

2015 Discharge to the Commission

WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO COMMISSIONER AVRAMAPOULOS

Hearing on 29 November 2016

2015 Annual Activity Report of DG HOME

Compliance approach

While the overall shared management residual error rate remained well below 2%, the cumulative residual error rate was higher than 2% for eight Funds in four member states. However, for six of them the residual amount at risk remained below the de minimis threshold: in order to avoid issuing reservations on programmes which have a marginal impact on DG HOME's declaration of assurance, a de minimis threshold of 350 000.00 EUR is applied. All cases for which the cumulative amount at risk is above 2% but below that threshold are not subject to a reservation (unless on reputational grounds)

1. In which Member States was the residual error rate higher than 2 %?

Commission's answer:

Member States with a Residual Error Rate higher than 2% in the 2015 AAR of DG HOME:

1. Czech Republic: European Refugees Fund (3,32%), Return Fund (2,88%), European Integration Fund (3,04%) and External Borders Fund (3,13%)
2. Germany: European Refugees Fund (5,00%), European Integration Fund (5,74%)
3. France: European Integration Fund (2,00%)
4. Poland: Return Fund (2,00%)

2. Which errors and deficiencies were identified in Germany? How this situation had been redressed, which lessons had been taken for the future, bearing in mind the open attitude adopted by the German Government as to the refugees issue?

Commission's answer:

Two Funds in Germany (EIF and ERF) were among the eight Funds concerned for which the cumulative residual error rate was higher than 2%. For all eight Funds, either a contradictory procedure following an ex-post audit, or financial correction procedures were on going at the time of the assessment (end 2015). However, for six of the eight funds, the residual amount at risk remained below the "de minimis" threshold. As a result, only two funds (EIF and ERF in Germany) were subject to a reservation in 2015 AAR of DG HOME, a procedure which is applicable to all Member States.

The reservation issued for these two Funds in Germany which have a similar

internal control system, had no financial impact as no payments to these Funds were made in 2015 – therefore the reservation was reputational.

The Funds were managed by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. The preliminary results of a project and system audit for the Annual Programmes 2008-2010 reported some errors and weaknesses in the management and control system (concerning mainly compliance with the project target group, respect of rules on the eligibility of staff costs, insufficient supporting documents for expenditures, weaknesses in the selection and award process, deficiencies concerning audit activities) but the financial impact could not be quantified at the time of reporting. The audit process has been completed on 10 August 2016. Its results are now being analysed by the Commission in order to determine any required financial correction.

As to the system weaknesses identified, given that the implementation of the SOLID Funds (ERF, EIF, RF, EBF) has ended, the Commission took contact with the German Authorities with the goal to avoid similar issues in the management of the new AMIF/ISF funds. It is expected to finalise this process by the end of the year.

For the new programming period (2014-2020) the management and control system in Germany has been reviewed. Recently (July 2016) the Commission has organised a system review meeting with the German Authorities responsible for programme implementation of the new Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) – the successor of old ERF and EIF. Following this meeting, a number of observations and recommendations on the new system in place were addressed to the Responsible Authority and the Audit Authority.

The German Authorities have already completed the process of tackling some of these issues of concern.

As a general approach to all national programmes, further **corrective actions** have been taken for the annual programmes for which the assurance is limited to the extent that the risk for the Fund was estimated to be at 5% minimum of all payments made. In particular, flat rate corrections were implemented and further ex-post controls took place in 2016 to better estimate the risk for the Funds of system deficiencies for other annual programmes.

3. Are there other services in the Commission that use this practice of the *de minimis* threshold? Is that conform to the directives of the Secretary general and DG Budget? If it is the case, how is it taken on board in the calculation of the overall amount at risk in the second part of the Annual Management and Performance report?

Commission's answer:

The Commission instructions require the AOD to issue an AAR reservation if the residual error rate is above the materiality criteria. The AOD's have limited discretion to deviate from this principle. Consequently, quite a few reservations across the Commission are fairly small in scope and exposure (for example DG

GROW and FP7, scope 0.2% of payments, exposure 0.2 million).

However in shared management, where the AAR reporting is specified at Member State level, it can be meaningful to have a *de minimis* approach at the level of the Member State/paying agency/operational programme.

Deciding the significance or the *de minimis* threshold of a control weakness is a matter of judgment by the AOD, who remains responsible for setting the materiality criteria, the declaration of assurance, including any reservations to it. The guidance provided by the Commission Central Services specifies that the AOD should identify the overall impact of a weakness and judge whether it is material enough for the non-disclosure of the weakness to likely have an influence on the decisions or conclusions of the users of the declaration. The guidance also states that when making a reservation the significant weakness identified must be a material one in relation to the activity or control system in question. Accordingly, after having made the analysis for issuing a reservation or not at the Commission level for each fund, applying a *de minimis* threshold for the Member State level below is not against the guidance of the Commission Central Services.

Such a *de minimis* approach for deciding on reservations is applied for example in DG Agriculture and Rural Development. Given the overall amount at stake for the Common Agricultural Policy with expenditure of around 55 billion a *de minimis* threshold of 1 million is applied at paying agency level. All cases for which the amount at risk is below this threshold are described in full transparency in the Annual Activity Report but are not subject to a formal reservation.

The *de minimis* threshold is used when deciding to issue a reservation at Member State/paying agency/operational programme level and when estimating the "amount at risk under reservation", however it is not applied when estimating the "overall amount at risk" in the AAR. Consequently, all Funds managed under shared management by DG Migration and Home Affairs (EIF, ERF, RF, EBF), , were taken on board in the estimation of the overall amount at risk in 2015 AAR, irrespective of whether they are under reservation or not.

Performance issues

4. *2015 was an extremely challenging year in the field of migration and home affairs. The refugee crisis took a new scale. Large scale terrorist attacks were perpetrated in several EU Member States.*

What is your general assessment of the effectiveness of DG HOME's responses?

Commission's answer:

The scale and the cross border dimension of the challenges raised by terrorism and the refugee crisis have shown that an effective and sustainable solution requires European cooperation and solidarity. DG HOME has played a critical role within the Commission services in mobilising EU policy instruments to define and implement comprehensive policy responses at EU level to address these challenges with legislation, funding, operational support and other supporting

measures. Although it is premature to make an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the instruments put in place, it is clear that thanks to the Commission's response the situation is better today than one year ago, as regards the preparedness of Member States and the instruments at their disposal. For some of the Commission's proposals, implementation is still too recent to assess their impacts against their objectives. For others, the measures proposed still have to be implemented. DG HOME is committed to continue mobilising EU resources to support Member States for ensuring an effective implementation of the decisions taken at EU level.

5. What is the assessment of the Commissioner on the adequacy between the means and tools and the challenges that DG HOME has to address? Are there enough resources: money, staff?

Commission's answer:

DG HOME's operational budget has been reinforced to respond to the increased needs resulting from the migration crisis and security threats¹.

Also, DG HOME has been reinforced by additional staff to cope with the increased volume of legislation put forward, including the consequences this legislation has in terms of budgetary means available to Member States. DG HOME has also been subject to several internal reorganisations to better respond to the increasing needs.

However, the staff is still put under high workload pressure to cope with the preparation, follow-up and monitoring of the additional actions implemented to alleviate the migratory crisis. Also, having an annual budget which has basically doubled, means that DG HOME needs to adjust the number of staff dealing with financial issues accordingly.

In order to implement all the measures taken to overcome the crises and start building pro-actively a more structured approach towards migration and security, the administrative capacity needs to be aligned to the increased needs at operational level.

6. What is the analysis in terms of performance and results as to key performance indicator 2 (DG HOME AAR 2015): number of target group persons who received pre or post return reintegration assistance co financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund: 45 300 persons between 2011 and 2015.

