

NATIONAL PROGRAMME AMIF

IDENTIFICATION OF THE DESIGNATED AUTHORITIES

Competent authorities responsible for the management and control systems

Authority	Name of the authority	Head of the authority	Address	E-mail address	Date of designation	Activities delegated
Responsible authority	International Projects Directorate - Ministry of Interior	Maya Petkova	29 Shesti Septemvri Str. Sofia 1000	dmp@mvr.bg		
Audit authority	Audit of EU Funds Executive Agency	Luydmila Rangelova-Petrova	4 Slavyanska Str. 1040 Sofia	aeuf@minfin.bg		

Management and control system

The system is under development and will be built on the existing administrative capacity of the Ministry of Interior. The International Projects Directorate at the Ministry of Interior is envisaged to be the Responsible Authority for the ISF and AMIF. The function of the Audit Authority is envisaged to be carried out by the Internal Audit Unit at the Ministry of Interior which is functionally independent from The International Projects Directorate (RA). The functional independence will be ensured as there is no direct hierarchical relation between the Audit Authority and the Responsible Authority and the Audit Authority also has full autonomy in its opinions and declarations as per Art. 13 of Delegated regulation (EU) No 1042/2014. No delegated authorities are planned to be designated.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National programme under the Asylum, Migration and Integration fund is being developed at the time when Bulgaria faces unprecedented and disproportionate pressure irregular migrants and asylum seekers. The national programme focuses on continuity of the successful measures supported by the SOLID funds while taking into consideration current patterns in migration flows. As the AMIF offers only limited financial resources and it will be used as complementary financial source in the migration field. In a statement attached to the AMIF Regulation at its adoption by the EU Council, Bulgaria has underlined the fact that is amongst the Member States that are most affected from the recently increased refugee and migratory pressure and at the same time will receive one of the smallest national allocations under this fund. Along with the need to respond to the immediate challenges arising as regards granting adequate reception and accommodation to asylum seekers and persons seeking international protection, Bulgaria has to ensure a long-term comprehensive approach focusing also on the social integration of the beneficiaries of international protection and the expected pressure on the social system: housing, social assistance, education, and health services.

The planned actions for implementation of the AMIF National programme are in line with the National Strategy on Migration, Asylum and Integration 2011-2020,. An update of strategic national documents on migration and integration is to be undertaken in short terms in order to reflect the latest developments in this area both at European and at national level. The National Strategy for Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection was adopted in 2014 and incorporates the underlying principles of the international law and the EU acquis relevant to the refugees, as well as of the national law. The strategy aims at successful integration of the beneficiaries of international protection (BIP) in the Bulgarian society. Concrete measures include: access to Bulgarian language learning, to employment, to health care, to housing, recognition of professional qualifications, social and cultural integration, etc. The Strategy will be implemented through annual National Action Plans on Integration.

The National programme reflects the general EU policies on asylum and immigration, the established capacity and national policies for implementation of the priorities set by the European Refugee Fund 2007-2013, the European Fund for Integration 2007-2013 and the European Return Fund 2008-2013.

The National programme emphasizes actions related to ensuring swift and effective asylum procedures, improving the reception conditions and provision of basic needs for asylum seekers especially regarding identification and support for vulnerable groups inclusive of unaccompanied minors. In order to achieve this goal AMIF will support measures in the area of improvement of reception conditions, evaluation of the policies and resettlement.

The actions in the integration field will be implemented in conformity with the Union's Common Basic Principles on Integration, the National Strategy for Migration, Asylum and Integration 2011-2020 and the National Integration Strategy for Beneficiaries of International Protection (2014-2020). The National programme will be focused on measures facilitating the integration of TCNs into Bulgarian society, including information campaigns, education and training and provision of advice and assistance. Measures to ensure successful management of the legal migration are to be implemented as well.

The goals set in the area of return are related to exercising transparent, balanced and humane policy on return, taking into consideration the individual needs of persons, with clear preference on voluntary return and enforced return as last option. The AMIF financial support will focus on implementation of actions related to the monitoring system, voluntary and forced return with special attention paid to vulnerable groups and capacity building in line with the Strategic Programme for Integrated Management of Return 2011-2013. The main priorities of Bulgaria set in the document are:

- promotion of voluntary return**
- special approach to vulnerable persons**
- supporting of durable and sustainable reintegration in the countries of origin**
- improving the international cooperation with the countries of origin at all stages of the return process.**

Bulgaria plans to allocate approximately 39,9 % of the available EU funding under SO3 of the National programme as the AMIF is currently the sole EU financial instrument that supports the EU policy in the return field. The agreed measure in the Policy dialogue with EC for increasing the reception capacity with 600 new places is already implemented with the emergency measures under ERF and in this regard the available funding under SO1 Asylum is reduced to 26,1% of the available AMIF funding.

