

General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": External Borders Fund 2007-2013

2005/0047(COD) - 23/04/2014 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents a report on the ex-post evaluation of the External Borders Fund (EBF) for the period 2007-2010.

Purpose of report: the Decision establishing the EBF requires the Commission to submit an ex-post evaluation report on the EBF's implementation for the period 2007-10 by 31 December 2012. This report must be based on national reports evaluating the results and impact of the national actions co-financed by the EBF. It presents the main ex-post findings of 26 participating countries. Together they cover a financial allocation of **EUR 630 million, or 40 % of the EBF's total allocation.**

The report evaluates the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, complementarity and value added of the 2007-2010 EBF.

To recall, the External Borders Fund was created for the period 2007-2013 and given a budget of EUR 1 858 million. It is part of the general programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows', which has a total budget EUR 4 032.23 million.

The purpose of the EBF is to support the creation of consistent capacity to manage migration flows and apply common border and visa management standards across the Schengen Area. It was set up to promote solidarity among Member States by providing them with financial assistance to manage their migration flows and by contributing to the development of a **common integrated border management system.**

The EBF is implemented by 28 countries and works with a strategic multiannual programme covering the whole programming period. The yearly financial allocations are negotiated separately and laid down in annual programmes.

Main conclusions: having analysed Member States' reports and information from other sources, the Commission concludes that the **EBF is meeting its objectives** despite some delays in implementation. With a very satisfactory average implementation rate of 86.7 %, the EBF is fulfilling its purpose as an EU tool for co-financing investment in the external borders and in the consulates of participating countries. In so doing it serves the interests of the Schengen area as a whole and is achieving visible, lasting results.

EBF investment during the reporting period has resulted in:

- 3.6 million patrol missions,
- an overall decrease in average response time, and
- surveillance systems installed **along 8 279 km** of the external borders.

The report also notes: (i) Member States modernised equipment at between a third and 100% of their border crossing points, reducing waiting time for travellers undergoing checks; (ii) **over 1.8 million visas** were issued at new or renovated consulates, and **378 consulates connected to the central VIS**; (iii) the SIS was extended to include 120 additional institutional stakeholders.

The EBF's success is partially the result of its specialised character. By focussing on external border management and visa issuance, it avoids scattering its resources. Expenditure seems to have been spread fairly evenly among the EBF's priorities. However, Member States **allocated fewer resources to upgrading consulates and visa issuance**. These generally benefit the Member States' foreign ministries, which are not directly in charge of border management. The report states that it would be **useful to create a flexible mechanism enabling relevant institutions to participate more fully**.

As this was the first effort to share the management of a fund supporting such an unpredictable area of activity, some constraints were inevitable. They were compounded by the fact that funding had to be calculated and allocated annually, which affected the implementation timetable. In most cases, however, constraints were overcome by the participating countries' efficient and innovative approach.

The Commission, for its part, provided continuous guidance, simplified the implementing rules and made funding available for maintenance of equipment already acquired with support from the EBF.

The flaws identified by Member States and the lessons learnt were taken into account when preparing the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework.

The general aim is to broaden the scope of Union funding in support of internal security and its external dimension, while further simplifying the delivery mechanisms and increasing flexibility, **especially in response to emergencies**. Better use can be made of relevant Union agencies such as Europol and Frontex.

Shared management is to be continued, but with a shift to multi-annual programming. The future [Internal Security Fund](#) will cover visa and border management, but will add a new element by **integrating police cooperation in the fields of crime prevention and crisis management**. Extending shared funding management to police cooperation will pave the way for more targeted and overarching support.