¹ The reinforcements in 2015 were mainly used to provide additional emergency assistance to the Member States (EUR 130 million), resettlement (EUR 25 million) and to reinforce the agencies most concerned: FRONTEX (EUR 27. 428 million), EASO and EUROPOL.

Furthermore, in 2016 the emergency assistance to the Member States has been significantly increased reaching EUR 326 million under AMIF and EUR 140.5 million for ISF. Substantial resources have been provided to them to implement the temporary relocation scheme established in two Council Decisions in September 2015, in which Member States committed to relocate up to 160,000 people from Italy and Greece by September 2017.

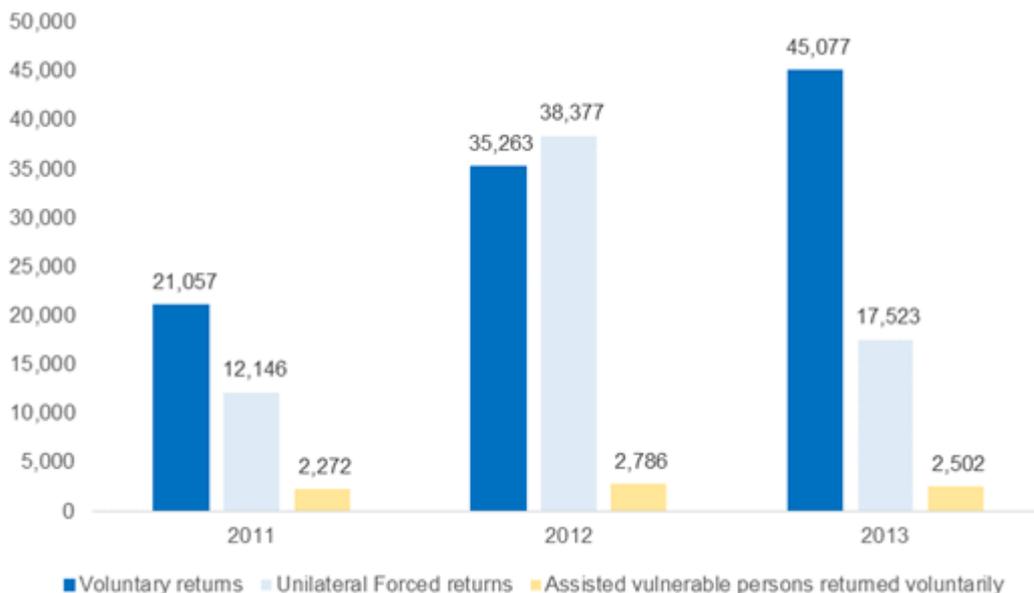
Additional funds have been envisaged under 2016 Budget for the Member States to deliver on their commitment on resettlement.

Are the specific targets for next years (see page 16 and 17 of the AAR: 160 .000 persons in clear need of international protection from Italy and Greece by the end of 2017 plus 20.504 persons in the framework of another scheme by the same date) realistic in light of the fact that 202 people have been resettled and 272 relocated by end 2015.

Commission's answer:

This indicator corresponds to a projection for the period 2011-2013, based on figures extracted from the ex post evaluation of the Return Fund 2008-2010. The ex-post evaluation of the European Return Fund for the period 2010-2013 (whose implementation ran until end 2015) shows that the number of persons returned voluntarily gradually doubled over the years (2011-2013) from 21,057 to 45,077. Forced returns increased significantly from 2011 to 2012 (+ 216%) and consequently dropped again in 2013 (-54%). Assisted vulnerable persons returned voluntarily shows a constant trend, the number changing only by a few hundreds of persons over the years considered.

Number of persons returned by type, EU total for 2011-2013



Source: National Evaluation Reports

Note: Data from the following Member States was not available for voluntary returns: CY, HR, SE. Data from the following Member States was not available for assisted vulnerable persons returned voluntarily: BG, CY, ES, FR, HR, SE, SI, UK. Data from the following Member States was not available for unilateral forced returns: BG, CY, DE, IE, SE.

The targets for the relocation of 160,000 applicants for international protection from Italy and Greece and for the resettlement of 20,504 persons are set by Council Decisions (EU) 2015/1523 and 2015/1601 and the Conclusions of 20 July 2015 of the Representatives of Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council respectively. The different schemes should be implemented in the course of 2017. Our objective is to match the real needs of Greece and Italy in terms of relocation and to open credible alternative legal ways for migrants to come to Europe. The Commission works closely together with Member States to accelerate the implementation progress to reach these targets.

The Commission reports regularly on the implementation of these schemes to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council through its Reports on Relocation and Resettlement. The last Commission report on this issue was adopted on 9 November 2016.

As of 22 November, 2,343 people had been resettled from Turkey to the EU and 7,627 people had been relocated since the launch of the scheme (5,825 to Greece and 1,802 to Italy). Regarding relocation, some improvements in the trend have been noticed since May, with the number of persons relocated per month in September and November getting close to or exceeding 1,000 per month.. However, further efforts are still needed from Member States to sustain the positive trend reached until now. The Commission foresees additional financial support for resettlement and relocation actions. Following the last call for pledges (7 November 2016), Member States have until now declared their willingness to legally admit 32.772 Syrians from Turkey and to relocate another 1,680 persons from Italy and Greece (but the pledging process still needs to accelerate).

7. In his annual activity report for 2015 the Director general of DG HOME adopted a very defensive approach as to the critics enclosed in the Special report 9/2016 of the ECA concerning “EU external migration spending on Southern Mediterranean and Eastern Neighbourhood Countries until 2014”
What is the responsibility of DG HOME in this issue?

Commission's answer:

DG HOME has supported DG NEAR and DG DEVCO in the preparation of the responses to the Special Report. DG HOME is not however directly concerned as funds are managed only by DG DEVCO and DG NEAR.

Performance Based Budget approach

8. How did you include the principles of Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness in your daily operations and annual planning and controls?

Commission's answer:

The principles of Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness call for the Commission to optimize its controls taking into consideration its resources available.

Under shared management, Regulation (EU) No 514/2014 for AMIF and ISF Funds sets out the minimum requirements on controls, which take place at both national and Commission levels. The primary responsibility for the monitoring and control of the programmes implemented with EU funding lies with the Responsible Authorities designated by the national Governments. The designation process has been closely reviewed by the Commission services and a specific consultation process has been put in place to discuss the management and control systems set up for the implementation of the Funds, in order to ensure compliance with the regulatory requirements, sound financial management and to take into account areas of risk detected during the implementation of the previous funds during the 2007-2013 programming period (SOLID). This is part of the role

established in the Treaties for the Commission to protect the financial interests of the Union by applying preventive measures and conducting effective checks.

On the side of the Commission, the controls are ensured through the annual clearance of accounts and through monitoring of programmes' implementation (including monitoring visits also at project level). In addition, audits provide reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the Member States are used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

The Commission builds its assurance on the systems gradually over the programming period through a logical assurance chain, building on:

- (i) DG HOME own audit work including visits, annual closure and ex-post audits, based on risk analysis as it is not efficient nor effective to audit all funds and all expenditure.
- (ii) operational controls and monitoring visits performed by the operational units that also included light system verification;
- (iii) the audit work of MS audit authorities through the review of the annual audit reports;
- (iv) information from other sources, contributing to building the assurance on the effective functioning of the MCS.

With a view to ensure the optimal use of audit resources, the Commission is committed to implement the Single Audit Principle: synergies with the Audit Teams of other DGs are promoted, like sharing of audit methodologies and audit results.

