



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate D: Strategy and Delivery Steering  
Unit D.3: MFF Programming

## **SPECIFIC ACTIONS**

### **Introduction**

The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Borders and visa component of the Internal Security Fund (ISF-Borders) offers the possibility of additional funding to the Member States in the form of 'Specific Actions':

- AMIF: EUR 80 million<sup>1</sup> (Article 15(1)(b) and (2)(a); Article 16; Annex II);
- ISF-Borders: EUR 147 million (Article 6(1)(b); Article 7; Annex II).

Specific Actions are designed as 'top-up funding', i.e. additional amounts that will be added to Member States' basic amounts depending on their willingness to implement under their national programmes actions that respond to specific Union priorities. These Specific Actions are defined exhaustively in the Annexes II to the AMIF and ISF-Borders Regulations.

Whereas the standard co-financing rate under the national programmes is 75%, Specific Actions may benefit from an increased co-financing rate of 90% (Article 16(4) of the Horizontal Regulation).

The present note sets out how the additional amounts will be allocated to the Member States, in particular how and when Member States may apply for Specific Actions, preferences for assessing the proposals, some implementation rules, as well as the models for the application forms.

For further issues and clarifications the Commission stands ready to assist MS at the next expert group meeting or at any other time in the

<sup>1</sup> The amount referred to in Article 15(1)(b) is EUR 360 million but this also covers support for the Union Resettlement Programme (Article 17) and/or transfers of beneficiaries of international protection from one Member State to another (Article 18). EUR 280 million will be used for resettlement and intra-EU transfers and EUR 80 million for specific actions.

context of the exchange of information on the preparation of the policy dialogues.

## **1. General principles**

The additional amounts available for Specific Actions will be allocated to the Member States on the basis of their pledges, i.e. proposals that will be assessed by the Commission. If a proposal for Specific Action(s) is accepted by the Commission, the action and the corresponding amount will be included in the relevant national programme(s).

It is useful to distinguish between two types of Specific Actions, i.e. those to be implemented by one Member State (hereinafter referred to as 'single actions') and those that require joint efforts by Member States (hereinafter referred to as 'joint' actions):

- Single actions: a Member State may present a proposal for Specific Action(s) and be allocated additional funding under its national programme provided that the Specific Action(s) has been approved by the Commission in the national programme.
- Joint actions: the proposal for Specific Action(s) is presented by a lead Member State on behalf of other participating Member States ('partners'). Additional funding will be allocated to the national programme of the lead Member State who will be responsible for the implementation of the joint action.

## **2. Pledging exercise**

In order to allow the Commission to allocate the available additional funding, all proposals from Member States for Specific Actions must be assessed at the same time.

To this end, Member States are invited to submit their proposals by **30 April 2014** using the forms in annex. All proposals must correspond to one of the Specific Actions defined in the exhaustive lists (mixed actions will not be considered).

In the event that one or more Specific Actions are over-subscribed or participation confirmations are needed, a two-step procedure may be used to refine the selection, where the Commission may ask for further information.

The awarded Specific Action and the corresponding amount will be included in the draft national programme of the Member State responsible for the implementation of the Specific Action.

### **2.1 Preferences**

General preferences (except for Frontex equipment)

When assessing the submitted proposals, the Commission will look in particular for the following:

- a) number of Member States involved in the action (for joint actions)
- b) duration of the action with a preference for long-term actions over short-term actions;
- c) diversity of actions (comparative assessment will be organised for the same type of Specific Action);
- d) expected impact of the action in terms of results and persons affected;
- e) feasibility of the action and likelihood of success;
- f) level of development and planning of the action.

These preferences do not apply to the Specific Actions related to the purchase of equipment for Frontex (ISF-Borders).

