

NATIONAL PROGRAMME AMIF

IDENTIFICATION OF THE DESIGNATED AUTHORITIES

Competent authorities responsible for the management and control systems

Authority	Name of the authority	Name of the person responsible for the authority	Address	E-mail address	Date of designation	Activities delegated
Responsible authority	EU Funds Unit	Una Ni Dhubhghaill	Bishops Square, Redmond's Hill, Dublin 2, Ireland	UMNiDhubhghaill@justice.ie	23-Mar-2017	
Audit authority	Internal Audit Unit, Department of Justice and Equality	Walter Johnston	51 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2	wjohnston@justice.ie		

Management and control system

The Responsible Authority (RA) is the EU Funds Unit of the Department of Justice and Equality. The existing Audit Authority (AA) in respect of the Solid Funds will continue in this role. The Repatriation Unit of the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) will be a Delegated Authority in respect of all return actions. The Repatriation Unit was the RA for the European Return Fund (RF).

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

Under the AMIF, Ireland is continuing the work done with the assistance of the SOLID Funds and improving its effectiveness where possible. There continues to be strong support for the efforts of non-Government actors, in assisting applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection and in promoting the integration of TCNs.

The International Protection Act 2015 commenced on 31 December 2016, introducing a single application procedure for all protection applicants so that all matters relevant to an applicant's case to be granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or permission to remain can be assessed in a single, three stage application. The new procedure will, over time, significantly accelerate the protection determination process and reduce the length of time which applicants spend in State accommodation. □

The International Protection Office processes the single procedure applications and issues recommendations. If an applicant has not proven his or her eligibility for refugee status or subsidiary protection, the Protection Officer can then assess all matters that might be relevant to granting permission to remain. The recommendation on refugee status or subsidiary protection status, if negative, can be appealed to a new International Protection Appeals Tribunal.

This shortens the overall process and reduces the time applicants spend in the direct provision system in which most asylum seekers are accommodated.

A Working Group, chaired by a retired High Court Judge, reported in June 2015 on improvements to the protection process, including direct provision and supports to asylum seekers. The report forms the basis for ongoing improvements across the entirety of the system involving all relevant Government Departments and Agencies. □

On 23rd February 2017, the latest audit of the implementation of the recommendations contained in that report shows that some 121 of the recommendations are now implemented, with a further 38 recommendations partially implemented or in progress. In total, 92% of the 173 recommendations are implemented, partially implemented or in progress, a significant increase on the figure of 80% reported on last June.

A range of reception and integration measures are being supported, as appropriate, for applicants and beneficiaries of international protection with specific assistance for vulnerable persons.

Resettlement has increased from an average of under 50 per year in 2010-2013. A combined total of 609 was reported in our 2015 and 2016 accounts. Assistance from the Fund is being availed of for measures such as selection missions, information and assistance upon arrival and support for host communities.

A range of integration priorities have been identified for assistance from the Fund. These include measures to promote contact and dialogue between TCNs and the host community and acceptance of TCNs by that community, language training, anti-racism measures, measures to introduce TCNs to Irish society and civil and cultural life and measures focusing on vulnerable persons.

Strengthening the capacity of public and civil society bodies to provide services to TCNs in a culturally-appropriate manner, promoting the exchange of experience and best practice and building the capacity of beneficiaries are also being addressed with assistance from the Fund.

Voluntary returns are continuing with this option being promoted as the preferred alternative to enforced returns. Enforced returns are carried out, as appropriate, in order to protect the integrity of the asylum and immigration systems.

Priorities for assistance from the Fund include voluntary return including of vulnerable persons and the provision of counseling and reintegration grants, campaigns highlighting the benefits of voluntary return, training of staff to ensure smooth and effective return procedures, enforced returns, cooperation with third countries in order to facilitate return, and participation in joint return operations with other Member States.

Ireland has opted in to Council Decisions (EU) 2015/1523 and 2015/1601 relating to relocation. The Government has established the Irish Refugee Protection Programme for this purpose. At 28 February 2017, Ireland had taken in 320 people from Greece under relocation.

Assistance from the Fund is being availed of for such measures as information and assistance upon arrival and support for host communities.

The financing plan of the programme provides that 25.5% of the national allocation will be spent on Asylum, 30.1% on Integration, 27.3% on Return, 6.9% on Solidarity and 10.1% on technical assistance.

2. BASELINE SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATE

Summary of the current state of play as of December 2013 in the Member State for the fields relevant to the Fund

Description of the baseline situation:

Population

Census 2016 results show that Ireland's population stood at 4,761,865 in April 2016, an increase of 173,613 (3.8%) since April 2011. The total number of non-Irish nationals fell slightly to 535,475, or 11.6% of the population, the first decline since the introduction of this question in 2002, while the number of people with dual-Irish nationality has increased by 48,879 to 104,784 people since April 2011.

An estimate by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) for April 2015 indicates that TCNs constituted 33.5% of the non-Irish population and 4.2% of the population of the State.