Monitoring the implementation and the progress becomes the core activity and the Commission is stepping up its role in Monitoring Committees of the national programmes. DG HOME representatives regularly participate (in advisory capacity) in the monitoring committee meetings that are organised by Member States. The monitoring committee is the main body responsible for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the national programme and the progress towards achieving its objectives. Its functions may include, among others, the examination of all issues that affect the performance and implementation of the national programmes and approving the amendments to these programmes.

The Commission analyses on a yearly basis the implementation reports and gathers the project reporting data to monitor the progress on the implementation of the Funds. In addition, DG HOME desk officers regularly review the operational and financial management of the Funds as well as the functioning of the management and control system put in place by Member States through monitoring visits. Monitoring visits are directly linked with the quality/consistency of the operational implementation of actions/projects. The monitoring visits are in place in order to ensure timely and up to date information about the implementation of the national programmes.

This monitoring process is set up to: 1) ensure that expenditure declared complies

with the rules and principles of the basic acts (which among others lists the importance of ensuring effectiveness and efficiency of the implemented actions) and the Financial Regulation and its implementing rules and 2) ensure that policy priorities and commitments made during the policy dialogues as reflected in the programmes are pursued.

In the case of direct management, in 2016 DG HOME joined the E-grants tool for the electronic management of grants, which aims to automate administrative processes and reduce the resources needed in the long term.

9. What Key Performance Indicators have you included in your planning and how did you check up on their achievement?

Commission's answer:

DG HOME has included the following key performance indicators in its Strategic Plan 2016-2020:

- 1) Rate of return of irregular migrants to the third countries measured as % of effected returns compared to return decisions issued by the Member States;
- 2) Convergence of protection recognition rates for asylum seekers from the same country;
- 3) Use of EU information exchange mechanisms measured through the number of hits in SIS and Prüm databases and the use of Europol's Siena and EIS;
- 4) Number of operations conducted with the involvement of EC3;
- 5) Estimated residual error rate.

Achievement is monitored in the framework of the Annual Activity Reports, using relevant data sources as indicated in the Strategic Plan.

10. What follow-up measures did you introduce following the annual revision of the goals achieved?

Commission's answer:

As of 2016, DG HOME adapted planning tools to the political priorities and strategic framework. DG HOME established a Strategic Plan for the 2016-2020 period based on long-term general and specific objectives that guide DG HOME's operations. General objectives correspond to the 10-political priorities of the Juncker Commission and DG HOME contributes to the following:

- Towards a European Agenda on Migration – covering migration policy
- An Area of Justice and Fundamental Rights Based on Mutual Trust – covering security policy
- Making the EU more democratic –Europe for Citizens Programme
- A deeper and fairer internal market – covering security research.

In the area of migration and security, DG HOME's specific objectives are built on the main pillars of the European Agenda on Migration and the European Agenda on Security. The achievement of each objective is measured against a number of impact and result indicators.

The Strategic Plan is implemented through annual Management Plans which specify main outputs and deliverables for the given year and hence contribute to the general and specific objectives.

At the end of 2015, the Commission's Internal Audit Service conducted an audit on the process of setting objectives and indicators for the 2015 Management Plan. The new approach addresses in an action plan the subsequent recommendations formulated by the auditors with a view to improve and monitor performance.

11. Have you also set medium to long-term goals allowing you to also check the effectiveness and not just the efficiency of your operations?

Commission's answer:

Medium and long-term goals are set out in the Agendas on Migration and Security establishing the strategic framework of DG HOME policy areas.

Achievements and Successes

12. Please name 3 of your main achievements and successes in 2015.

Commission's answer:

2015 was a particularly challenging year in the area of migration and security. In order to support Member States faced with important challenges due to the inflow of migrants, the Commission has worked closely together with the European Parliament and the Council to ensure that adequate funding is secured to alleviate the most pressing challenges faced by Member States.

The Commission has also put forward a number of operational and legal measures to address the migration and refugee crisis, with the following main achievements:

- Established hotspots approach in Greece and Italy to ensure full registration and identification of arrivals and set up EU resettlement and relocation schemes.
- Reinforced the operational capacities of the EU Agencies to further assist Member States in managing the crisis and in particular to contribute to the hotspots approach and to support search and rescue operations (FRONTEX)
- Proposed the creation of the European Border and Coast Guard to enhance the management and the protection of Europe's external borders. The Agency was given an enhanced mandate and operational capabilities to better support Member States. In the course of 2016, in record time, the European Border and Coast Guard has been agreed and it is currently being operationalized.

Challenges Ahead

13. Please present the main challenges your DG is facing?

Commission's answer:

The main challenge ahead of us will be to consolidate the measures taken so far to address the migration crisis and the security threats, so that we phase out of an emergency mode to a more proactive and structured management of the means available.

That is the reason why we should aim at increasing the flexibility in the implementation of the EU funds as well as the flexibility of the EU budget as a whole, in order to enable the EU to optimize the use of the existing resources. In the meantime, the Commission works closely together with Member States to assess the remaining needs on the ground and ways to address them on the one hand, and ensuring that the allocated EU funds are adequately absorbed on the other hand.

Other challenges worth mentioning are:

- Slow progress in implementation of agreed measures by the Member States, in particular as regards the relocation scheme;
- Shortfalls in contributions by Member States to deploy experts to the EU Agencies to support activities in the frontline Member States;
- Stretched resources in DG Home involved in dealing with migration challenges/policy areas.

Room for Improvements

14. Please present your view on the possible improvements in operations, activities and results achieved.

Commission's answer:

Much progress was accomplished already in tackling both the migration crisis and the security threats, but there is still room for improvement.

First, the European responses on migration and security have not secured unanimity among Member States, and national specificities strongly impact EU action. We need coordinated efforts with the Member States in order to deliver the expected results. We need to demonstrate to all that only a common European approach can respond to the global challenges of migration and security.

Second, we need a paradigm-shift from reactive to pro-active European policies. Rather than granting emergency assistance, the national programmes of ISF and AMIF should be at the very center of the mix of national and EU-level contingency measures and measures to implement efficient and effective longer-term policies.

Third, we need to further rely on the expertise of the EU decentralised agencies. They are key actors to implement the EU policies and achieve the EU objectives.

Finally, we need more flexibility to use EU funding. If our policies would fail due to a lack of funding or to a lack of capacity to shift resources where they are the most needed, we would face a reputational risk that we cannot afford in a time of political uncertainties.

Fraud & Corruption (including co-operation with OLAF)

15. What further measures / rules your DG had at your disposal or had introduced in 2015 to fight against fraud & Corruption? How did those rules changed up till today?

Commission's answer:

DG HOME attaches great importance to the development of fraud prevention and detection strategies in the Member States. Member States are responsible to develop and establish tasks and procedures, including those linked to fraud prevention and detection, composing the Management and Control System. DG HOME audit strategy foresees comprehensive checks in this regard in the framework of the assessment of the management and control systems.

For the shared management component of the funding managed by DG HOME, training was provided to Member States representatives through the AMIF-ISF Committee on how to operationalize the fight against fraud and how to fulfil the legal obligation of reporting to the Commission on allegations of potential fraud or misuse of EU Funds.

16. How did you co-operate with OLAF and ECA in the spheres of prevention, investigation or corrective measures?

Commission's answer:

DG HOME cooperates with OLAF in all stages of an investigation: before opening an investigation (selection), during the investigation (on a need to know-to-know basis) and after the closure of the investigation (monitoring and follow-up). OLAF organises regular meetings, trainings and workshops to which DG HOME staff participate.

In respect to ECA's audits, DG HOME ensures an appropriate follow up of findings. With a view to ensure the optimal use of audit resources, the Commission is committed to implement the Single Audit Principle, taking into account the synergies with other audits carried on, like sharing of audit methodologies and audit results.

