



MANAGING THE REFUGEE CRISIS

ITALY: PROGRESS REPORT

Effectively managing the pressure of migratory flows on the shared external Schengen border requires both responsibility and solidarity by all Member States. When it comes to common external borders which are under particular pressure it is of crucial importance that two key measures are fully implemented: the 'hotspot' approach and the relocation scheme – with the fingerprinting of all migrants, the prompt selection and relocation of asylum applicants and establishment of adequate reception capacities. The other essential component is action to secure swift return, voluntary or forced, of people not in need of international protection and who do not therefore qualify for relocation.

With the support of the European Commission, the delivery of fully operational hotspots in all identified locations is improving steadily, but Italy must take the necessary actions as soon as possible to complete what remains to be done. The Commission will continue to support the efforts of the Italian authorities and measure the progress made and continue to call for the intensification of efforts in this regard.

Almost 170,000 people have arrived in Italy by sea since the beginning of 2015. The scale of arrivals is considerable and the Commission is working very closely with the Italian authorities to assist them in this challenge.




170,000

A dedicated team of Commission officials has been working on the ground for months, hand in hand with the Italian authorities.



HOTSPOTS



Commission Recommendations of 15 December

- Hotspots in Pozzallo and Villa Sikania/Porto Empedocle to be opened by end 2015; work on additional hotspots to be completed by end of February 2016.
- Increase medical presence in the hotspots to help streamline registration process; presence of EU-ROPOL in hotspot operations to be extended,
- Deliver solid legal framework for hotspot activities, in particular to allow the use of force for fingerprinting and to include provisions on longer term retention
- 100% fingerprinting rate for arriving migrants to be achieved without delay
- Connections between national and EU/international databases to be established, allowing for a full check of arriving migrants against SIS II/Interpol STLD databases
- Improve system of transfers from hotspot areas to the mainland, potentially supported by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

Progress since December Recommendations

- 2 fully functioning hotspots in Lampedusa and Pozzallo, 1 more opened and expected to be fully operational soon (in Trapani); works ongoing in Taranto, plans for the refurbishment of Augusta and Villa Sikania still missing.
- Standard Operating Procedures finalised by Italy; including requirements for a full-time medical presence and role of Europol - that still needs to be rolled out effectively
- Fingerprinting rates nearing 100% in hotspots – overall fingerprinting rate risen markedly from 36% in September 2015 to 87% in January
- Submission of application for emergency funds for additional fingerprinting machines - Commission adopted award decision on 8 February 2016.
- Systematic checks of fingerprints against national databases and EURODAC taking place, and documents being checked against SIS and Interpol databases
- Tender procedures still to be launched for transfers from hotspot areas

RECEPTION CAPACITY

Commission Recommendations of 15 December

- Improve the quality of reception conditions so they all reach the same standards
- Establish a single database to manage migration flows
- Conclude tendering process for internal transfers prior to relocation

Progress since December Recommendations

- Enhanced system for monitoring reception conditions put in place
- Rollout of a database for registering migrants delayed until June
- Tender process for internal transfers incomplete
- Increase in places available for unaccompanied minors

RELOCATION



Commission Recommendations of 15 December

- Produce a common narrative to inform migrants of the hotspot and relocation process; EASO to deploy cultural mediators to support national authorities
- Improve the workflow for receiving unaccompanied minors
- Member States to substantially reduce the response time for relocation applications and substantially increase their pledges for relocation places

Progress since December Recommendations

- Information leaflet & video for migrants produced by EASO in cooperation with the Commission; common script and EASO mediator deployment being finalised
- No procedure in place for transfer of unaccompanied minors under the Relocation scheme
- 279 people relocated to other EU Member States
- 253 additional relocation candidates identified; 966 places made available by 15 Member States
- Response time and pledging process for relocation still too slow and insufficient
- Member States to strictly apply the criteria foreseen under the Council Decision when rejecting relocation applications

RETURN

Commission Recommendations of 15 December

- Strengthen Italian dialogue with main countries of origin to speed up forced returns
- Commission to step up engagement with third countries on readmission
- Restart voluntary returns through new IOM programme
- Temporarily increase detention capacity with EU funding to support return programme

Progress since December Recommendations

- Returns taking place to Nigeria, Egypt, Tunisia and discussions ongoing with Ghana, Senegal, Gambia and Ivory Coast
- Commission in dialogue with Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan
- Tender opened for voluntary returns process, and IOM proving support on an interim basis
- Pre-return detention capacity has fallen and is in need of urgent remedy
- 14,000 **forced returns** of persons with no right to asylum carried out in 2015

IMPROVING BORDER MANAGEMENT

Commission Recommendations of 15 December

- Monitor shifting migratory flows and assess need for Frontex redeployment to Slovenian land border
- Maintain Member State assets for Operation Sophia

Progress since December Recommendations

- Frontex Joint Operation Triton extended to Southern Adriatic - operation now consists of 293 officers
- Member States are providing, and should continue to provide, assets to Triton and Operation Sophia

FUNDING

- The Commission has awarded provided **€21 million** in AMIF emergency funding
- The Commission has agreed with Italy a national programme of **€592,6 million** for migration and border management from 2014-20



The Commission has made available a total of €1 million to IOM in support of the relocation process in Italy.