Reception and asylum systems and procedures

The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) offers accommodation to those in the protection process and works with other State agencies to co-ordinate the delivery of other services for them. At the end of March 2017, the RIA accommodation portfolio was comprised of a total of 32 centres throughout 16 counties, with a contracted capacity of 5,140.

RIA monitors the operation of accommodation centres on an on-going basis through a series of inspections by staff from RIA and independent contractors. □

There is rigorous assessment of prospective accommodation to ensure that statutory and contractual requirements are in place. □

Residents of accommodation centres receive a weekly payment of €19.10 per adult and €15.60 per child from the Department of Social Protection. Residents may also be entitled on a case by case basis to other benefits such as exceptional needs payments. Mainstream services (education, health etc.,) are provided to those in the protection process on the same basis as to the general population. □

RIA operates a child protection policy based on the Child and Family Agency's Children First national guidelines for the protection and welfare of children. □

The Refugee Legal Service (RLS) is a specialised office established by the Legal Aid Board to provide confidential and independent legal services to persons applying for asylum in Ireland.

Protection applicants are not detained.

Common European Asylum System

In accordance with the provisions of Protocol No. 21 annexed to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Ireland is not bound to participate in EU instruments in this area but may opt in to any it wishes to. While Ireland has opted in to all the Phase One instruments with the exception of the Reception Conditions Directive, it has not opted in to

the core Phase Two instruments with the exception of the recast EURODAC Regulation and the Dublin III Regulation. It has opted in to the EASO Regulation and the AMIF Regulation.

Resettlement and relocation

An Irish refugee resettlement programme has been in operation since 2000. 1,723 vulnerable persons from 27 different countries, including Iraq and Syria, have been admitted as "programme refugees" for resettlement purposes under this programme. 519 persons were admitted between August 2015 and December 2016 and a further 520 persons are expected to arrive during the course of 2017. □

The Government set up the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) in 2015 to coordinate the admission of up to 4,000 persons under resettlement and relocation programmes. Refugees admitted under the resettlement programme have been resettled in 39 different communities throughout Ireland and in all four Dublin local authority areas to date. In the coming months, persons admitted under the relocation programme and who have been granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or permission to remain will begin the process of resettlement into local communities.

Under this programme, the Government has pledged to accept a total of 4,000 persons into the State by the end of 2017, 2,622 through the EU relocation mechanism established by two EU Council Decisions in 2015 to assist Italy and Greece, 1,040 (519 by the end of 2016 and the remainder in 2017) under the UNHCR-led refugee resettlement programme currently focussed on resettling refugees from Lebanon.

In a further gesture of humanitarian assistance towards the most vulnerable caught up in the migration crisis the Government also committed to taking up to 200 unaccompanied minors from France who were previously resident in the migrant camp at Calais.

These initiatives therefore leave just a small residual balance to be allocated from the Government decision to take 4,000 persons. □

The decision on the country of origin/country of refuge of the persons to be resettled is taken by the Minister in consultation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and appropriate Government Departments and agencies.

Cases are selected following a selection mission or on a dossier from UNHCR. Pre-departure medical screening is done by the IOM.

New arrivals undergo medical screening, are linked to various services and receive general orientation/training to prepare them for independent living. Children under the age of 18 participate in an induction programme to prepare them for entry into mainstream education.

Resettled persons are accommodated temporarily by RIA before being provided with their own dwelling.

A language and training programme is put in place for a period of more than a year post-arrival.

OPMI continues to monitor and support the programme for up to 18 months post arrival.

Legal migration

The principal legislation governing the entry and residence of TCNs in the State is the Aliens Act, 1935 and Orders made under it.

The number of citizens from non-EU countries legally living here at the end of 2016 rose to approximately 115,000, compared to 114,000 at the end of 2015. The majority of persons with permission to remain in the State are here for work, family or study purposes. (Source: INIS statistics)

As regards economic developments, real GDP passed its pre-crisis peak in 2014. The level of GDP per person passed its pre-crisis peak in Q 2, 2015. Real GDP grew by 4.2% in 2016, is forecast to grow by 3.5% in 2017 and an average of 3.1% per annum thereafter to 2020.

Employment grew by 2.6% in 2015, 2.6% in 2016, is forecast to grow by 2.1% in 2017 and 1.8% per annum thereafter to 2020. The unemployment rate was 9.5% in 2015, 8.3% in 2016 and is expected to average 7.7% in 2017. Thereafter, it is expected to decline to 6.5% in 2020. (Source of economic data: Budget 2016 Economic and Fiscal Outlook, Department of Finance)

From these figures which illustrate economic and employment growth and declining unemployment, it may be inferred that immigration of TCNs, will continue in the coming years.

From the published results of the April 2016 census the number of immigrants to the State in the year to April 2016 is estimated to have increased by almost 15% from 69,300 to 79,300, while the number of emigrants declined over the same period, from 80,900 to 76,200. These combined changes have resulted in a return to net inward migration for Ireland (+3,100) for the first time since 2009. Non Irish-nationals from outside the EU continued to display strong migration flows, accounting for 31,800 (40.1%) of total immigrants and 18,500 (24.3%) of total emigrants. This resulted in estimated net inward migration among non-Irish nationals from outside the EU of 13,300. (www.cso.ie)

Integration

Integration is the responsibility of all Government Departments and public bodies in their appropriate sphere with the OPMI having the role of leading and coordinating work in this area.