Conflict of Interests (Rules and control mechanism)

17. What measures / rules has your DG had at your disposal or had introduced in 2015 to prevent and fight against the conflict of interests? How did those rules changed up till today?

Commission's answer:

The main policy innovation in 2015 is the publication of the first Annual Communication on the application of Article 16(3) regarding the prohibition of lobbying and advocacy for senior managers having left the service and during one year after retirement. It also launched a process of revision of the Decision C(2013) 9037 on outside activities and assignments with a view to adapting it to the experience gained in the previous years. Discussions related to the adoption of new rules on outside activities and assignments are ongoing. The obligation not to

disclose unauthorised information unless it is already public or made accessible to the public has also been at the top of the concerns with a specific focused reflection upon it in 2016.

18. Do you have any regular/ad hoc controlling mechanism at place?

Commission's answer:

DG HOME applies general Commission policies.

19. Were there any cases reported, investigated and concluded in 2015?

Commission's answer:

In 2015, one case of a possible conflict of interests concerning DG HOME was reported to and investigated by the Commission's Investigation and Disciplinary Office. This investigation was closed without need for follow-up in 2016.

Development Cooperation Instrument and European Neighbourhood Instrument

20. During 2015, is it possible that funds be used from instruments for third countries, as Development Cooperation Instrument or European Neighbourhood Instrument, initially planned to reduce poverty and promote development, to manage the flow of migrants and asylum seekers? If yes, how has it been possible to change the object of the initially expected use?

Commission's answer:

With the inclusion of migration targets in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, migration is now firmly embedded in the global development framework. Development cooperation thus plays a key role to support partner countries achieving these targets, both in terms of providing short-to medium term support to improve migration and refugee management capacities, and support to more long-term objectives of addressing its root causes. This will also be reflected in the Commission's proposal for a new EU Consensus for Development.

While the EU has addressed migration and forced displacement concerns under its development and neighbourhood policy for years, efforts were significantly stepped up in 2015. In line with the European Agenda on Migration, we have engaged in close policy dialogue with priority partner countries to agree on joint objectives on addressing migration challenges.

EU development policy instruments play a key role in contributing to this agenda, in full coherence with development objectives and principles. Funding support for the implementation of these objectives has been made available notably through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and the EU Trust Fund for the Syria crisis.

No change of object of initially expected use of any of the Humanitarian Aid programmes managed by ECHO.

21. In Southern Italy, there have been numerous cases of misuse of funds for asylum seekers leading to the opening of investigations and judicial proceedings. In particular the emergency procedures involve the absence of regular tenders do not guarantee accurate control of costs. What control instruments has implemented the Commission to prevent such abuse? What control systems is used for sub-contracts?

Commission's answer:

Member States have an obligation to notify to the Commission the detection of irregularities, including fraud cases, recover EU funding unduly paid and keep the Commission informed of any significant progress in the related administrative and legal proceedings. Should the situation arise or should the Commission be informed by other means, together with OLAF enquire with the relevant Member States on allegations of potential fraud or misuse of EU funds and take action accordingly.

In general, for Funds under shared management, such as AMIF and ISF where the Member States are primarily responsible for the management of these Funds, the audit approach involves various audit tasks depending on the implementation cycle, risks and audit strategy. Each Member State designates a Responsible Authority which is responsible for the proper management and control of the national programme and which, inter alia, shall carry out administrative controls and on-the-spot controls in accordance with Article 27 of Regulation No 514/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014.

By 15 February of the year following the financial year, the Responsible Authority shall submit to the Commission its accounts on the expenditure incurred during the relevant reference period, in the execution of its tasks and that was presented to the Commission for reimbursement. Those accounts shall include pre-financing and sums for which recovery procedures are underway or have been completed. They shall be accompanied by a management declaration confirming that, in the opinion of those in charge of the management of the funds the information is properly presented, complete and accurate, the expenditure was used for its intended purpose, as defined in the sector-specific rules and that the control systems put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions. At the same date, the Member State shall provide the Commission with an annual summary of the final audit reports and of controls carried out, including an analysis of the nature and extent of errors and weaknesses identified in systems, as well as corrective action taken or planned (Article 44 of Regulation (EU) No 514/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council).

The Audit Authority which is functionally independent of the Responsible Authority is responsible for issuing annually the opinion referred to in the second subparagraph of Article 59(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. It shall also certify that the management and control system has functioned effectively so as to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure included in the annual accounts is legal and regular and it validates the management declaration of the Responsible Authority.

The Commission, as external auditor, analyses the Member States' management and control system descriptions, assesses their compliance with the legal bases

and performs system audits with substantive testing in the Member States to confirm the effective functioning of the systems. In addition, it analyses in detail the annual audit opinions related to the AMIF and ISF accounts submitted.

Furthermore, for the previous funding instruments (SOLID Funds) the Commission carried out monitoring visits within the Member States, on a risk basis.

As regards support granted under Direct management (and in particular the emergency assistance under AMIF and ISF), the same principles apply. In particular, the respect of national public procurement rules is an essential eligibility criteria and is checked during regular monitoring as well as at ex post audit stage.

Procurement directive foresees the possibility to carry out accelerated procedures which ensure the respect of the basic principles. To help Member States using effectively and legally the procurement rules during the migration crisis, the Commission has issued special guidelines in a form of a Communication (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1449677032809&uri=CELEX:52015DC0454>).

AMIF

22. Could the Commission provide detailed data of subcontracting in the use of AMIF fund?

Commission's answer:

Under shared management, as projects' selection and implementation take place at the level of Member States, the Commission services are not in the possession of detailed data on subcontracting in projects. Member States are obliged to maintain an adequate audit trail including procurement files at the national level for control and audit purposes.

23. Could the Commission provide an estimated cost paid for migrant/asylum seeker country by country?

Commission's answer:

The management of migratory flows comprises a wide range of activities, from border control and surveillance activities to direct support to migrants/refugees such as shelter and accommodation, catering, healthcare, transportation, interpretation, processing of asylum claims, relocation, and return to countries of origin or transit. Moreover, the expenditure varies to a great extent from one to another Member State. For that reason, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to provide an estimated cost paid for migrant/asylum seeker. Besides, it should be noted that EU funding covers a share of the total costs incurred by MS. Furthermore, most of the National Programmes through which most of EU funding for migration and border management activities is provided just started being implemented, and therefore the data available as regards implementation of

those programmes is very limited.

24. Could the Commissioner provide us with the costs of living of the refugees after the immigration process?

Commission's answer:
Please see the reply to question 23.

25. Could the Commission provide the country-by-country data of consumption of the AMIF funds for 2015?

Commission's answer:

The first set of accounts has been submitted by Member States on 15 February 2016 covering 2014 and 2015 financial years (until October 2015). The Commission has received accounts (request for payment) from 12 Member States in 2015. Following that, the Commission issued *Decision on the clearance of the annual accounts for national programmes concerning expenditure supported under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund for the 2014 and 2015 financial years* C(2016) 3504 on 1 June 2016 covering:

MS	CCI	Total= Amount accepted by the Commission and cleared for the financial year (year)
AT	2014AT65AMNP001	9.802.040,68
BE	2014BE65AMNP001	3.575.871,93
BG	2014BG65AMNP001	572.472,66
DE	2014DE65AMNP001	9.546.807,79
EE	2014EE65AMNP001	486.267,41
ES	2014ES65AMNP001	26.361.634,00
FI	2014FI65AMNP001	16.722.262,94
FR	2014FR65AMNP001	29.888.091,44
IT	2014IT65AMNP001	1.621.977,15
LT	2014LT65AMNP001	108.359,09
LU	2014LU65AMNP001	1.523.457,87
NL	2014NL65AMNP001	382.889,35

On 15 February 2017 Member States are expected to present second set of accounts covering AMIF implementation from 16 October 2015 until 15 October 2016.

