 and contracted by the end of 2020, with more than €4 billion disbursed. The final contracts, worth €780 million, were concluded on [17 December 2020](#). According to a Commission [factsheet](#) updated in January 2021, results achieved include:

- 1,8 million refugees receive support for basic daily needs
- 750,000 refugee children supported to attend school
- 2.6 million ante-natal consultations delivered
- 170,000 education staff trained
- 365 new schools being constructed
- 90,000 children benefit from back-up and catch-up classes
- 13 million primary health care consultations delivered
- 4 million vaccination doses provided to refugee infants and pregnant women
- 177 migrant health centres are under way
- 3,400 health workers are employed

More details on the implementation of the FRT may be found in the [Fourth Annual Report](#) on the Facility for Refugees in Turkey²⁸.

According to the [Turkey 2020 Report](#) accompanying the Commission 2020 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy²⁹:

“The Facility is also providing support on registration of refugees and civil documentation.

The EU decided to **mobilise additional EUR 485 million from the 2020 budget to ensure the continuation of flagship projects**³⁰ funded under the 2016-19 Facility providing refugees with basic needs and access to education. This additional funding is not part of the EUR 6 billion of EU assistance allocated under the Facility (...). The recent Communication on a new Pact on Asylum and Migration noted that **continued and sustained EU funding in some form will be essential**.(...)

In the context of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey, the Commission immediately launched [COVID] awareness raising activities for the refugee population who are among the most vulnerable people. **An agreement was reached with the Turkish government to mobilise savings and contingencies under the Facility to support the national COVID-19 response.**

Turkey sustained its outstanding efforts to host more than 3.6 million registered refugees from Syria and around 370,000 registered refugees from other countries, which is the largest refugee community in the world.

²⁸ COM(2020)162

²⁹ SWD(2020) 355, 6.10.2020.

³⁰ The Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), which provide cash assistance to refugees in partnership with the Turkish Red Crescent (Kizilay), and the Conditional Cash Transfers for Education (CCTE), which provide support to families whose children attend school regularly.

Overall, the March 2016 EU-Turkey Statement continued to deliver results, with both parties renewing commitment to its effective implementation. Early in March 2020, Turkey however actively encouraged migrants and refugees to take the land route to Europe through Greece. Later in March, the Turkish authorities organised transport for migrants and refugees away from the border area with Greece and closed the borders with Greece and Bulgaria except for commercial traffic because of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Turkey also called for a new agreement to replace the March 2016 Statement.”

The Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement answered parliamentary questions on behalf of the European Commission in November 2020 stating that:

“The vast majority of Facility funding goes directly to refugees through implementing partners including international financial institutions, Member States’ agencies and international non-governmental organisations;”

A strategic [Mid-term Evaluation](#) of the FRT (2016-2019/2020) was planned to be completed in the third quarter of 2020.

In December 2020, the European Council invited the High Representative and the Commission to submit a report by March 2021 on the state of play of EU-Turkey political, economic and trade relations.

4. EUROPEAN COURT OF AUDITORS

Since its special reports of 2017-2018³¹, the ECA did not publish new reports focusing specifically on EUTFs or the FRT.

In its [Journal 03/2020 on Realising European added value of 26 November 2020](#) the Court recalled that

“Crisis after crisis, the limitations of the EU budget as an instrument to protect the citizens from asymmetric shocks or to achieve its stated objectives has required ad hoc mechanisms partially or fully external to the EU budget to de facto indirectly expand its financial capacity and avoid the limitations imposed by the Treaties. The European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism (EFSM), the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), **the Trust Funds in External Action**, the creation of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), the Corona virus responses including SURE (Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency) and the NextGenerationEU, **are all in large part the result of the EU budget’s shortcomings**. They are placed partially or fully outside the EU budget to overcome the restrictive obligations to operate only for specific programmes and projects and for rigid payments to pre-identified beneficiaries and an obligatory budgetary balance. The EU budget is still formally unable to offer solutions to many of the challenges public budgets are supposed and expected to react to.”