The Migrant Integration Strategy was launched on 7th February 2017. The Strategy provides the framework for Government action on migrant integration for the years 2017 to 2020 and addresses the challenges that we anticipate in the years ahead and is targeted at both EU and non-EU nationals, including refugees. Its primary objective is to ensure that barriers to full participation in Irish society by migrants or their Irish-born children are identified and addressed and the basic values of Irish society are respected by all.

Its key message is that integration is a two-way process that will involve actions by both migrants and by Irish society

Funding of over €17 million has been delivered by Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration (OPMI) to various national organisations and local authorities to promote immigrant integration from 2008 to 2016.

Integration strategies have been adopted by a number of public services, namely the arts, education, the Garda Síochána (Police), health and a number of local authorities.

Return

A person whose removal is contemplated is given an opportunity to make written representations to the Minister on the matter. Any representations are examined having regard to the factors set out by law. The prohibition of refoulement is also respected.

Persons facing the possibility of deportation can seek voluntary return as can persons who have yet to receive a decision on protection or residency.

A person, subject to a deportation order is required to present themselves on a specified date and time in order to make arrangements for their removal. Any person who fails to do this can be arrested and detained pending deportation.

Measures implemented and results achieved under the SOLID Funds

Under the European Fund for the Integration of TCNs (EIF), a total of 14,470 TCNs directly received services from the programmes, exceeding planned numbers by around 150%. The most significant activities were in the areas of civic orientation as well as activities to promote meaningful contact and dialogue with the receiving society. Actions for General and Practical Information were the strongest absolute performer, reaching 8,685 TCNs and being a key activity of 10 of the 27 projects included under the programmes. Significant performance was noted for 7 projects which targeted vulnerable groups, particularly women and the young.

These findings indicate that the levels and direction of performance observed in the 2008-2010 evaluation was exceeded. Established competence and capabilities in the provision of drop-in, outreach and advocacy services was developed and maintained.

Other significant areas of performance included:

- The most prevalent theme of intercultural and interfaith dialogue actions (nearly 4,000 TCNs benefitting).
- Engagement of around 1,500 young TCNs in various themed actions.
- Anti-racism actions with over 160 events/actions, 1,021 TCNs and 5,500 Irish and Other nationals participating.
- Strong focus on capacity development in the statutory, community/voluntary sectors with 21 projects being involved across these sectors.

(source is the Evaluation Report submitted to the Commission for the period covered by the Annual Programmes 2011-2013).

Under the European Refugee Fund (ERF), a total of 9,319 target group persons directly received services from the programmes, exceeding planned numbers by around 17%. Across the 14 projects supported under the Annual Programmes around 93% of projects achieved or largely achieved their planned targets. The highest incidence of projects and activities were in the provision of social assistance and administrative assistance category for the Improvement of Inception Conditions, with actual results of 7,875 target group persons exceeding plan by around 18%.

Other strong themes included the provision of trauma and counselling services and activities focussed on young people, advocacy and legal support and the building of capacity of state, community and voluntary bodies, enhancing the ability of these organisations' front line staff to interact more effectively with the target groups.

(source is the Evaluation Report submitted to the Commission for the period covered by the Annual Programmes 2011-2013)..

Under the European Return Fund, 456 enforced returns took place and 1,005 voluntary returns. 762 persons availed of reintegration assistance under the Fund.

National resources available

The national resources available for actions carried out by or on behalf of the Department of Justice and Equality or organisations under its aegis will be provided in the Estimates of the Department as approved by Parliament from year to year. In 2017, the allocation to the OPMI will be €3.552 million from which some national matching funding can be made available, usually for resettlement projects. INIS has a non-pay budget for 2017 of €26.288 million and from this will come the national matching funding for return actions.

In the case of other beneficiaries, the matching funding will generally be sourced by those bodies.

Current needs and challenges

Ireland has opted in to Council Decisions (EU) 2015/1523 and 2015/1601. Under the former Decision, 600 will be relocated and, under the latter, 2,022 will be. As indicated above, the Government has established the Irish Refugee Protection Programme for this purpose. On arrival in Ireland, persons will be offered accommodation in Emergency Reception and Orientation Centres for the limited period of time necessary to determine their application for protection.

Increasing numbers of applications for international protection, increased resettlement, the introduction of relocation, and ongoing and, perhaps, increased immigration of TCNs give rise to a need for a range of measures appropriate to each category which can be supported by the AMIF.

3. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Specific objective	1 - Asylum
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The International Protection Act 2015 commenced on 31 December 2016, introducing a single application procedure for all protection applicants so that all matters relevant to an applicant’s case to be granted refugee status, subsidiary protection or permission to remain can be assessed in a single, three stage application. The new procedure will, over time, significantly accelerate the protection determination process and reduce the length of time which applicants spend in State accommodation.

