



## AMF: THE ASYLUM MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND 2014-2020: BRIEFING FOR MEMBERS

### An Overview: What is the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMF)?

The **Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMF)** focuses on managing people flows throughout the EU. Migration into and out of the EU has increased dramatically in the last few decades. Furthermore, the number of asylum seekers attempting to find refuge in Europe has greatly risen. These migration flow changes have posed numerous challenges to the Union as a whole. EU laws and funds have been created to better handle all of the new migration challenges- **the AMF is a key example of one of these funds.**

Migration and Asylum has traditionally been an area where a Member State has full authority to create their own policies and programs. However, because of developments in the past years and the free movement of people across the EU, it is necessary for the EU as a whole to have some unifying policies when it comes to migration and asylum. A key example of this is the “Common European Asylum System” which seeks to require each member state to carry out certain “European” policies in regards to their laws with migration and asylum.

Changes in the Lisbon treaty in 2009 allowed the EU legally to set out these common policies in regards to asylum, immigration, and border control issues. The goal with having unifying laws in these areas is to have all member states agree on policies that will be fair to non-EU citizens throughout the entirety of the Union.

From 2007-2013, there were four funds dealing with migration, asylum and border protection. In order to make these programs clearer to relevant participants, for 2014-2020, the Commission has narrowed these programs down from four to two: The **Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMF)** and the **Internal Security Fund (ISF)**.<sup>1</sup> The ISF, not the AMF, will be handling visa and border control issues as well as police cooperation and combating crime with illegal migration. The focus of this briefing will be on the AMF and its important elements.

The AMF is a seven year program and will carry out its tasks from 2014-2020. Previously, all of the different migration and asylum funds had to be approved on an annual basis, making the programs less effective overall. The AMF will exist for the next seven years and be able to carry out tasks continually during that time.<sup>2</sup>

The AMF is a part of the “Home Affairs” budget within the MFF (Multi-annual Financial Framework, which is the EU’s long term spending plan for 2014-2020) and has been awarded with 3.1 Billion Euros. This accounts for about 0.5% of the overall EU Budget.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2014/130663/LDM\\_BRI\(2014\)130663\\_REV1\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2014/130663/LDM_BRI(2014)130663_REV1_EN.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index_en.htm)



## What was in place before the AMF? Which previous programs does the AMF use?

AMF takes a few programs that existed separately from 2007-2013, combines and replaces them. The three programs that used to exist separately and now all function under AMF are: **the European Refugee Fund (ERF), the European Integration Fund (EIF), and the Return Fund (EF).**

Originally **the European Refugee Fund (ERF)** financed the improvement of reception conditions in certain Member States; furthermore, it funded programs unifying asylum procedures throughout the EU. The ERF also financed programmes that relocated and resettled refugees throughout the EU, assisting Member States who were particularly burdened with a large number of refugees or migrants.

**The European Integration Fund (EIF)** sponsored projects for newly arrived immigrants. Some of these projects include language assistance for newly arrived immigrant children, services to aid communication between government authorities and immigrants, and training programs for EU immigration workers on immigration specific issues and how to handle these issues in real-life situations.

**The Return Fund (EF)** gave financed return and reintegration programmes throughout the EU. Examples of some of these programmes include: incentives for voluntary return of irregular/illegal migrants to their country of origin, cooperation efforts with programmes in third countries assisting with reintegration of returned migrants, and special help for particularly vulnerable returnees.

**For 2014-2020**, these programs all take place under the AMF. By merging all of these programs, the Commission hopes to simplify the administration with these programs but also allow them to still carry out all of their important tasks. By combining these programs all under the AMF, the Commission can financially support the tasks that these programs were carrying out as well as decrease the amount of administrative paperwork that previously took place with three separate programs.

## What are the goals of the AMF? How do the old programs fit into these specific goals?

The main goal of the AMF is to create an **effective management of migration flows into and out of the European Union**.<sup>3</sup> To carry out this goal, the AMF hopes to: (1) Strengthen the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), (2) support legal migration and integration, (3) promote return strategies (for irregular/illegal migrants back to their home countries), and (4) increase solidarity and responsibility sharing among Member States.<sup>4</sup>

**With the first goal**, the AMF will fund projects that seek to monitor the CEAS. These projects will make sure that efficient and uniform laws are being passed and implemented throughout all Member States in regards to asylum.<sup>5</sup> This goal will also seek to see recognition rates (of asylum-seekers approved of refugee status) be more similar throughout the EU. Currently, the number of refugees who are recognized in Germany or France vary drastically compared to the number of refugees recognized (or officially approved of) in Malta, Italy or Greece.

- A type of “Common Asylum System” first came about in 1999 but its most recent formal changes were approved in July 2013.
- The AMF will be making sure that the newest elements of the CEAS are implemented all throughout the EU by the time the law becomes applicable in 2015.
- The AMF will thus be carrying out actions that the previous ERF program used to with aiding the implementation of the CEAS.

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation_en.pdf) Slide 6.

<sup>5</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation_en.pdf)



The second goal of the AMF, **supporting legal migration**, will allow projects to take place that support integration and legal migration hand-in-hand.<sup>6</sup> Overall, this goal seeks to see more third country nationals participate in employment, education and democratic processes throughout the Union.