In its [Report of 9 November 2020 on the performance of the EU budget at the end of 2019](#) the Court noted concerning DCI: “Our audit reports noted that the projects in our sample funded by **EUTFs had started to produce outputs**, and that the funds had **helped to speed up implementation**. Despite **several issues** noted in our reports³² (**limited pooling of funding; design, management and monitoring weaknesses**), EUTFs have also proven a **flexible tool for emergency situations**. One of the principles of EUTFs is to leverage additional funding in order to increase EU support and thus achieve greater results. To date, **however, the EUTFs have attracted few additional donors and funds**.”

In its replies annexed to the ECA’s report, the Commission underlined that it “has made continuous efforts over the years to obtain additional donor funding for the EU trust funds (EUTFs)” and that “Regarding the findings in the ECA Special Report on EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa, complementarity and synergies with EU actions under other instruments is systematically assessed. Coordination on the ground is ensured through regular donor and partner’s coordination groups.”

Commission also highlighted that “A Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) for the three windows of the EUTF for Africa is now in place and fully operational. Under the EUTF Monitoring and Learning System, a single results framework is shared across the three geographical windows. The EUTF common output indicators are part of this framework, which consists of 41 common output indicators that all projects report against. This system allows the common reporting on the EUTF Africa through quarterly reporting that is made publicly available.”

In its decision of 13 May 2020 on the closure of the accounts of the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh European Development Funds for the financial year 2018 (2019/2065(DEC)), **the European Parliament invited the Court to consider an audit** of the impact of the implementation **of the EUTF for Africa** on Union development policy both from a budgetary and results point of view.

³¹ ECA’s 2017 Special report No 11 on the Békou TF, ECA’s Special report No 32/2018 on the EU TF for Africa, ECA’s 2018 Special report No 27 on the FRT.

³² In particular, the special report on the EUTF for Africa found that EU actions are not always based on comprehensive needs assessments and that several indicators were not specific, or lacked baselines.

5. Other stakeholders

Stakeholders mostly focused their comments on the EUTF for Africa. A recent study³³ for the European Parliament (among others) underlines the “increasingly narrowing set of European interests, which approaches most migration-related interventions from the vantage point of EU border security (...). **The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa specifically targets migration routes** and the countries they pass through (...). Irregular or more specifically undocumented migration plays a critical role in securing some people’s lives and livelihoods; hence, control or elimination is likely to have negative effects on people (Bakewell, 2020). (...) **Recommendation 1: Embrace and communicate ‘the big picture’ on intra-African migration(...). Rather than the current reframing of development assistance** to education, poverty reduction, livelihoods and skills training as addressing the ‘root causes’ of migration, migration-related earmarked funding such as **the Trust Fund should be dedicated to dealing with ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration within Africa.**(...) The European Parliament should encourage **knowledge production and dissemination** that account for the scale, scope, context and variability of intra-African migration, (...) **as a tool to inform decision and policy making** (...). Support to European stakeholders as well as African stakeholders in **conducting such studies can be mobilised from varied sources, but the EU Emergency Trust Fund is undoubtedly key** in this sense.”

Moreover as pointed out in a recent paper³⁴, the approach taken under the EUTF for Africa which is to integrate return and reintegration into a broader partnership approach and to fund partner governments’ priorities to compensate for the political risk – may be only **one of different options** available.

A recent Joint communication³⁵ of the EC and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy foresees that “the EU should leverage its role as a global powerhouse in research and innovation to ensure that multilateral action is **informed by the best possible scientific evidence**”.

As regards the **implementing actors** of the EUTF for Africa, according to a recent research article³⁶, “the fast procedures set up for the definition and selection of EUTF projects did not leave much room for local actors in target countries to participate. While the level of consultation of Civil Society Organisations and local actors is still debated and has improved over time(...) less than 10% of the implementing actors of the funded projects is a local partner. Moreover, **due to the lack of a formal call for proposal it was not possible to reconstruct the application and selection process to understand the extent to which local actors tried to submit projects and programmes.** However, expert reports (...) and interlocutors from development agencies confirm that **the emergency nature of the instrument favoured big European and international actors and Member States interests.**”

³³ EP DG EXPO Policy department for external relations “[Intra-African Migration](#)”, 28 October 2020. See also: “[A Comprehensive EU Strategy for Africa](#)”, June 2020.