The International Protection Office processes the single procedure applications and issues recommendations. If an applicant has not proven his or her eligibility for refugee status or subsidiary protection, the Protection Officer can then assess all matters that might be relevant to granting permission to remain. The recommendation on refugee status or subsidiary protection status, if negative, can be appealed to a new International Protection Appeals Tribunal.

This shortens the overall process and reduces the time applicants spend in the direct provision system in which most asylum seekers are accommodated.

A Working Group, chaired by a retired High Court Judge, reported in June 2015 on improvements to the protection process, including direct provision and supports to asylum seekers. Its membership was drawn from a range of interests in the international protection area including UNHCR, non-governmental organisations, academia and relevant Government Departments and Offices. The final report of the Working Group was submitted to the Minister for Justice and Equality on 23 June 2015 and published on 30 June 2015. It made 173 recommendations and forms the basis for ongoing improvements across the entirety of the system involving all relevant Government Departments and Agencies. The report forms the basis for ongoing improvements across the entirety of the system involving all relevant Government Departments and Agencies.

On 23rd February 2017, the latest audit of the implementation of the recommendations contained in that report shows that some 121 of the recommendations are now implemented, with a further 38 recommendations partially implemented or in progress. In total, 92% of the 173 recommendations are implemented, partially implemented or in progress, a significant increase on the figure of 80% reported on last June.

National objective	1 - Reception/asylum
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Priorities for assistance from the Fund for this purpose will include the following;

- Improvement of the services provided to applicants for asylum through, for example, the provision of early legal advice. The desired outcome is the improved operation of the determination process;;
- The provision of material aid and support, including specific assistance for vulnerable persons, within the meaning of the recast Reception Conditions Directive including in the following areas:
 - health and psychological care, for example for victims of torture or sexual violence;
 - outreach support to the residents of direct provision centres providing information, training and support or drop-in centres for the same purposes;
 - translation and interpretation; and
 - education, training, including language training, and other initiatives which are consistent with the status of the person concerned;
 - measures to deal with the specific needs of unaccompanied minors including in the education system.

A number of NGOs have been awarded monies under AMIF specifically to provide assistance to persons who have been granted protection and who are now in a position to move out of State provided accommodation. At the end of December 2016, there were approximately 450 persons with some form of status continuing to reside in State provided accommodation and working is underway with the NGO community and residents alike to ensure that those with permission to remain in the State are assisted in finding mainstream accommodation as soon as possible and that state provided accommodation remains available for those in most need. The desired outcome identified in the Policy Dialogue of improved prospects for the social integration of asylum seekers will be addressed in this context;

- Actions to support family reunification for beneficiaries of international protection;
- Integration-related measures, combined with reception measures, in respect of beneficiaries of international protection and resettled persons. Examples would be targeted education initiatives to help resettled persons who left school early or whose education was interrupted; and life skills, personal development, and leadership programmes. The desired outcome will be that this target group are better equipped to succeed in Ireland.

National objective	2 - Evaluation
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Priorities for assistance from the Fund for this purpose will include the following;

- Enhancement of our capacity to produce statistics on the protection system, including for the purposes of Eurostat, EASO and UNHCR, by, for example, engaging professional support for this purpose;
- Research into the Irish resettlement programme focusing on the eventual outcome for persons admitted since 2000 and examining the resettlement model used and its successes and failures with a view to seeing what could be done better. It is envisaged that the research will contribute to the better implementation of the EU Resettlement Programme in Ireland.

National objective	3 - Resettlement
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Priorities for assistance from the Fund for this purpose will include the following;

- Selection missions to carry out interviews and conduct medical and security screening;
- Pre departure health assessment and medical treatment, pre departure material provisions, pre departure information and integration measures and travel arrangements, including the provision of medical escort services;
- Information and assistance upon arrival or shortly thereafter, including interpretation services;
- Support for receiving communities during the first year post-arrival in the community;
- Actions for family reunification purposes for persons being resettled in Ireland.

Specific action	1 - Transit centres
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Specific action	2 - Access to asylum
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Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration
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Ireland's legal migration strategy over the coming years will focus on a number of strands. Firstly, Ireland will continue its efforts to attract highly skilled workers to contribute to our economic development. There is already a very generous immigration regime for such persons and in recent years the effort has been on streamlining the administrative processes for bringing such people to Ireland, including faster processing and greater flexibility. This will continue as will the successful operation of the EU researchers scheme and programmes aimed at entrepreneurs and investors. Secondly, substantial reform is being carried out on international student migration to raise quality standards and tackle abuses. Thirdly, an

ongoing civilianisation programme will aim to deliver enhanced customer service to all migrants.

The Immigration and Residence Bill will overhaul Ireland's immigration laws providing for both codification of the disparate legislative instruments and also the setting out in much greater and transparent details the processes for applying for visas, entry and residence, including long term residence.

The Programme of the Government which took office in 2011 contains a commitment to promote policies which integrate minority ethnic groups in Ireland and which promote social inclusion, equality, diversity and the participation of immigrants in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their communities and is targeted at EU and non-EU nationals, including refugees. It is also targeted at foreign-born Irish citizens and their children..