- With this goal, regional and local strategies will be created to better assist already existing integration programs for those legally migrating to the EU.
- Previously, national strategies were focused on to make integration activities more efficient; with the new AMF, more local actions will take place in order to make these integration programs more efficient.
- With improving integration programs, The AMF will be carrying out tasks that the previous EIF program used to.

**With the third goal (returning irregular or illegal migrants safely to their home countries)**, the previous task of the EF (Return Fund) will be carried out. The AMF hopes to make this program even more efficient by improving the “incentive program” for voluntary return.

- This incentive program will also have an element of “reintegration” which will make sure that irregular/illegal migrants choosing to voluntarily return home will be given with some type of reintegration assistance.<sup>7</sup>

The last goal of the AMF, **aiding responsibility and burden sharing between MS**, will be carried out through relocation and resettlement programmes of refugees and migrants entering the EU.

- Previously, the ERF handled these tasks, but the AMF, operating as the new “umbrella fund” will handle these types of projects.
- These relocation and resettlement programs seek to make sure that one area of the EU or one Member State is not particularly over-burdened with the amount of migrants/refugees entering and living within their borders.

## How Can Eurodiaconia members participate in the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund?

Under each of the four main goals of the AMF, there will be many “**calls for proposals**” that members will be able to answer. If a member successfully answers a call for a proposal, they will receive funds from the AMF to carry out that specific task.

Detailed target areas for 2014 will be listed in the upcoming **2014 AMF Work Programme**, and Eurodiaconia will inform members through our **E-news** of the actual calls for proposals as they are published.

**Currently, the 2014 Work Programme has not been released as of May 2014.** Once the **2014 Work Programme** is released, this briefing will be updated.

In order to get an idea of the types of projects that are likely to be funded by the AMF, please see the list below of “eligible actions”.<sup>8</sup> These are just **general guidelines** of the types of projects that will be further explained in the **2014 Work Programme** and may result in calls for proposals.

- Advice and assistance in areas such as housing, means of subsistence, administrative and legal guidance, medical, psychological and social care, child care for refugees or migrants in need
- Actions introducing third-country nationals to the receiving society and actions enabling them to adapt to it; assisting with integration efforts
- To inform third country nationals on their rights and obligations, to participate in civil and cultural life and to share the values enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
- Measures focusing on education, including language training and preliminary actions to facilitate access to the labor market for legal migrants and refugees;

<sup>6</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation_en.pdf)



- Actions designed to promote self-empowerment and to enable third-country nationals to provide for themselves;
- Actions that promote meaningful contact and constructive dialogue between third-country nationals and the receiving society
- Actions promoting both equality of access and equality in relation to third-country nationals' dealings with public and private services;
- Provision of material aid, education, training, support services, health and psychological care to third country nationals, vulnerable migrants, refugees or asylum seekers;
- Provision of social assistance, information or help with administrative and/or judicial formalities for migrants
- Provision of legal aid and language assistance for migrants in need
- Specific assistance for vulnerable persons
- Information for local communities as well as training for the staff of local authorities, who will be interacting with those being received
- Actions enhancing the capacity of Member States to collect, analyze and disseminate data and statistics on asylum procedures, reception capacities, resettlement and relocation actions;

## What do I need to know? In Short....

- The AMF is an important fund for the 2014-2020 period that combines three already existing programs (**the European Refugee Fund, the Return Fund, and the Reintegration Fund**) to make them more effective.
- The main goals of the AMF are **(1)** to aid the implementation of the Common European Asylum System throughout MS, **(2)** to support legal migration and better integration of legal migrants, **(3)** to promote safe and effective return strategies for irregular/illegal migrants back to their origin countries, and **(4)** to assist with burden and responsibility sharing between MS with migration problems with relocation and resettlement programs
- There will be a number of calls for proposals under each of these goals that members can apply for, unfortunately, neither the **2014 Work Programme** nor any **2014 calls for proposals** have been released.
- When the Work Programme and relevant calls are published, **Eurodiaconia** will update members or relevant calls through the **E-News**.

## What can members do now?

1. We encourage you to **familiarize yourself** with the AMF, its goals, and structure by reading this briefing and other resources found in the “further information” section of this document
2. Look at the “**eligible actions**” section of this briefing for general ideas on what calls for proposals might look like for 2014. More information will be known about goals for 2014 and specific calls when the **2014 Work Programme** comes out later this year. This briefing will be updated when the **2014 Work Programme** is released.
3. Continue to **monitor Eurodiaconia E-News** for information about calls for proposals in the AMF. When a new call for proposal is released, further information will be found on the Eurodiaconia E-News.

## Further information and links

- DG HOME Affairs- General Information on the Two Funds for 2014-2020: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index_en.htm)



- DG Home PowerPoint Presentation on Major Elements of AMF: [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/pdf/1-amf-presentation_en.pdf)
- Full European Parliament Text Adopted March 2014: Asylum and Migration Fund: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2014-0237+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>
- European Parliament Briefing on Funds for Asylum, Migration and Borders: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2014/130663/LDM\\_BRI\(2014\)130663\\_REV1\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2014/130663/LDM_BRI(2014)130663_REV1_EN.pdf)

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