2. BASELINE SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATE

Summary of the current state of play as of December 2013 in the Member State for the fields relevant to the Fund

Bulgaria has built stable system and administration for defining and implementing the state's policy on migration, asylum and integration with clear distinction of competences

- the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the State Agency for Refugees (SAR) the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP). The Bulgarian border with Turkey is an EU external border with key importance because of Bulgaria's geographical location and the increasing number of migrants seeking to travel to the EU. Since 2012 Bulgaria is facing an increasing migratory pressure in large part due to the conflict in Syria – the number of TCNs apprehended while crossing irregularly the external borders at entry is: in 2011 - 748, in 2012 – 1904 and 11581 in 2013.

Bulgaria has undertaken a number of measures, e.g. adoption of a National Plan for Managing the Crisis Situation Caused by the Increased Migration Pressure, adopted in Nov 2013 (expired in Mar 2014 – 91 % completed), Plan for Implementation of Complementary Measures for Enhancing the Preparedness for Possible Increased Migration Pressure (Apr-Dec 2014), signing of the EASO Operating Plan to Bulgaria in Oct 2013. New plan will be signed in Dec 2014). Actions have been implemented with ERF and RF Emergency Measures (EM). In 2014 € 1 394 000 are provided for national co-financing for the ERF EM and € 3 858 000 as emergency national funding in the asylum field. A total of € 3 263 000 emergency national funding is envisaged in the return field in 2014. A National financial plan for 2015 for dealing with migration influx and a Plan for the integration of beneficiaries of international protection (BIP) are under development.

Asylum

The total number of asylum applications for the period 2011 - 2013 is 9421 (2011- 890; 2012 – 1387; 2013 - 7144) mainly from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and stateless persons. For the first 9 months of 2014, 8205 asylum applications have been submitted. In the third quarter of 2014 there is stable increase of number of the asylum applications (Aug–1104, Sept-1220, Oct-1430). The trends show constant increase of TCNs seeking protection and coming from the Middle East countries due to the crises there. A new influx of asylum seekers from Iraq can be expected. In this regard additional efforts are needed to optimize and refine the national planning for emergency situation in view of a new possible mass influx of migrants. Needs are identified for provision of legal assistance and translation in the process of RSDP as well as social and psychological assistance, identification and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups. The sustainable implementation of such measures has already proved its effectiveness.

The SAR's staff has been increased twice and by the end of May 2014 the number of employees is increased from 133 to 293. The number of interviewers has been increased from 14 (Sep 2013) to 39 (Jan 2014). Fifteen social workers were employed. Training courses for interviewers, COI experts, registrars are conducted under the EASO operating plan. Computerized system for registration of accommodation, medical and psychological services etc. provided to asylum seekers will be put into operation.

It is necessary to maintain and to further develop the administrative capacity of the staff responsible for the Refugee Status Determination Procedure (RSDP) as well as the system for monitoring of the RSDP need to be improved, as well as social workers, staff working with vulnerable groups. The RSDP procedure has to be implemented for 3 to 6 months. The above stated increase of the asylum applications leads to delays in the

procedure which has to be optimized and improved (as of October 2014 5500 applications are in RSDP).

Special attention is paid to the unaccompanied minors (UAM) accommodated in protected SAR premises. In 2014 all UAMs were transferred in Registration and reception centre (RRC) Banya and its capacity is enlarged with 40 places. Provision of special services for them is ensured under the ERF AP 2013.

The capacity of the country's RRCs was increased more than 5 times (from 782 places in 2012 up to 4060 places in 2013) with support of EM and national funding. In 2014 the capacity of the centres was increased to 6000 places with possibility to further increase it by 30 % in short time (1-2 months). Before the considerable increase of the migration pressure there were 2 RRCs in Sofia (capacity of 860 places) and in Bania (capacity of 70 places) and 1 transit centre in Pastrogor (capacity of 300 places). These centres are responsible for the registration, accommodation, social and medical support of persons seeking international protection and are open regime of stay type.

Because of the sharply growing number of asylum seekers in 2013, 4 new accommodation centres (ACs) were opened: 2 in Sofia (Vrazhdebna - capacity 420 persons and Voenna Rampa - capacity 700 persons); 1 in Kovachevtsi village - capacity 350 persons; 1 in Harmanly - capacity of 2000 - can be expanded to 4000.