³⁴ ECDPM Discussion paper No. 291 A sustainable development approach to return and reintegration: dilemmas, choices and possibilities, January 2021.

³⁵ [Joint communication of the EC and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on strengthening the EU’s contribution to rules-based multilateralism of 17 February 2021 \(JOIN\(2021\)3\)](#)

³⁶ Federica Zardo (2020) The EU Trust Fund for Africa: Geopolitical Space Making through Migration Policy Instruments, Geopolitics.

As noted in a recent in-depth analysis³⁷ delivered to the European Parliament, on 27 April 2020 a **complaint to the ECA³⁸ was supported by a coalition of thirteen civil society organisations (CSOs)**, concerning the mismanagement of EU funds by the EU Trust Fund for Africa’s ‘**Support to Integrated Border and Migration Management in Libya**’ Programme, based on failure to comply with development objectives and the absence of an ex ante assessment or safeguards regarding human rights. This was **followed by a petition³⁹** filed with the EP committee on petitions, to which the **Commission gave detailed replies on 21 December 2020⁴⁰**, strongly refuting that there had been any misuse or mismanagement of EU funds under the above-mentioned programme.

On 10 November 2020 **Privacy International and 13 CSOs** called upon the European Commission, in coordination with the European Parliament and EU member states, in an **open letter**, to ensure that the EUTF for Africa and other development and foreign cooperation funds do not support **projects which threaten the right to privacy and other fundamental rights**. It recommended that the European Parliament be provided with greater capabilities of scrutiny, and to **discontinue the EUTF for Africa**.

Furthermore, it was pointed out that “EUTF implementation in the Sahel showcases a number of incoherencies and **potentially dangerous consequences in regard to poverty reduction and gender inequality**. The institutionalization of the EUTF approach, and the principles which underpin it, into the MFF should thereby be viewed with scepticism.”⁴¹

In October 2020, Refugee watch⁴² recommended that 1°) the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (**Madad Fund**) be extended beyond 14 December 2020, and **new financial contribution** be pledged to it, 2°) the Operational Board of the Trust Fund **increase the availability of funds for projects proposed by local CSOs**.

6. The European Parliament

In its resolution of 14 May 2020⁴³ on the 2018 Commission discharge, the EP Insisted “on the need to closely monitor the use of funds of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey, ensuring that these funds are accurately targeting refugee projects” and called on the Commission to “report regularly to the budgetary authority on the compatibility of the actions financed with the underlying legal basis”.

In 2020, the EP continued to express concerns about **transparency, accountability, alignment, steering and monitoring** of EUTFs, especially the EUTF for Africa. It called for partner countries and civil society organisations to be more closely involved.

³⁷ EU External Migration Policy and the Protection of Human Rights, In-depth analysis, EP Policy Department for External Relations, September 2020.

³⁸ Complaint to the European Court of Auditors Concerning the Mismanagement of EU Funds by the EU Trust Fund for Africa’s ‘Support to Integrated Border and Migration Management in Libya’ (IBM) Programme Submitted by Global Legal Action Network (GLAN), Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration (ASGI), and Italian Recreational and Cultural Association (ARCI).

³⁹ Petition No 0655/2020.

⁴⁰ [PE N°663.059](#).

⁴¹ [Migration and development in the new EU budget, Clingendael, 2020](#).