### **3. Specific Actions**

#### **3.1 *AMIF***

The list of Specific Actions is defined exhaustively in Annex II of the AMIF Regulation:

1. Establishment and development in the Union of transit and processing centres for refugees, in particular to support resettlement operations in cooperation with the UNHCR.
2. New approaches, in cooperation with the UNHCR, concerning access to asylum procedures targeting main countries of transit such as protection programmes for particular groups or certain procedures for examination of applications for asylum.
3. Joint initiatives amongst Member States in the field of integration, such as benchmarking exercises, peer reviews or testing of European modules, for example on the acquisition of language skills or the organisation of introductory programmes and with the aim of improving the coordination of policies between Member States, regions and local authorities.
4. Joint initiatives aimed at identification and implementation of new approaches concerning the procedures at first encounter, standards of protection of and assistance for unaccompanied minors.

5. Joint return operations, including joint actions on implementation of Union readmission agreements.
6. Joint reintegration projects in the countries of origin with a view to sustainable return, as well as joint actions to strengthen third countries' capacities to implement Union readmission agreements.
7. Joint initiatives aimed at restoring family unity and reintegration of unaccompanied minors in their countries of origin.
8. Joint initiatives among Member States in the field of legal migration, including the setting up of joint migration centres in third-countries, as well as joint projects to promote cooperation between Member States with a view to encouraging the use of exclusively legal migration channels and informing on the risks of illegal immigration.

### **3.2 ISF-Borders**

Annex II to the ISF-Borders Regulation provides for two categories of Specific Actions, namely actions in the area of consular cooperation and actions linked to the purchase of Frontex equipment. The amounts earmarked for each category are EUR 30 million and EUR 117 million respectively.

#### Consular cooperation

The first category of Specific Actions relates to the *"setting up consular cooperation mechanisms between at least two Member States resulting in economies of scale as regards the processing of applications and the issuing of visas at consulates in accordance with the principles on co-operation laid down in the Visa Code, including common visa application centres"*.

Please note that for consular cooperation, 1 application form for each mechanism/location of cooperation is required.

#### Frontex equipment

The second type of specific action relates to *"Purchasing means of transport and operating equipment that are considered necessary for the deployment during joint operations by the Frontex Agency and which shall be put at the disposal of the Agency in accordance with the criteria established in Article 7(5) 2nd and 3rd paragraph of Regulation No 1168/2011"*<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p.1.

In consultation with Frontex, the list of mobile equipment<sup>3</sup> has been identified for purchase by Member States:

- Offshore patrol vessels, both aerial and maritime, with modern surveillance equipment. Specifically, there is a lack of cost efficient and multi-functional offshore patrol vessels having their own helicopters which enable them to extend their surveillance range and capabilities;
- Modern and efficient maritime helicopters with appropriate, state-of-the-art, on-board surveillance equipment in addition to being capable of carrying out Search and Rescue (SAR) activities;
- Long range fixed wing aircrafts equipped with modern surveillance technology enabling the aircraft to perform most of the Coastguard functions at sea;
- Thermal Vision Vehicles (TVVs): a need to increase the number of TVVs available for carrying out routine surveillance operations;
- Mobile land and coastal surveillance vehicles equipped with thermal cameras, land and coastal surveillance radars, special optical equipment, as well as secure radio communication and data transfer equipment;
- Mobile offices: There is a need to provide suitably equipped mobile offices (e.g. with heating, air conditioning, radio, telecommunication and internet equipment, as well as furniture), for the processing of migrants, as well as providing appropriate working conditions for border guards in the operational area. It should be possible to set up such offices at short notice in the operational area in response to specific local migratory pressure.
- Special secure busses for the transportation of migrants in the operational areas;
- Miscellaneous, mainly small-scale equipment could be of great benefit for Frontex if more were available from the Member States:
  - Heart beat detectors;
  - CO2 detectors;
  - Mobile x-ray machines;
  - Mobile laboratories;
  - Hand held radio communication equipment.

The assessment of the Specific Actions proposed under this category will be based on the following criteria:

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<sup>3</sup> Fixed equipment is to be financed via the Member States' national programmes.

