

Major funding increase for stronger borders and migration proposed

For the next long-term EU budget 2021-2027, the European Commission proposes to almost triple funding for migration and border management to €34.9 billion, as compared to €13 billion in the previous period.

The Commission's proposal is a response to increased migratory, mobility and security challenges, with more flexible funding instruments to address unforeseen migratory events and border protection at the core of the new budget. A new separate fund for integrated border management will be created and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency will be further strengthened with a new standing corps of around 10,000 border guards. The new border fund will also help Member States carry out customs controls by financing customs control equipment.

First Vice-President Frans Timmermans said: *"Based on past experience and the knowledge that migration will remain a challenge in the future, we are proposing an unprecedented increase in funding. Strengthening our common EU borders, in particular with our European Border and Coast Guard, will continue to be a big priority. Increased flexibility of our funding instruments means we are ready to support Member States quickly; where they need it, when they need it – particularly in the event of crisis."*

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos said: *"Better managing our external borders and migration will remain key priorities for the EU, the Member States and our citizens in the years to come. Bigger challenges need bigger resources – this is why we propose to almost triple the budget in this area. The reinforced funding will be pivotal in ensuring that we can implement these political priorities: further secure our external borders, continue to grant protection to those who need it, better support legal migration and integration efforts, counter irregular migration, and effectively and swiftly return those who have no right to stay."*

The effective protection of the EU's external borders is crucial to manage migration and ensure internal security. Strong external borders are also what allow the EU to maintain a Schengen area without internal border controls. The Commission proposes to allocate €21.3 billion to border management overall and create a new Integrated Border Management Fund (IBMF) worth more than €9.3 billion.

The full press release including details about the IBMF, next steps and background readings can be found here:

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-4106_en.htm

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The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission hold second round of negotiations on a mandatory Transparency Register

On 12 June 2018, negotiators from the three institutions continued their discussions on strengthening the EU Transparency Register. Parliament's negotiators, Vice-President Sylvie Guillaume and Chair of the Constitutional Affairs Committee Danuta Hübner, together with Deputy Minister for the Bulgarian Presidency Monika Panayotova and Commission First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** committed to make further progress towards a common interpretation of the key issue of conditionality.

The three institutions discussed ways to make their interactions with interest representatives conditional on the registration of such representatives in the Transparency Register. Establishing this principle will provide citizens with more information about who seeks to influence the EU legislative process, allowing them to better scrutinise how EU decision-making works.

Commission First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"Being on the Transparency Register must be a pre-condition for lobbyists to get access to lawmakers. The Commission has applied this principle for almost four years, and it works. Now we must agree on the practicalities for extending it to other European decision-makers. Further work is needed to ensure that we can agree on how all three institutions commit to meaningful implementation of the principle 'no registration, no meeting'"*

The three institutions reiterated their common ambition to reach a meaningful improvement on the status quo, and their commitment to ensure the transparency of the negotiating process itself.

Background

The European Commission presented its proposal for a new [inter-institutional agreement](#) on a mandatory Transparency Register for lobbyists covering the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on 28 September 2016. The proposal aims to strengthen the framework for a transparent and ethical interaction between interest representatives and the three institutions. Since 2011, the Parliament and the Commission have jointly operated a public register for interest representatives to increase the transparency and accountability of the EU decision-making process. The Council has been an observer to the current scheme since 2014.

On 15 June 2017, the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament, bringing together the Parliament's President and political group leaders, approved the Parliament's negotiating mandate and made it public.

The Council adopted its negotiating mandate on 6 December 2017 and also decided to make it public.

Two tripartite political meetings were held in 2017 ahead of the Transparency Register negotiations, with the Estonian Presidency. The three institutions held a first negotiating round on 16 April 2018, under the Bulgarian Presidency.

A meeting with stakeholders is planned for September 2018.

General Report of Activities 2017 – Key achievements and governance: a year in review

The General Report of Activities is an annual publication providing a detailed progress report of the EMCDDA's activities over a 12-month period. It catalogues the Centre's achievements in each area of its annual work programme. The report is a useful information source for all those seeking comprehensive information on the Centre and its work.

Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on the alignment of certain countries concerning restrictive measures against Syria

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On 28 May 2018, the Council adopted Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/778 [1] amending Council Decision (CFSP) 2013/255.

The Council Decision extends the existing restrictive measures until 1 June 2019.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

They will ensure that their national policies conform to this Council Decision.

The European Union takes note of this commitment and welcomes it.

[1] Published on 29.5.2018 in the Official Journal of the European Union no. L 131, p. 16.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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