⁴² [Trapped in between Lebanon and Syria - The Absence of Durable Solutions for Syria’s Refugees](#)

⁴³ EP resolution of 14 May 2020 with observations forming an integral part of the decisions on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2018, Section III – Commission and executive agencies (2019/2055(DEC))

Some of these concerns are not circumscribed to EUTFs. Indeed in its resolution of 14 May 2020 on the 2018 Commission discharge, the EP highlighted that in delivering Union policies in third countries, **the use of financial instruments⁴⁴, not just the use of trust funds**, alongside the Union budget, “risks undermining the level of accountability and transparency of Union action”, “as **reporting, audit and public scrutiny arrangements are not aligned**”.

In the same resolution, the EP observed **moreover** concerning development cooperation policy generally that “**due to security risks, auditors are often not able to verify** in many countries (...) whether the receivers of Union funds are respecting high standards of human rights;”

In 2020, the EP repeatedly deplored⁴⁵ the reported **human rights violations linked to the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa particularly in Libya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Niger**, and the fact that Commission did not review and report on them when proposing the extension of the EUTF until end 2021. It warned against the potential long-term contribution to destabilisation of countries and sub-regions. The EP moreover called for:

- human rights clauses in the contribution agreements with implementing partners
- human rights integration at the core of projects
- a transparent and rigid monitoring system, with an anonymous complaints procedure and follow-up
- a final comprehensive review of implementation

Such calls are in line with **recent EU commitments on human rights⁴⁶**.

In its detailed replies of 5 October 2020⁴⁷, Commission stated that “contribution agreements signed between the EU and implementing partners already contain relevant provisions on respect for human rights.”⁴⁸ and pointed to existing complaints procedures before the European Ombudsman and the ILO. It also underlined that “Should respect for human rights not be ensured in the implementation of EUTF projects, the Commission can suspend activities in line with contractual arrangements with the relevant implementer. Moreover, the EU relies on project monitoring missions undertaken by external experts, who report on whether the conditions on the ground are conducive to achieving the planned objectives, also in respect of human rights international standards. In the case of Libya, the EUTF has launched a unique and independent third party monitoring on outputs and on conflict sensitivity of the programme.”

In its decision of 13 May 2020 on the EDF discharge for 2018, while it welcomed Commission’s efforts to improve the EUTF for Africa common monitoring system, **the EP reiterated general concerns** over project selection criteria, risk assessment, performance measurement, effectiveness and monitoring of

⁴⁴ Governed by Title X of the Financial rules applying to the EU budget.

⁴⁵ Opinion of the Committee on Development for the Subcommittee on Human Rights on human rights protection and the EU external migration policy (2020/2116(INI)) of 18 January 2021; European Parliament resolution of 26 November 2020 on the situation in Ethiopia (2020/2881(RSP)); European Parliament decision of 13 May 2020 on the closure of the accounts of the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh European Development Funds for the financial year 2018 (2019/2065(DEC)); European Parliament resolution of 14 May 2020 with observations forming an integral part of the decisions on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2018, Section III – Commission and executive agencies (2019/2055(DEC))

⁴⁶ Joint communication of the EC and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on strengthening the EU’s contribution to rules-based multilateralism of 17 February 2021 (JOIN(2021)3); Council Regulation (EU) 2020/1998 of 7 December 2020 concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses.

⁴⁷ Detailed replies to the specific requests made by the European Parliament complementing the report from the Commission on the follow-up to the discharge for the 2018 financial year, COM(2020)311.

⁴⁸ “ All types of contracts, agreements, tender and grants include a code of conduct laying down ethical clauses as a contractual obligation for the respect of human rights and labour standards (...). Failure to comply with these ethical clauses may lead to termination of contracts, sanctions or exclusions from tender or grant.”

implementation, dissemination and media coverage of best practice, concluding that **“given such findings, the added value of the EUTF [for Africa] is highly questionable”**.

EU cooperation, including through EUTFs, is hoped to gain effectiveness and transparency following the current transition to [OPSYS](#)⁴⁹, which the European Court of Auditors welcomed in 2018⁵⁰, underlining the need to improve the information collected and to make it usable for analysis and treatment.

