EU Trust Fund for Africa: additional €90.5 million to strengthen border management and protection of migrants in North Africa

This follows last week's European Council's conclusions in which Leaders committed to stepping up support along the Central Mediterranean route. The new programmes under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa will increase EU assistance to refugees and vulnerable migrants and improve partner countries' ability to better manage their borders.

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** commented: "*Today's new programmes will step up our work to managing migration flows in a humane and sustainable way, by saving and protecting lives of refugees and migrants and providing them with assistance and by fighting against traffickers and smugglers. It is our integrated approach that combines our action at sea, our work together with partner countries along the migratory routes, including inside Libya, and in the Sahel. This work has already brought results and will bring more if member states will be consistent with the commitments they have been taking since the establishment of the Trust Fund at the Valletta summit, in 2015.*"

Commissioner for European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn**, added: *"Partnership is key to respond to the challenges posed by irregular migration. By working together with our southern neighbours we can tackle this challenge and bring benefits to the partner countries, the migrants and Europe. Today's new programmes will provide support to authorities to improve border management but at the same time will also ensure protection and emergency assistance for vulnerable migrants."*

The newly adopted €90.5 million in assistance will fund 3 programmes, which will complement ongoing EU efforts in the region:

- Through the programme on **border Management for the Maghreb region worth** €55 million, the EU will support efforts of national institutions in **Morocco** and **Tunisia** to save lives at sea, improve maritime border management and fight against smugglers operating in the region. This programme, implemented by the Italian Ministry of Interior, together with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), will focus on capacity building and providing and maintaining equipment;
- Building on existing programmes, the EU will reinforce its support to the protection of refugees and migrants in **Libya** at disembarkation points, in detention centres, in remote southern desert areas and urban settings. The "**Integrated approach to protection and emergency assistance to vulnerable and stranded migrants in Libya**" programme, worth €29 million, will be implemented together with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). It

will also promote initiatives to develop economic opportunities for migrants in the domestic labour market, together with the Libyan Ministry of Labour;

- With an additional €6.5 million, the EU will reinforce its **assistance to vulnerable migrants**, supporting the 2014 Moroccan National Strategy on migration. It will facilitate access to basic services for vulnerable migrants and improve local associations' and organisations' capacity to effectively deliver those services. Civil Society Organisations will implement this programme.

Background

The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa was established in 2015 to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. The budget allocated so far amounts to €3.43 billion from the EU, EU Member States and other donors. So far, 164 programmes across the 3 regions (North of Africa, Sahel/Lake Chad and Horn of Africa) have been approved for a total amount of around €3.06 billion.

With today's addition, €461 million from the North of Africa window were mobilised for 19 programmes responding to multiple needs across the region and beyond.

The programmes adopted follow the commitment of the European Council of 28 June 2018 to step up support along the Central Mediterranean route for coastal and Southern communities, humane reception conditions, cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and increase assistance to countries affected by increased flows along the Western Mediterranean, in particular Morocco. The EU continues to maintain its support to the activities conducted in Libya by the International Organisation for Migration and the UN Refugee Agency.

For more information

'North of Africa Window' of the EU Emergency Trust Fund

Factsheets: The North of Africa Window and Libya

Communication of 25 January 2017: Migration on the Central Mediterranean route. Managing flows, saving lives

Annex to the Communication

Central Mediterranean Route: Protecting migrants and managing irregular flows

EIOPA seeks evidence on the use of Big Data

Today, the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) launched a European Union-wide thematic review on Big Data as a follow-up to the European Supervisory Authorities' cross-sectorial review of the use of Big Data published in March this year.

The purpose of the thematic review is to gather empirical evidence on the use of Big Data by insurance undertakings and intermediaries along the whole insurance value chain, i.e. in pricing and underwriting, in product development, in claims management, as well as in sales and marketing. The review specifically focuses on the motor and health insurance markets.

More information in the press release.

EIOPA issues Mediation Opinion regarding the determination of the correct insurance class for statutory risks

Today, the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) published its Mediation Opinion regarding the determination of the correct insurance class for the insurance policy known as “statutory risks” in France.