26. Could the Commission provide for 2015 data on the number of irregularities and frauds detected in the context of AMIF program and their nature?

Commission's answer:
According to the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1973 and Article

3 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1977 Member States have the obligation to report through the IMS only for the programming period 2014-2020. For the Member States covered by the Commission Decision on the clearance of the annual accounts C(2016) 3504 final, the Responsible Authorities reported no irregularities and frauds following their financial on-the-spot controls carried out in 2015.

For the previous programming periods Member States had to report the detected irregularities once per year in the framework of their annual report. When a Member State provides the Commission with the information on the detected irregularities, appropriate follow up is ensured.

2014 Discharge follow-up

27. What actions did the Commission take in order to:

- a. be able to control and audit the Union funds involved in migration policy on the basis of performance indicators?
- b. address the ongoing migration crisis with a coherent Union solution?
- c. reflect the current and sharply changing set of priorities to provide efficient Union financial support to follow not only the territorial aspects (Ukraine, Turkey, Western Balkan, Eastern Partnership countries among others), but simultaneously also the thematic ones? In the 2014 discharge follow-up it is mentioned, that *“ongoing and upcoming processes allow for adapting the balance between geographic and thematic programming as appropriate”*.

Commission's answer:

a) The Commission has adopted a new strategic approach for planning activities and monitoring progress in achieving President Juncker's political priorities and policy frameworks set up in the European Agenda on Migration and the European Agenda on Security. This approach is underpinned by a set of impact and result indicators that will contribute to measure performance of our policies.

Programmes related to migration management in development cooperation are contracted with a logical framework in annex which contains a number of performance indicators. In 2015, efforts have been invested into the improvement of the quality of such indicators, notably through the creation in DG NEAR of a centre of expertise on migration which was notably tasked with such thematic support. Similarly, the migration section in DG DEVCO has been reinforced to ensure close follow-up and monitoring of migration related funding. These support teams are regularly consulted on migration management programmes in the framework of quality reviews and involved in a more upstream manner, in the course of the formulation of these programmes. Due attention has notably been paid to the formulation of budget support indicators.

b) The Commission adopted a comprehensive and European approach to deal with

the migratory challenges in the European Agenda on Migration; Since then the Commission is making progress on all the strands presented in the agenda.

c) DG HOME has been involved in the discussion group of the ENI/DCI/FPI midterm review. The objective of this working group is to explore how to improve effectiveness and strategic orientations for the future external aid instruments. Discussions on how to better match a balance between geographic and thematic programming is ongoing.

The quality reviews undertaken by DG DEVCO and DG NEAR have also aimed at checking the coherence and complementarity of the designed programmes with programmes already approved or actions in the pipeline and ensured the balance between geographic and thematic actions (i.e. ENI/IPA with DCI Migration and Asylum or EIDHR programmes).

28. The main source of errors detected can be explained by the fact that programmes managed by DG HOME under the MFF 2007-2013 targeted relatively new policy areas and new beneficiaries who needed to adapt to EU rules. The complexity of the eligibility rules as laid down in the Financial Regulation (based on the reimbursement of actual eligible costs declared by the beneficiaries), the additional complexity of having customised rules per programmes and the big number of beneficiaries and co-beneficiaries added also to the complexity of managing the grants under these programmes.

What kind of measure has the EC put in place in order to ensure the control and accountability? Which lessons have been drawn from the audit of the Court as reported in Special Report 9/2016 (2015 Discharge): "EU external migration spending in Southern Mediterranean and Eastern Neighbourhood countries until 2014", which is of DG NEAR competence and demonstrated potential similarities in terms of the complexity of objectives, stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Commission's answer:

The new MFF 2014-2020 Home Affairs Funds (AMIF and ISF) were designed, taking into account lessons learnt from the previous financial framework (notably the 'SOLID' funds). The move towards two Funds managed in close synergy reflected the proven need for a more outcome-oriented and policy-driven while, at the same time, providing flexible and less cumbersome financial instruments to focus more clearly on achieving policy results and delivering added value at EU level in a highly dynamic and challenging context.

The new two-pillar structure of funding in the field of home affairs (migration / security) should contribute to the simplification, rationalisation, consolidation and transparency of funding. Thanks to the multiannual approach to programming in the area of shared management Member States can adopt a strategic approach and allocate funds to specific interventions which can be decided on a more ad hoc basis without the need to revise the programme.

In order to simplify the use of funding and reduce the risk of error, the forms of support and the harmonised conditions for the eligibility of expenditure grants,

including simplified costs options under shared management, are defined in the Home Affairs Funds supporting regulations. In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, Member States should adopt national rules on the eligibility of expenditure.

Regarding the simplified costs options under shared management, the use of lump sums and of standardised "unit costs" should be particularly mentioned.

The programmes adopted under the development cooperation funds systematically foresee a final evaluation and in most cases, a mid-term evaluation. This applies of course to migration management programmes. The Results Oriented Monitoring system also is available during the course of implementation of these programmes, notably when this implementation meets particular difficulties and challenges. External audits complement, selected based on a risk assessment, the compulsory audits that need to be conducted according to the provisions foreseen by each programme and rules in place.

As far as EU Trust Funds are concerned, the decisional / financial / contractual procedures are defined by the Commission. Within EUTFs, decisions on the use of funds are taken by the Operational Committees/Boards representing all donors and are chaired by the Commission following a proposal by the Commission. Narrative reports are presented to the donors of the EUTFs and include the results/achievements of the Trust Funds. External audit reports, prepared by external audit companies, will be shared with all donors through the Operational Committee and the Board on an annual basis.

All standard controls, as for any other implementing actions of the Commission, are applicable. As established in the constitutive agreements approved by the College, the EU institutions, including the European Parliament and the Court of Auditors, maintain their rights and prerogatives over the EUTFs.

Also in terms of accountability, it is also worth mentioning that there is currently no unique code for migration sector, whereas the latter comprises a wide range of diversified activities. The Commission is about to initiate a discussion with the OECD (and other relevant stakeholders) to rapidly identify best possible ways to capture migration expenditure by various development agencies and discuss the creation of a specific code.

In immediate response to the Special Report 9/2016, DG NEAR, DEVCO, HOME and EEAS are actively participating in the development of a strategic framework for actions to be funded by country. This concerns in particular the Partnership Priorities negotiations. At the programming level, DG HOME cooperates with DG NEAR and DEVCO in the identification of project ideas and in the preparation of project fiches so as to ensure complementarity at the design phase. To enhance complementarities and synergies, DG HOME takes part in discussions on the mid-term evaluation for ENI/DCI and FPI instruments and on the future programming process. It also plans to start a study on how to better frame the next generation of instruments.

29. How does the EC consider to clarify objectives, develop, expand and improve the performance measurement framework and focus available financial resources on clearly defined and quantified target priorities, while developing an appropriate coding in the Commission's information systems?

Commission's answer:

The target priorities in the migration field have been defined in the Valletta Action Plan and in the General Approach to Migration and Mobility. DG HOME is currently compiling the list of funded actions for third countries so to link them to the set objectives. In addition, DG DEVCO, NEAR, HOME and EEAS currently contribute to a mapping exercise of all the actions undertaken under the strategic axes of the La Valletta process. These DGs also work on quantifying targeted priorities in their Annual Work Programmes and Annual Activity reports.