The 2 new ACs in Sofia have been opened in old schools as part of the urgent national measures for addressing the crisis. The infrastructure, services and living conditions in all centres were improved under ERF EM in 2013-2014. More than 14000 asylum seekers were accommodated in 2013 and 2014. There is a need to maintain/renovate the existing reception capacity in line with the applicable EU standards.

The other activities include the daily costs such as food, water, electricity and heating, medical treatment, translation/interpretation, legal aid, increase of the number of SAR staff, EURODAC equipment. After the end of implementation of the EM, these measures are covered by the national budget and with UNHCR assistance.

The actions planned under ERF APs for the period 2008-2013, were aimed at enlarging the accommodation capacity and improvement of the living conditions for asylum seekers; continuity of provision of legal assistance and social mediation; interpretation for the RSDP; initial adaptation and integration measures; strengthening the administrative capacity etc.

Integration

Even though the share in Bulgaria of foreign born population remains amongst the lowest in the EU, over the past two years this structure is rapidly changing. The asylums seekers, including minors, who remain in Bulgaria even in the short to mid-term need to enter the local labour market or educational system. They also need to access health and other social services. Furthermore Bulgaria is no exception of the global tendencies for increased mobility of the population. For this purpose, together with the integration of TCNs, it is important to attract labour force with special education and qualification profile as shortage of various categories of qualified workers has been growing - e.g.

healthcare, engineering, etc.. Information pre-departure measures will be needed due to the possibility of concluding bilateral labour migration agreements with third countries, which will establish legal channels for professional immigration.

The total number of the TCNs, legally residing in Bulgaria was 94232 in 2011, 101238 in 2012 and 107945 in 2013, as of 23.10.2014 – 113840. At the same time the total number of TCNs who received residence permit had increased: 18076 in 2011; 20123 in 2012; 21936 in 2013 and 21586 as of 23.10.2014. This trend is expected to continue during the next years.

In 2011 refugee status was granted to 10 persons and subsidiary protection to 182. In 2012 refugee status was granted to 18 persons and subsidiary protection to 159. In 2013 refugee status was granted to 2359 persons and subsidiary protection to 2279. From Jan to Sept 2014 refugee status was granted to 3320 persons and subsidiary protection to 1695. The highest number asylum seekers are from SY, AF and stateless persons.

In line with the new National Strategy for Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection a new coordination mechanism - National council on migration and integration is to be established. It will be chaired by the Minister of MLSP with participation of broad range of government institutions, local authorities, social partners, international organizations and NGOs. Triennial National Integration Programs existed between 2005-2013 with budget of 150 000 euro per year national funding.

Strong cooperation with public authorities at regional and local level has been built. The beneficiaries under EIF include municipalities, associations of municipalities, NGOs and social partners, which have implemented projects on capacity building, analysis and research, organizing courses, information centres, etc.

Different integration actions were implemented with EIF financial support in the period 2007-2013 - analyses of the national and EU integration legislation, researches, reports, developing indicators for evaluating integration measures, coordination of relevant national policies and setting up national policy frameworks for integration of TCNs, as well as practical measures (building a network of information and integration centres, information campaigns both for immigrants and receiving society, support for vulnerable groups, practical courses, exchange of experience and best practices with other MS).

Over 15 000 TCNs have been reached directly by the projects implemented under the EIF in 2007-2010. The implementation of the EIF APs 2007-2010 was successful and most indicators were exceeded. The same results are expected for the APs 2011-2013.

With the assistance of ERF the following measures for integration of beneficiaries of international protection were implemented:

- Training of minor refugees, including UAMs in Bulgarian language and other basic subjects taught in Bulgarian schools; social orientation and cultural adaptation courses;
- Training of resource teachers for working with minors;

- Early identification and rehabilitation of vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees;
- Specialized healthcare and psychological assistance to vulnerable groups and individuals.

The implementation of MAP under AMIF will seek to build on the results achieved under EIF and ERF which will ensure the sustainability and complementarity.

Return

The return policy is an important element of the management of migration policy in Bulgaria. It is based on two principal approaches - voluntary and compulsory return, the voluntary return having priority as being generally the preferred option for the returnees.

The mechanisms for return and readmission are based on the General Return Standards in the EU MS set in Directive 2008/115/EC transposed in 2009, through amendment to the Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria, the 'Twenty instructions on compulsory return' of FRONTEX of 2009 and the readmission agreements with third countries.

According to statistics, 2266 compulsory administrative measures (CAM) and expulsion and repatriation to the border have been imposed in 2012, which is an increase by 64% compared to 2011. A total of 5 785 CAMs have been imposed in 2013 and 11363 in 2014. The enforced CAMs are 294 in 2010, 657 in 2011, 837 in 2012, 1025 in 2013, 907 in 2014 (30.09.2014) In this regard considerable funding is needed for implementation of removal operations, counselling and AVR until 2022.