- Compliance with the minimum standards/requirements for technical specifications based on selection criteria for technical equipment to be included in the Frontex Overall Minimum Number of Technical Equipment (OMNTE);
- Feasibility of project implementation in particular the timing/planning of procurement procedures;
- Timing of making the equipment available to Frontex;
- Balanced coverage of Frontex needs in line with the above list.

#### **4. Implementation issues**

##### ***4.1 General***

The duration of Specific Actions may cover the full period of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, so may run from 2014 until 2023.

The additional funding allocated for a Specific Action to the national programme of a given Member State may not be used for any other purpose than that of implementing the Specific Action awarded. This means that in case of under spending or non-implementation of the Specific Action, the corresponding amount cannot be transferred to any other part of the national programme. Any unused amounts for which payments have been made by the Commission will have to be reimbursed to the Union budget.

##### ***4.2 Joint actions***

In relation to joint actions, the lead Member State will be responsible for the implementation of the Action. Nevertheless, the participation and role of each Member State must be described in their respective national programmes.

As the additional funding allocated for the Specific Action will be included in the national programme of the lead Member State, that Member State will also be responsible for presenting all the costs of the Action as part of its annual implementation reports. In terms of the costs linked to the participation of other Member States, the lead Member State may choose to cover these:

- Directly, by paying for all the costs and thereby incurring all the expenditure itself. In this case, only the lead Member State is responsible for complying with all audit requirements.
- Indirectly, by reimbursing the partner Member States for the expenditure incurred by them upon presentation of a declaration of expenditure approved by their respective audit authorities. In

this case, the partner Member States are responsible for complying with all audit requirements.

In the event a partner Member State leaves the Action, the remaining Member States may either find a new participating Member State or reassign the tasks of the Member State that left to the remaining participants. The main objectives of the Action should remain essentially unchanged.

The additional amounts allocated for Specific Action(s) to the national programmes will be taken into account for calculating the technical assistance to which the lead Member State is entitled.

### **4.3      *Frontex equipment***

Member States are expected to register the equipment purchased under the Specific Action in the Frontex Technical Equipment Pool and to make it available to Frontex when needed. It should be noted that the equipment could be used for Frontex-coordinated operations carried out in another host Member State.

The maintenance costs for equipment at the time when it is not being used in Frontex joint operations (i.e. when it is being used for tasks of a national character at the Member State's own borders) are to be borne by the Member State who owns it. These costs are eligible for support from Operating Support under ISF-Borders.

**Application form for Specific Actions**

Member State:		Date:					
Fund:	Specific Objective:	Specific Action Number:					
Total budget:	Location:						
Title:							
<p>Describe how the action will be carried out and justification for the budgeted amount.</p> <p>Trans-national projects: for the lead Member State only: list the participating Member States, including their role and possible financial re-partition if applicable.</p> <p>For participating Member States: describe your role and any possible financial re-partition.</p>							
<p>Other information (for the assessment):</p> <p>number and types of final beneficiaries or visas applications, expected results and outcomes, risks and mitigating factors,</p>							
Indicative timetable and financial plan	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Actors / actions:							
Actors / actions:							
Actors / actions:							
n.....							
Financial plan							

**Frontex equipment (1 application form per type of equipment)**

Member State:		Date:					
Fund: ISF-Borders	Specific Objective:	Action: Frontex equipment					
Type of equipment:							
Number of items:							
Budget per item:							
Total budget:							
Type of procurement procedure planned:							
If an existing framework or supplier contract will be used please give references and the name of supplier (if known) :							
If direct award is used please provide the justification:							
Approximate timetable for purchase (preparatory stages, tendering, contracting, delivery)							
Year when the equipment will be registered in the Frontex pool of resources and put at the disposal of the Agency:							
Indicative timetable and financial plan	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Actors /actions:							
Financial plan							