In order to contribute to the setting up of a coherent, measurable and impact-oriented cooperation framework for the EU Trust Funds, the European Commission has initiated several ad hoc initiatives as follows:

- the North of Africa window of the EU TF is developing a tailor-made monitoring and evaluation framework for the North of Africa window's strategy, in order to steer coherently the formulation of programmes and projects financed by this window and to allow the measurement of achievements and impact, as well as its harmonized reporting;
- Other relevant exercises have been launched or are being developed by the other two windows of the EUTF for Africa, such as the Research and Evidence Facility, adopted by the Horn of Africa window, the Research and Evidence Facility for the Sahel and Lake Chad Region and the North of Africa, and the IT system that the three windows are setting up with the aim to coherently and timely report on the actions adopted under the two windows of the EU TF.
- An overall results framework was shared with the Board of the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (the "MADAD" Fund) and serves as a living document. Individual projects' log-frames will be trimmed to feed into the overarching results framework, in line with the strategic priorities and objectives of the Madad Fund. In addition, a comprehensive impact-oriented evaluation mechanism for Madad financed programs will soon be presented to the Board for adoption.
- With regard to the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT), an overarching monitoring and evaluation system and results framework is being developed in consultation with all stakeholders. This will be an active management tool providing strategic guidance, serving accountability purposes, as well as information needs. The management of monitoring data will be facilitated by means of an online platform – a data-management tool organised by the architecture of the results framework.

In DG HOME, more effort will be exercised in the near future to feed data into a centralised system.

30. Did the Commission face any cases of misappropriation of funds and/or double financing?

Commission's answer:

The Commission has not faced any cases of misappropriation of funds. The risk of double financing is closely assessed and monitored. Each Action Document to be approved by the EU needs to explain how complementarity will be ensured with other related actions. In addition, the EU Delegations have set up coordination mechanisms with Member States on all the different aspects of their cooperation policy and participate to donors' coordination meetings.
(please see reply to question 26)

Refugee Policy Greece

31. Could the Commission please provide the figures on how many war refugees and presumed economic refugees, respectively, entered Greece through Turkey or Africa and who are staying on the territory of Greece now? This means refugees, who are part of the Greek and EU-led refugee programs for registration, reviewing, housing and/ or return to their homeland.

Commission's answer:

62,553 migrants were according to Greek authorities staying on Greek territory as of 22 November. No matter if an arriving migrant is eventually given the status as refugee or not, (s)he is part of the Greek and EU led programmes for registration, reception, etc.

As of 22 November, 5825 people had been relocated from Greece to other EU Member States.

Since 4 April, a total of 1 135 migrants were returned to Turkey from Greece under the EU-Turkey Statement or under the Greece-Turkey bilateral protocol. 5 361 have since 1 January 2016 used the assisted voluntary return programme from Greece.

32. Could the Commission please provide us with an overview of the number of refugees for 2016 reported from Greece to the EU - broken down by origin and reason for leaving?

Commission's answer:

So far in 2016, 39 760 asylum applications have been lodged in Greece. The Greek Asylum Service has consistently reported to EASO that the main nationalities of the asylum applicants are Syrian, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The migrants' reasons for leaving their home countries and whether those reasons are conducive to grant refugee status can only be ascertained by the Greek authorities, on a case by case basis, based on international rules.

33. Which number of refugees is the calculation basis for the funding programs (financial, personal, material funding) of the EU for Greece?

Commission's answer:

According to data from FRONTEX, in 2015 some 885.000 migrants arrived in the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands via Turkey, while during the first quarter of 2016 the number of such crossings was approximately 150.000 migrants. Following the signature of the EU-Turkey Statement in March 2016 the migratory flows into Greece have dropped substantially. According to the latest data provided by Greek authorities, as of 24 November 62 373 migrants are staying on Greek territory of which approximately 16 511 are hosted in the islands.

Greece's allocation under its National Programmes for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Internal Security Fund (ISF) for the period 2014-2020 amounts to EUR 509 M. Such allocation was calculated essentially on the basis of the migratory flows into the country in the years preceding the adoption of the Multi-annual Financial Framework for 2014-2020 which, already relatively high, were much lower than those experienced since 2015. In addition, to help the country to cope with such high influx of migrants/refugees into its territory, since the beginning of the migration crisis in 2015, Greece has been awarded about EUR 352.8 M in emergency assistance (EMAS) through AMIF and ISF. This EMAS has been awarded, either directly to the Greek authorities or through EU agencies and international organisations. The emergency funding has been provided to cater for a wide range of services, from border control and surveillance activities to direct support to migrants/refugees such as shelter and accommodation, catering, healthcare, transportation, interpretation, processing of asylum claims, relocation, and return to countries of origin or transit. Most of such funding has been awarded over the year 2016.

Since the EU-Turkey Statement in March 2016, the migratory flows into Greece have been substantially reduced; however, the high number of migrants in the hotspots on the Greek islands remains a challenge. According to the latest data provided by Greek authorities, 62,553 migrants were according to Greek authorities staying on Greek territory as of 22 November of which approximately 16,524 are hosted in the islands. To note also that such extra funding was also used to support the implementation of the relocation programme, through which 5,825 persons were already transferred from Greece to other EU MS or Associated Countries.

To help Greece to cater for the needs of tens of thousands of migrants/refugees stranded in the country after the closure of the "Western Balkans Route" in February/March 2016, additional emergency funding has been provided through the ECHO managed Emergency Support Instrument adopted by the Council on 15 March 2016 (please see below).

34. Has either the EU or the UNHCR counted the number of refugees in Greece? If so which number of refugees was the result?

Commission's answer:

The Commission relies on Member State data concerning the number of refugees in Greece, notably the data provided by the Greek Asylum Service (so far in 2016, 39,760 asylum applications have been lodged in Greece).

35. On which EU funding programs in Greece is the number of refugees taken as the basis for nature and level of the fundings?

Commission's answer:

EU funding aiming at supporting asylum police is provided essentially through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). The number of refugees/asylum seekers in Greece was one of the main criteria used to establish Greece's initial allocation for the period 2014-2020 under its AMIF National Programme. Subsequently, with the substantial increase of the migratory flows into the country, such statistical data were taken consideration to establish the number of persons to be relocated from Greece to other EU MS, and the respective additional funding. Such stats have also been taken into account for the awarding of extra funding as emergency assistance to Greece.

As far as the Humanitarian Aid is concerned, the Commission uses the official figures provided by the Greek administration.

36. Which special funding programs were launched by the EU in 2016 (managed either by the EU only or together with the UN or Greece) to accommodate the refugee crisis? Could the Commission please provide us with a complete list of these programs?

Commission's answer:

Several funding programmes/projects were approved as emergency assistance for Greece in 2016 (please see above, as well as factsheet on funding for Greece: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/20161005/factsheet_managing_refugee_crisis_eu_financial_support_greece_-_update_en.pdf).

As far as the Emergency Assistance Instrument is concerned, the Commission granted in 2016 about 127 million EUR for assistance to the refugee in Greece. For further details on the granted actions for refugees, please see the annex enclosed.



Microsoft Excel 2003
Worksheet

NGO Policy in Greece

37. There are numerous Greek and International NGO's which are supporting the coverage of the refugee crisis in Greece. By what means, Instruments, and financial funding the EU is supporting these NGO's?

Commission's answer:

EU funding to Greece for migration and border management activities is mainly

provided through its AMIF and ISF national programmes. Under these programmes, funding is provided to the respective Responsible Authority, the Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism, which has the responsibility for the implementation of those programmes and can assign NGOs as beneficiaries of the actions implemented on the ground. On the other hand, due to the unprecedented migratory crisis that started in 2015, Greece has been awarded since then substantial emergency assistance from the same funds. Such assistance has been awarded directly to the Greek authorities and to EU agencies or international organisations such as EASO, IOM and UNHCR, but not directly to NGOs. But, also in this case, the Greek authorities or the other organisations work in partnership with NGOs, which are often responsible for the implementation of some activities.