Another persistent concern in the EP decision of 13 May 2020 on the EDF discharge, is that even though “the Union contribution to the EUTF [is] made mostly using ODA resources”, the EUTF tool can be described as “more an instrument focusing on quick-fix projects aiming at stemming migratory mix-flows instead of tackling long-term drivers of migration in line with the principles of development aid;”. The decision insists that any trust fund must “ensure that the security interests of European countries do not override the needs of the recipient populations”. The EP resolution of 14 May 2020 on the Commission discharge for 2018, while noting “that Commission may use Union funds for **security purposes** in order to reach a more efficient development cooperation”, added that **“a proper legal basis** and the full transparency of the funded actions must be secured”. In this regard, the EP welcomed in its resolution of 16 September 2020⁵¹, **the proposal for the establishment under the CFSP of a European Peace Facility (EPF)** for the financing of military and defence-related cooperation with third countries and international organisations, “which **will fill an important gap** in EU support and together with the NDICI give the EU the ability to respond more quickly and effectively to security challenges”.

In its [detailed replies](#) of 5 October 2020, Commission underlined that “migration management is in fact covered by official development assistance (ODA) eligibility criteria”.

As regards the **governance of EUTFs**, the EP reiterated in its resolution of 14 May 2020 on the 2018 Commission discharge its recommendation that Commission provide detailed information on the decisions taken in the EUTFs **operational committees** and ensure that the Parliament is represented at its meetings.

In its [detailed replies](#) of 5 October 2020, Commission stated that: “detailed information about the programmes approved by the Operational Committees of the EUTF Africa is made available through the Trust Fund website and the Annual Report on EUTF activities which is shared with the European Parliament. Based on negotiations held in 2017 between the Commission and the European Parliament, it was agreed that the European Parliament would be granted observer status on the Board of EU Trust Funds but not on the Operational Committees.”

On 23 and 26 November 2020, the EP President announced in plenary the AFET, DEVE and BUDG Committees recommendations under Article 234 of the Financial regulation to extend the four EU trust funds. No objections having been raised these were officially forwarded to the European Commission as EP positions.

⁴⁹ A large-scale IT programme covering the entire EU external relations portfolio of projects and programmes (actions), meant to address the whole project cycle: from programming to final evaluation, all through its contracting and implementation phases. OPSYS users include the EC, partner countries and implementing partners (e.g. UN agencies, Member State development agencies).

⁵⁰ Court’s Special Report No 35/2018: Transparency of Union funds implemented by NGOs: more effort needed.

⁵¹ EP resolution on EU-African security cooperation in the Sahel region, West Africa and the Horn of Africa (2020/2002(INI))

While the EP approved the extension of the EUTFs until the end of 2021, it underlined:

- as regards the EUTF for Africa, among other elements: the need to combine its flexibility with full transparency and accountability of the decision-making process; the necessity to take on board lessons learnt in a timely manner; the lack of information on the involvement of local civil society organisations; persistent concerns over short term migration management and its effects, in particular on human rights;

-as regards the Madad Trust Fund, that spending for reconstruction under the current conditions in Syria would not have tangible benefits for the population nor create the conditions for a voluntary return of the Syrian refugees who had to leave Syria;

- as regards EUTFs generally the need for better information and involvement of the EP; the need for new contributions from Member states (and not from the EU budget); the fact that these extensions should be seen as mainly technical to allow for a smooth transition into the new MFF and an efficient contracting and use of the funds already committed from the Union budget.

Moreover the EP regretted that the MFF 2021-2027 did not meet the expectations of a sufficient firepower of the Union budget to respond adequately to the external challenges, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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- AFRICA <https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/>
- FRT https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/migration_en

This paper proposes a factual overview of recent developments in the implementation of the EU Békou Trust Fund for the Central African Republic, the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (Madad), the EU Trust Fund for Peace in Colombia, the EU Trust Fund for Africa and the Facility for Refugees in Turkey

PE 691.520

Print ISBN 978-92-846-7933-1 | doi: 10.2861/382694| QA-05-21-066-EN-C

PDF ISBN 978-92-846-7932-4| doi: 10.2861/345499| QA-05-21-066-EN-N