The Migrant Integration Strategy published on 7 February is the framework for the Government's action on migrant integration for the period from 2017 to 2020 and has been devised to respond to the new challenges that we anticipate in the years ahead.

The principal aim in this Strategy is to promote the ability of migrants to participate actively in Irish society and to foster migrants' sense of belonging within this society. The Strategy builds on the foundation of what has been achieved so far. It recognises that mainstream services have to place a renewed focus on integration to ensure that migrants gain equal access to such services. Equally, it proposes a range of targeted measures to address barriers which prevent migrants from realising their full potential. For example, it is accepted that some migrants, particularly the refugees coming into Ireland under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme, may have complex needs and may need targeted services.

National objective	1 - Legal migration
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No actions are planned under this objective.

National objective	2 - Integration
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Priorities for assistance from the Fund for this purpose will include the following;

- Measures implementing the EU Action Plan on the integration of Third country nationals, in particular those carried out by civil society organisations and local authorities in the context of Ireland's Migrant Integration Strategy. Such measures would notably promote an integrated approach to the integration of TCNs, including through the cooperation between relevant actors.
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- Actions that promote mutual understanding between the host community and TCNs, cultural awareness and the acceptance of TCNs in Irish society and combat racism. Examples are intercultural/interfaith dialogue, anti-racism and other measures in workplaces and schools, training of front line staff in these subjects, and coverage of them in the media. The desired outcome will be good mutual understanding between TCNs and the host community, an appreciation of the benefits that legal migration of TCNs brings to Ireland, and the prevention of racism;
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- Actions introducing TCNs to Irish society and enabling them to adapt to it, to inform them about their rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, and obligations, to participate in civil and cultural life and sports and to share the values enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Examples are the provision of materials on these subjects in different languages as required. The desired outcome is that TCNs can participate fully in society;
- Other measures focusing on education, personal development, and preparatory actions to facilitate access to the labour market or self-employment and measures to combat discrimination and exploitation. Examples are courses to familiarize TCNs with the Irish labour market, preparing CVs and for interviews and for mainstream vocational training. The desired outcome will be more TCNs who are economically active and greater participation by TCNs in communities and society;
- Actions focused on vulnerable and socially-excluded persons e.g. activities to benefit TCNs who are low-paid, have literacy difficulties etc. The desired outcome is to improve the position of such persons and facilitate their integration in society.
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- Additional integration-related measures in respect of beneficiaries of international protection and resettled persons and relocated persons, e.g. targeted education initiatives to help those who left school early; and life skills and personal development programmes. The desired outcome will be that this target group are better equipped to succeed in Ireland;

The above actions may include immediate relatives (as defined in the basic act) of TCNs to the extent that it is necessary for the effective implementation of the actions.

National objective	3 - Capacity
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Priorities for assistance from the Fund for this purpose will include the following;

- Actions strengthening the capacity of public and civil society bodies in providing services in a culturally-appropriate manner, through for example the training of frontline staff, and in the language of the service user where necessary;
- Promoting the exchange of experiences and best practices, cooperation and networking in relation to integration by Irish authorities and bodies in Ireland and other Member States. The desired outcome is that relevant bodies in Ireland learn from experience elsewhere;
- Capacity building of recipients of funding under this Programme including through exchanges of experience and best practices, and networking. The desired outcome is that the learning from operating projects is captured for future reference.

Specific action	3 - Joint initiatives
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Specific action	4 - Unaccompanied minors
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Specific action	8 - Legal migration
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Specific objective	3 - Return
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The Immigration and Residence Bill will introduce a more streamlined procedure for the removal of TCNs who are unlawfully present in the State.

It is planned to continue voluntary returns, to increase the range of voluntary return programmes available and to promote the voluntary return option as the preferred alternative to enforced returns.

It is also planned to continue carry out enforced returns as appropriate in order to protect the integrity of the asylum and immigration systems.

National objective	1 - Accompanying measures
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Priorities for assistance from the Fund for this purpose will include the following;

- Training of staff to ensure smooth and effective return procedures, including their management and implementation. Staff must also be kept up to date with developments in the

area of returns arising from changes in legislation or the consequences of court decisions or otherwise. Training is required both for the staff of the Repatriation Division and the members of the Garda National Immigration Bureau who effect enforced returns.

National objective	2 - Return measures
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Measures implementing the EU Action Plan on return and possible follow-ups to the plan on return aiming at enhancing the effectiveness of the EU system to return irregular migrants that are developed and implemented in / through innovative cooperation with other Member States.