For what concerns the newly established Emergency Support Instrument (Regulation 2016/369 on the provision of emergency support within the European Union), funding is awarded directly to partner NGOs and international organisations operating in Greece.

38. Could the Commission please provide us with further information about the activities and missions of the Greek NGO's? Which monitoring structures with regard to their activities and budget implementation are in place?

Commission's answer:

In line with the contractual rules applicable, the Commission monitors closely the implementation of the projects supported with EU funding, including the compliance with the appropriate procurement procedures. For more details on auditing and monitoring mechanisms please refer to the answer to question 21.

As far as the emergency assistance is concerned, no Greek NGO to date signed with the Commission a current Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) and therefore received any funding under the Emergency Support Instrument.

39. Who is in charge of the recognition of the NGO's managing the refugee crisis? Is it Greece or the EU?

Commission's answer:

In the context of the Emergency Support Instrument, the Commission only works with partner organisations, be it under the auspices of the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement concluded between the Commission and the United Nations or Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) concluded with certain international organisations (such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) or with non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

(Please see also the reply to question 38)

Treaty between the UNHCR, Greece and the EU on 20.000 residential units for refugees and migrants (signed 14. of December 2015 in Athens)

40. Could the Commission please provide us with further information on the progress of, the agreement between the UNHCR, Greece and the EU on 20 000 residential units for refugees and migrants?

Commission's answer:

Out of the 20,000 places committed for applicants eligible for relocation under the rental scheme by the UNHCR, as of 14 November, 18,129 places were available, including 5,509 places in hotels/entire buildings, 10,554 places in apartments, 484 places in host families, and 646 places in dedicated facilities for unaccompanied minors (source UNHCR:

<http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/download.php?id=2166>).

UNHCR expects to have the full 20,000 ready by the end of the year. In addition, as regards the relocation centres, as of 21 November, only one of the three relocation centres committed by the Greek authorities (Lagadikia) has been established with 960 places available. For the remaining two, the Greek authorities have not yet designated suitable sites. Discussions are still ongoing between the UNHCR and the Greek authorities regarding the provision of more sites for the construction of dedicated relocation centres, notably in the Attica region.

41. How many reception places in the form of apartment rental scheme, hotel vouchers and host family programs have been established/implemented until now and for how many refugees, asylum seekers or migrants do they offer space? Could you please also list the kind of accommodation for refugees that had been realized within that program so far?

Commission's answer:

See reply to question 40.

42. What is the reason that the Greek government is not able to provide thousands of refugees with an accommodation while the UNHCR and the EU are simultaneously finance and implement 20.000 reception places? Could the Commission please provide us with a list which amount of EU money has been transferred until now together with the recipients?

Commission's answer:

The Greek government provides accommodation to migrants and applicants for international protection in various sites at the islands and on the mainland. Apart from the facilities at the five Hotspots, (53) reception facilities are operational at the mainland. In accordance to information available to the Commission (i.e. UNHCR, NGOs), much of the reception capacity on the mainland consists of encampments (53 sites) and emergency facilities with widely varying, both in terms of material/living conditions and security. Winterisation of the facilities is an important issue: winterization of some of these facilities has commenced. The Commission is providing direct support to Greece as well as through UNHCR.

Please see factsheet on funding to Greece: <http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home->

[affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/20161005/factsheet_managing_refugee_crisis_eu_financial_support_greece_-_update_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/20161005/factsheet_managing_refugee_crisis_eu_financial_support_greece_-_update_en.pdf)

Turkey Agreement

43. Winter has already arrived in Greece and we observe Greece being unable to absorb a large amount of EU money dedicated to improve the conditions of the refugees. What are the Commissions plans to speed up the implementation?

Commission's answer:

Under the Emergency Support Instrument, winterisation activities in the camps are moving ahead in Greece, with the majority of accommodation sites undergoing upgrades. The winterisation response is being tailored to the needs of each site, for example tents are being winterised or upgraded to containers, buildings are being renovated and receiving maintenance e.g. installation and repair of heating systems and building of partitions to conserve heat. The winterisation of WASH facilities e.g. toilets and showers is not so far advanced but is progressing. A distribution of over 200 000 winterised items to the entire population of refugees and migrants in need has now been completed, including sleeping bags and clothing appropriate for cold weather.

44. The readmission to Turkey of the migrants entering Greece after the March agreement is stalling. What is the responsibility of the Greek side on this issue and why the main bulk of promised EASO's handlers of refugees' applications has not yet arrived to the Greek islands? What is the Commission going to do 8 months after the initial promise of the Member States to supply there numbers?

Commission's answer:

The delays are caused to a large extent by prolonged asylum procedures (not only in first instance of decision and mostly in appeal) and the lack of the appropriate number of experts.

The Commission is aware of the shortages of EASO experts in Greece. The Commission is constantly insisting – by sending letters and raising the issue at all levels – on the need for Member States to reply to the EASO repeated calls for expert and to deliver to the commitments made at the European Council.

45. Regarding the Hotspot of Moria - could you please provide us with further information on the costs and the status-quo about housing containers for refugees which were funded by EU-money but which were not equipped for winter months (no heating, no isolation)? Have there taken place any investigations?

Commission's answer:

According to the latest information available to the Commission (18/11/2016), all the existing housing containers for refugees in Moria camp are currently prepared for winter. The Greek Reception and Identification Service (RIS) is in charge of

their maintenance.

Moreover, UNHCR will also replace the tents by 96 housing containers.

Several emergency grants were awarded to Greek authorities to enhance the country reception capacities, both in the hotspots areas and in the Greek mainland. Many of these contracts are ongoing, and the Commission still has to receive the respective final reports to have a clearer view on the range of activities developed, location and number of beneficiaries. It is clear that the situation in Greece, and particularly in the hotspots areas, is very fluid, and the emergency funding awarded must by definition have enough flexibility to allow implementing partners to adjust quickly to the needs. The Commission understands that winterisation works are still ongoing in many camps/sites.

Syria

46. Could you please provide us with a complete overview for 2015 and 2016 of the EU amounts of money, funds and respective projects/ programmes which are committed/ decided, contracted, disbursed with regard to refugees in Syria? Please also list the respective number of refugees who have benefitted from each of these projects/ programmes.

Commission's answer:

Funds contracted and disbursed for actions within Syria do not distinguish between host communities and Internally Displaced Persons (refugees by definition being outside Syria).

- Funds committed in 2015: €40 million ENI Special Measure; €6 million DCI resilience actions.
- Funds committed in 2016: €80 million ENI Special Measure; €9 million DCI resilience actions.
- Funds contracted in 2015: ENI €35,511,625; Thematic Support (provided by EIDHR) €2,847,674.
- Funds contracted in 2016: ENI €7 million; Thematic Support €6 million (provided by DCI food Security).
- Funds paid in 2015: ENI €35 million; Thematic €2.3 million.
- Funds paid in 2016: ENI €16 million; Thematic €4 million.

ECHO

As far as the Humanitarian Aid (HA) is concerned, the Commission allocated in 2015 and 2016 about 891 million EUR to results related to refugees in HA actions inside Syria and in the bordering countries. It is estimated that the results should have attained a total of 55 million beneficiaries (although it should be noted that the same individual might be counted various times as being beneficiary of different actions). For further details on the results related to refugees, please see the annex enclosed.