The mediation conducted by EIOPA's Mediation Panel involved the Autorité de contrôle prudentiel et de resolution, the French national supervisory authority, as host authority and the Central Bank of Ireland, as home authority of those insurance undertakings that offer this policy on a freedom to provide services in France.

In line with the risk-based approach of Solvency II and with the aim of promoting consistent supervisory practices, the Mediation Panel concluded that the determination of the insurance class should reflect the nature of risk of the given insurance policy rather than its actual legal form. Accordingly, the Mediation Panel supported the classification of “statutory risk” insurance policy in class 1 (Accident) and class 2 (Sickness) for new authorisations. In case the insurance policy contains death or any other life coverage, an authorisation for life insurance activity is also required.

Furthermore, insurance undertakings should have relevant expertise to ensure appropriate pricing, adequate provisioning and claims management practices, relevant to the risks to be covered and to the target market in the host Member State.

The Autorité de contrôle prudentiel et de resolution and the Central Bank of Ireland, both agreed with the conclusions of the Mediation Panel. The Opinion, approved by EIOPA's Board of Supervisors, is available here.

Background

The **Mediation Panel** is mandated to settle disagreements between the national competent authorities in accordance with EIOPA's founding Regulation.

The **statutory risk** insurance policy covers the maintenance of the civil servants' salary in case of sickness, maternity, work incapacity or disability, and the payment of death benefits to the civil servant's beneficiaries.

Insurance class 1 in Annex I of Solvency II refers to "Accident", while **insurance class 2** in Annex I of Solvency II refers to "Sickness".

Russia: EU prolongs economic sanctions by six months

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The EU sanctions in response to the crisis in Ukraine explained

On 5 July 2018, the Council prolonged economic sanctions targeting specific sectors of the Russian economy until **31 January 2019**.

This decision follows an update from President Macron and Chancellor Merkel to the European Council of 28-29 June 2018 on the state of **implementation of**

the Minsk agreements, to which the sanctions are linked.

The Council adopted this decision today by written procedure and, in line with the rule for all such decisions, **unanimously**.

The measures target the **financial, energy and defence sectors, and the area of dual-use goods**. They were originally introduced on 31 July 2014 for one year in response to Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine and strengthened in September 2014.

The economic sanctions prolonged by this decision include:

- limiting access to EU primary and secondary capital markets for 5 major Russian majority state-owned financial institutions and their majority-owned subsidiaries established outside of the EU, as well as three major Russian energy and three defence companies;
- imposing an export and import ban on trade in arms;
- establishing an export ban for dual-use goods for military use or military end users in Russia;
- curtailing Russian access to certain sensitive technologies and services that can be used for oil production and exploration.

In addition to these economic sanctions, several EU measures are also in place in response to the crisis in Ukraine including:

- targeted individual restrictive measures, namely a visa ban and an asset freeze, currently against 155 people and 38 entities until 15 September 2018;
- restrictive measures in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, limited to the territory of Crimea and Sevastopol, currently in place until 23 June 2019.

The duration of the sanctions was linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements by the European Council on 19 March 2015, which was foreseen to take place by 31 December 2015. Since this did not happen, the sanctions have remained in place.

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Action against stolen Italian artefacts

The Hague, 05 July 2018

In the early hours of yesterday morning, arrests and searches took place in Italy, Germany, Spain and the UK against an international organised crime group (OCG) accused of trafficking in archaeological artefacts taken from illegal excavations in central Sicily.

The artefacts were illegally exported to Germany by couriers and smugglers working for the OCG. Once in Germany, the items were provided with false certificates of origin and placed on the legitimate art market, using auction houses operating in Munich as distribution channels.

The investigation was headed, since 2014, by the Public Prosecution Office of Caltanissetta, Italy. Arrest warrants were issued by an Italian judge against 28 suspects: 25 in Italy and one each in Germany, Spain and the UK. Italian officers, members of the Carabinieri Cultural Heritage Unit, were present during the action, and searches were carried out in all four Member States. At present, more than 25 000 artefacts have been seized, with a value estimated at EUR 40 million.

Europol’s analysts were involved in cross-matching evidence, both in advance and on the action day. Eurojust’s assistance was crucial in coordinating the execution of the arrests and searches in the four Member States on the action day.