Other Priorities for assistance from the Fund will include the following;

- Voluntary return operations including counselling and reintegration grants;
- Enforced returns including measures necessary for the preparation of return operations;
- Cooperation with the consular authorities and immigration services of third countries with a view to obtaining travel documents, facilitating repatriation and ensuring readmission;
- Develop campaigns, including online, highlighting the benefits of voluntary return;
- Information and awareness raising activities promoting a sustainable return process;
- Inclusion in voluntary return measures of vulnerable persons such as unaccompanied minor asylum seekers or victims of trafficking, who wish to return to their home countries.
 - Identification and implementation of good practice on disincentives for irregular stay by third country nationals;
 - Enhancing coordination and cooperation with third countries on return through, or in conjunction with, the activities of existing and new Specific Actions;
 - Ensuring effective return of UAMs/families with children/other vulnerable groups (e.g. returnees with medical needs) that are fully in line with relevant human rights norms; through, or in conjunction with, the activities of existing and new Specific Actions;

National objective	3 - Cooperation
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Priorities for assistance from the Fund for this purpose will include the following;

- Participation in joint return operations with other Member States, particularly the UK.

Specific action	5 - Joint return
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EURINT

The EURINT Network is a platform where expertise and knowledge about strategic and operational cooperation with third countries in the area of return is shared between the participating EU/ EER MS Institutions (EUMSI's) and Frontex.

The main objective is to Increase the commitment of third countries towards return and improve the operational cooperation among EU MS and EU agencies as well as the sharing of best practices in the area of identification of migrants and implementation of joint return operations.

Ireland's role will be to participate in the activities of the EURINT-Network in the following ways:

Designate one NCP that participates in the SGC's and operates as communication-hub towards the competent national services that need to be included in the events organized by the network;

- Participate in the third country oriented Third Country Working Groups, by delegating the right experts to this working groups, holding decisive power to agree on common actions and strategies;

- Participate in the workshops for field-practitioners;

Specific action	6 - Joint reintegration
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Specific action	7 - Joint family unity and unaccompanied minor reintegration
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Specific objective	4 - Solidarity
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Ireland has opted in to Council Decisions (EU) 2015/1523 and 2015/1601 relating to relocation. Under the former Decision, 600 persons will be relocated and, under the latter, it is expected that 2,022 will be relocated. The Government has established the Irish Refugee Protection Programme for this purpose.

As part of the relocation process, a full security check will be carried out by Ireland. There will also be an opportunity to take individuals' preferences and wider suitability, such as language skills and cultural ties, into account before a decision is made on whether to relocate them to Ireland.

The people relocated will have their applications for protection examined in Ireland. On arrival, persons will be offered accommodation in Emergency Reception and Orientation Centres for the limited period of time necessary to determine their application for protection.

National objective	1 - Relocation
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Priorities for assistance from the Fund for this purpose will include the following:

- Medical and security screening of persons proposed for relocation;
- Pre departure health assessment and medical treatment, pre departure material provisions, pre departure information and integration measures and travel arrangements, including the provision of medical escort services;
- Information and assistance upon arrival or shortly thereafter, including interpretation services;
- Support for receiving communities during the first year post-arrival in the community;

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Specific Objective	NO/SA	Main action	Name of action	Start of planning phase	Start of implementation phase	Start of closing phase
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	1	Training for the single procedure	2015	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	2	Material aid and support	2015	2016	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO2 - Evaluation	1	Enhancement of capacity to produce statistics	2015	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO2 - Evaluation	2	Research onto the Irish resettlement programme	2016	2016	2018
SO1 - Asylum	NO3 - Resettlement	1	Selection missions	2015	2016	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO3 - Resettlement	2	Pre-departure measures	2015	2016	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO3 - Resettlement	3	Information and assistance upon arrival	2016	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	1	Language training	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	2	Actions relating to meaningful contact and constructive dialogue etc.	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	3	Civic orientation actions	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	1	Capacity building of public and civil society bodies	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	2	Exchange of experience and best practice	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	3	Capacity building of beneficiaries	2018	2018	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	1	Staff training	2015	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	1	Voluntary return	2015	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	2	Enforced return	2015	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	3	Cooperation with authorities of third countries	2015	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO3 - Cooperation	1	Cooperation with authorities of third countries	2015	2015	2022
SO4 - Solidarity	NO1 - Relocation	1	Medical screening	2015	2015	2017
SO4 - Solidarity	NO1 - Relocation	2	Pre-Departure measures	2015	2015	2017
SO4 - Solidarity	NO1 - Relocation	3	information and assistance on arrival	2015	2015	2017

4. SPECIAL CASES

4.1 Resettlement

Justification of the number of persons to be resettled

In response to the Commission Recommendation of 8 June, 2015 on a European Resettlement Scheme, Ireland committed to resettling 300 persons in 2015-2016 additional to the 220 it was already planning to resettle. A Government decision of 9 June, 2015 approved the increased numbers. This figure of 520 is included in the Conclusions of 20 July 2015 of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council. In the first pledging period, 316 will be resettled and the aforementioned 520 in the second.