Q10-Q46.xls

FPI



Copy of Migration projects (2). question

DG DEVCO has made a contribution from DCI-GPGC Migration to the Madad Trust Fund – commitment in 2016: **EUR 20 million.**

47. Could you please provide us with a list of aid organizations who have received EU money for project implementation in Syria together with the corresponding amounts for 2015 and 2016?

Commission's answer:

DG NEAR

Contracted in 2015:

Contracting party	Contract amount	Paid 2015	Paid 2016
Joint Research Centre	310,000.00	186,000.00	0
UN Habitat	1,860,000.00	1,674,000.00	0
World Food Programme	3,000,000.00	2,400,000.00	0
UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND	19,970,000.00	13,400,780.58	0
Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH	7,000,000.00	0	0
ABAAD – Resource Center for Gender Equality	1,887,802.93	878,100.24	789,164.96
SOS Villages d’Enfants Belgique pour le monde	1,264,826.62	420,872.54	0

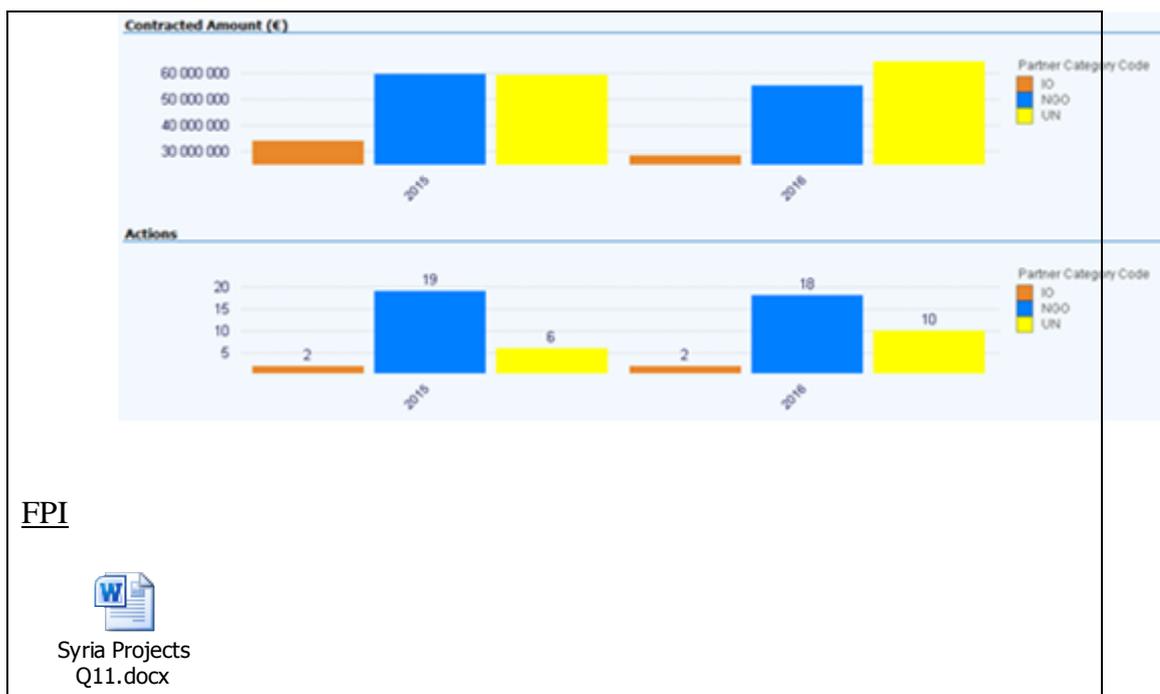
CARE Österreich	1,145,971.02	606,131.35	335,917.93
Comitato di coordinamento delle organizzazioni per il servizio volontario	1,999,624.56	949,569.36	0
Comitato non c'e pace senza giustizia associazione	1,051,607.04	448,389.92	0
Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network	1,350,000.00	644,832.00	0
Search for Common Ground vzw	1,021,987.50	276,184.38	0
Nonviolent Peaceforce aisbl	1,999,803.98	799814.37	0
STICHTING WAR CHILD	1,497,673.65	759,571.35	0

Contracted in 2016:

Contracting party	Contract amount	Paid 2016
FAO	6,000,000.00	3,164,598.63

As far as the Humanitarian Aid (HA) is concerned, the Commission granted funding to 34 aid organizations (24 NGOs, 8 UNs and 2 IOs) for a total of 298 million EUR to project implementation inside Syria. For further details on organisations and amounts, please see the annex enclosed.


Q11-Q47.xls



SOLID programmes

48. Audits of the SOLID (Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows) programmes did not cover tests of controls on most key processes according to the ECA (8.45). Due to this, there is a risk that some annual programmes with ineffective control systems have been considered by the Commission to provide reasonable assurance, and will not be in the focus of the Commission's ex-post audits, as the Commission focuses primarily on the minority of cases where it considers legality and regularity of the payments is not provided by the Member States' systems. This limited audit coverage reduces the reliability of the expenditure declared to the Commission. (ECA 8.46) The Commission had performed ex-post audits on only 13 of closed programmes, which it considered to provide reasonable assurance. By the end of 2015 the Commission had closed 506 annual Member State SOLID programmes.

- How many SOLID programmes have been audited ex-post in total?
- How many programmes have been considered by the Commission to provide reasonable assurance and how many not?
- How many programmes have been audited that did not provide a reasonable assurance according to the Commission?
- Do you plan to increase the audit coverage in the future?
- Do you intend to test the effectiveness of internal controls over most key processes? (Selection and award procedures, award procedures, project monitoring, payments and accounting)

Commission's answer:

a) As from the beginning of SOLID Funds until November 2016, 110 Annual Programmes have been audited from a total of 586 Annual Programmes closed. As Annual Programmes may still be audited up to 5 years after their closure and the majority of 2013 Annual Programmes are not yet closed, the Commission is targeting to audit an average of 15 Annual Programmes per year in the next 5 years, which will increase significantly the number of Annual Programmes audited ex-post.

b) For 2007-2013 programming period, out of 677 Annual programmes, 557 programmes are considered by the Commission to provide reasonable assurance so far. 120 Annual Programmes are considered by the Commission not to provide reasonable assurance as per November 2016.

c) A selection of Annual Programmes is audited with a view to determine whether the expenditure declared is legal and regular. If irregular expenditure is identified or a system weakness is detected, a financial correction or a flat-rate correction is applied by the Commission. In practice, once applied, the correction decreases ineligible expenditure to an acceptable level, i.e. below the so-called materiality level of 2%. Therefore, we can say that, at the end of the auditing and correction processes, all programmes audited are expected to provide reasonable assurance.

Out of the 120 Annual Programmes considered by the Commission as not providing reasonable assurance, up to date, 24 annual programmes have been audited by the Commission. This proportion will significantly increase in the coming 5 years, when additional audit work will be carried out as mentioned at point a).

d) Subject to the resources available, the Commission plans to increase the audit coverage and audit more SOLID programmes in the future, using both in-house capability and outsourced contractor. By the end of the audit period for SOLID (which is estimated to be mid-2021), the audit coverage should reach more than 25% of the 677 Annual Programmes, a percentage which is in line with the common audit practices.

e) It is the Commission's intention to test the effectiveness of internal controls over most key processes, based on a risk categorisation of the different Management and Control Systems in each audited Member State.

The Commission would like to reiterate that the assurance on the control effectiveness is gradually built, not only on the system audits but through a system approach, starting with the inception phase, DG HOME operational monitoring visits, annual closure, ex-post audits and, in line with the Single Audit Principle, through the audit work of the Member State, which must ensure over the whole programming period the audit coverage of all key processes, as requested by Article 17 par. 2 of Decision 574/2007/EC of 5 March 2008.

* * *