Pledging plan

Vulnerable groups and Common Union resettlement priorities (Lump Sum 10 000€ per person resettled)	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Persons having medical needs that can be addressed only through resettlement	38	40	
Refugees in Eastern Africa/Great Lakes	7		
Refugees from Iraq in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan	41	80	20
Syrian refugees in the region	230	400	1,180
Total union priorities	316	520	1,200
Grand total	316	520	1,200

4.2 Transfer & relocation

	From	To	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Transfer	Greece	Ireland	0	0	
Transfer	Italy	Ireland	0	0	
Relocation (2015/1523)	Greece	Ireland	0	240	
Relocation (2015/1523)	Italy	Ireland	0	360	
Relocation (2015/1601)	Greece	Ireland	0	849	
Relocation (2015/1601)	Italy	Ireland	0	263	

4.3 Admission from Turkey (2016/1754)

Pledging plan: Number of persons to be admitted from Turkey per pledging period

	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Admission			

5. COMMON INDICATORS AND PROGRAMME SPECIFIC INDICATORS

Specific objective	1 - Asylum			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of target group persons provided with assistance through projects in the field of reception and asylum systems supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	8,000.00	Project reporting
C2.1 - Capacity (i.e. number of places) of new reception accommodation infrastructure set up in line with the minimum requirements for reception conditions set out in the EU acquis and of existing reception accommodation infrastructure improved in line with the same requirements as a result of the projects supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting
C2.2 - The percentage in the total reception accommodation capacity	%	0.00	0.00	Project reporting
C3.1 - Number of persons trained in asylum-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	75.00	Project reporting
C3.2 - That number as a percentage of the total number of staff trained in those topics	%	0.00	40.00	Project reporting
C4 - Number of country of origin information products and fact-finding missions conducted with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate asylum policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting
C6 - Number of persons resettled with support of this Fund	Number	0.00	2,074.00	Authority in charge of transferring the persons

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of target group persons who participated in pre-departure measures supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting
C2 - Number of target group persons assisted by this Fund through integration measures in the framework of national, local and regional strategies	Number	0.00	20,000.00	Project reporting
C3 - Number of local, regional and national policy frameworks/measures/tools in place for the integration of third country nationals and involving civil society, migrant communities as well as all other relevant stakeholders, as a result of the measures supported under this	Number	0.00	5.00	Project reporting

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
Fund				
C4 - Number of cooperation projects with other Member States on integration of third-country nationals supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate integration policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting

Specific objective	3 - Return			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of persons trained on return-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	60.00	Project reporting
C2 - Number of returnees who received pre or post return reintegration assistance co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	1,100.00	Project reporting
C3 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who returned voluntarily	Number	0.00	1,600.00	Project reporting
C4 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who were removed	Number	0.00	400.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of monitored removal operations co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	4.00	Project reporting
C6 - Number of projects supported under the Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate return policies in Member States	Number	0.00	6.00	Project reporting

Specific objective	4 - Solidarity			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of applicants transferred from one Member State to another with support of this Fund	Number	0.00	2,622.00	Authority in charge of relocation
C2 - Number of cooperation projects with other Member States on enhancing solidarity and responsibility sharing between the Member States supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting

6. FRAMEWORK FOR PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME BY THE MEMBER STATE

6.1 Partnership involvement in the preparation of the programme

Inputs were received from the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, a branch of the Department of Justice and Equality, particularly as regards returns for which it is responsible and from ORAC. Within OPMI, we took on board points that have emerged from the work on the Migrant Integration Strategy.

The Department of Education and Skills was consulted both in regard to the education system and because a unit of the Department is the managing authority for the ESF.

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, which is responsible for funding community development, was also consulted.

Regard was had to a Position Paper from a number of NGOs, namely, the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, Cross Care Migrant Project, NASC Immigrant Centre, Irish Refugee Council and Cultúr in preparing the first draft of the Programme. This Position Paper was developed following a meeting between the NGOs and the Director General, DG HOME.

A partnership has been established in accordance with Article 12 of Regulation (EU) No 514/2014. The following were invited and agreed to participate: County and City Managers' Association (representing senior local government management), International Organisation for Migration, UNHCR, Migrant Rights Centre, Immigrant Council of Ireland, Cultúr, Nasc Immigrant Centre, Crosscare Migrant Project, New Communities Partnership, Doras Luimni, Irish Refugee Council (all of which are NGOs active in the immigration and/or asylum fields, except for IOM and UNHCR), and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (social partner).

6.2 Monitoring Committee

A monitoring committee will be established. Subject to the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 514/2014, the committee will consider the annual implementation reports and the evaluation reports and will meet as often as necessary to discharge these functions. The committee will also receive reports produced under the monitoring and evaluation framework and meetings can be called to discuss these as necessary. It will operate at an aggregate rather than at a project level in order to avoid possible conflicts of interest. The committee may also receive and consider reports of systems audits by the audit authority. The views of the monitoring committee will be taken into account by the responsible and delegated authorities.

6.3 Common monitoring and evaluation framework

It is intended that the monitoring and evaluation function will be the responsibility of the responsible authority. Monitoring of projects which will be carried out by the responsible authority and the delegated authority for return. Evaluation will be outsourced to an independent contractor.

Monitoring and evaluation reports will be shared with the monitoring committee and with the projects.

The monitoring and evaluation framework will inform us of progress in achieving the objectives of the Programme on an ongoing basis, the impact the Fund is having and the extent to which the different types of project contribute to the attainment of Programme objectives. It will also facilitate preparation of the interim and ex-post evaluation reports. In relation to the former report, the framework will contribute to the mid-term review and any decision on revising the Programme following this.

6.4 Partnership involvement in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national programme

It is proposed to have the same partners in these areas as in the preparation of the Programme if they wish to take part.

6.5 Information and Publicity

The National Programme will be accessible on the website of the Responsible Authority. The approval of the Programme will be publicised on the website of the Responsible Authority and by means of a press release. The list of actions supported by the Fund will be accessible on the website of the Responsible Authority and the Delegated Authority.

The obligations on beneficiaries under Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No.1048/2014 will be referred to in the grant agreements.

6.6 Coordination and complementarity with other instruments

There will be consultation with the unit in the Department of Education and Skills which is the managing authority for the ESF. The responsible authority is represented on the

monitoring committee for the ESF and the ESF managing authority will be on the monitoring committee for this programme.

Possible overlaps with Structural Funds other than the ESF will be investigated and regular liaison maintained with the relevant competent authorities.

6.7 Beneficiaries

6.7.1 List of five main types of beneficiaries of the programme

Non-governmental organisations, local public bodies, State authorities, international public organisations and companies.

6.7.2 Direct award (if applicable)

Direct award is envisaged in the case of enforced returns which will be carried out by the national police force because only its members have the necessary legal powers. It will also apply to actions that will be implemented by the bodies which are solely competent in the area such as many of the resettlement and relocation actions and support for actions of local authorities involved in the integration of resettled and relocated persons, training of staff, some measures recommended by the Working Group on improvements to the protection process, enhancement of the capacity to produce statistics on the protection system, research into the Irish resettlement programme, evaluation of the national integration strategy and other actions where the specific nature of the project or the technical or administrative competence of the relevant bodies leaves no other choice.

7. THE FINANCING PLAN OF THE PROGRAMME

Table 1: AMIF Financial plan

Specific objective / national objective / specific action	Total
SO1.NO1 Reception/asylum	3,570,000.00
SO1.NO2 Evaluation	450,000.00
SO1.NO3 Resettlement	1,500,000.00
TOTAL NO SO1 Asylum	5,520,000.00
SO1.SA1 Transit centres	
SO1.SA2 Access to asylum	
TOTAL SA SO1 Asylum	0.00
TOTAL SO1 Asylum	5,520,000.00
SO2.NO1 Legal migration	
SO2.NO2 Integration	6,150,730.66
SO2.NO3 Capacity	370,000.00
TOTAL NO SO2 Integration/legal migration	6,520,730.66
SO2.SA3 Joint initiatives	
SO2.SA4 Unaccompanied minors	
SO2.SA8 Legal migration	
TOTAL SA SO2 Integration/legal migration	0.00
TOTAL SO2 Integration/legal migration	6,520,730.66
SO3.NO1 Accompanying measures	375,000.00
SO3.NO2 Return measures	4,534,745.02
SO3.NO3 Cooperation	1,000,000.00
TOTAL NO SO3 Return	5,909,745.02
SO3.SA5 Joint return	
SO3.SA6 Joint reintegration	

SO3.SA7 Joint family unity and unaccompanied minor reintegration	
TOTAL SA SO3 Return	0.00
TOTAL SO3 Return	5,909,745.02
SO4.NO1 Relocation	1,500,000.00
TOTAL SO4 Solidarity	1,500,000.00
Technical assistance	2,190,239.32
TOTAL Special Cases	30,632,000.00
TOTAL	52,272,715.00

Table 2: Special case pledges

Special case pledges	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Resettlement total	1,580,000.00	1,580,000.00	2,600,000.00	2,600,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	20,360,000.00
Relocation (2015/1523) total	0.00	0.00	1,800,000.00	1,800,000.00				3,600,000.00
Relocation (2015/1601) total	0.00	0.00	3,336,000.00	3,336,000.00				6,672,000.00
Transfer total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00				0.00
Admission from Turkey(2016/1754) total								0.00
TOTAL	1,580,000.00	1,580,000.00	7,736,000.00	7,736,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	30,632,000.00

Table 3: Total Annual EU commitments (in €)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
Asylum and solidarity	0.00	3,190,059.96	14,213,198.84	14,968,086.71	2,674,645.71	1,847,676.71	1,853,451.73	38,747,119.66
Integration and return	0.00	2,220,383.04	2,259,361.16	3,832,046.29	1,495,832.29	1,856,136.29	1,861,836.27	13,525,595.34
TOTAL	0.00	5,410,443.00	16,472,560.00	18,800,133.00	4,170,478.00	3,703,813.00	3,715,288.00	52,272,715.00

Justification for any deviation from the minimum shares set in the Specific Regulations

Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
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Latest validation results

Severity	Code	Message
Info		Programme version has been validated.
Warning	2.15	New EC decision is required for versions > 1. New EC decision is required when fields belonging to the EC decision are modified/added/removed. These fields are all fields except those used in the Authorities section and the Management and Control System field. For the Financial Plan, amounts within a Specific Objective can be modified without the need for a new EC Decision, as long as the total per Specific Objective stays the same.