As of 2014 there are two detention centres with total capacity of 700 places. The existing infrastructure has to be enlarged

The number of irregular migrants assisted for effective voluntary return in 2011 was 77, in 2012 - 51 and in 2013 - 162. The number of irregular migrants provided with additional reintegration support after arrival in the country of origin was 27 in 2011, 19 in 2012 and 47 in 2013. Two AVR projects were started in 2014 under RF AP 2013 and EM aimed at voluntary return of up to 330 migrants including 125 with reintegration measures.

Under the Law on the foreigners in Bulgaria the enforcement of CAMs shall be monitored by the Ombudsman or by authorized officials from its administration or by representatives of national or international NGOs. An action for establishment of monitoring and evaluation system was implemented under RF in 2013.

The long-term activities under the Bulgarian MAP under RF have been successfully implemented, including arrangement of periodic meetings with representatives of the diplomatic and consular missions of third countries and translation services from and to rare languages. Training workshops were held for enhancing the administrative capacity of the Migration Directorate at the MoI. Individual consultations for voluntary return have been carried out with about 1200 TCNs and information campaigns for 47

500 TCNs have been implemented resulting in 514 effective assisted voluntary returns for the period 2009-July 2014. A number of strategic documents were developed.

Resettlement and internal relocation

Bulgaria has no experience in resettlement and internal relocation. Bulgaria was included in the Common European Programme for Resettlement by a resolution of the Council of Ministers in 2012. A project was drafted in 2013 for a Pilot Programme for resettlement in Bulgaria for 20 refugees. In 2011, Bulgaria agreed to join the EUREMA II project for internal relocation of refugees who have been granted status in Malta. No candidates for relocation to Bulgaria have been proposed because of lack of interest by the refugees. Bulgaria is building administrative capacity for resettlement - SAR experts participated in 2 missions for resettlement in EU MS, in the Annual Tripartite Consultations on resettlement, seminars held for SAR employees, NGOs and municipalities.

The analysis of the current situation in Bulgaria shows that there is no capacity for admission of resettled or relocated persons in 2014-2015. Bulgaria expects to be included in the implementation of actions related to allocation of quotas for admission of resettled or relocated refugees under its pilot programme for resettlement of 20 refugees after the mid-term review of the AMIF programme.

3. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Specific objective	1 - Asylum
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Bulgaria will continue to work for implementation of the Stockholm programme and the post-Stockholm programme - the strategic basis for implementation of the Common European Asylum System. The National strategy on migration, asylum and integration 2011-2020 is aimed at formation of efficient and integrated national policies for management of migration processes.

In the context of the strategy, the goals to be achieved under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund are related to our national contribution for completion of the Common European Asylum System, which will ensure efficient implementation of the EU acquis; improved conditions for admission and initial adaptation of persons seeking international protection in Bulgaria; inclusion of the country in the Joint EU Resettlement Programme by proposing long-term solutions for refugees on the territory of third countries.

The increase in the number of applications for international protection and possible developments in the future may put Bulgaria under greater pressure and it is necessary to maintain the available capacity for reception of people seeking international protection. Furthermore other measures are going to be implemented in that regard related to the improvement of the RSDP procedure, contingency planning, development of the capacity of the asylum authorities.

As agreed in the policy dialogue, Bulgaria will concentrate its efforts on improving the capacity for accommodation and providing better living conditions in the accommodation centres, ensuring continuous provision of legal assistance and social and psychological services including identification of vulnerable persons and covering their needs. Special attention will be paid to enhancing the administrative capacity.

Bulgaria will support all agreed measures on the Policy dialogue with EC except for increasing the reception capacity with 600 new places because the activity was already implemented with the emergency measures under ERF. Therefore the committed allocation for this specific objective is decreased. Bulgarian commitment to develop a national contingency planning in case of mass migration influx remains a priority. It will be however addressed with complementary funding due to the limited AMIF resources.

National objective	1 - Reception/asylum
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In order to address the above mentioned issues Bulgaria will focus on the following priorities:

Action 1: Measures aimed at improvement of the available accommodation capacity and of the infrastructure, service and living conditions in the accommodation centres for

which certain financial resources under this action will be used for maintenance and renovation of buildings in the territorial divisions of the Agency, additional equipment and furniture, expanding recreational facilities and entertainment, landscaping and design of adjacent areas around buildings etc.

Action 2: Measures to enhance the administrative capacity of the staff of the asylum authority and other stakeholders including social workers, staff working with vulnerable groups, for UAM and RRC staff etc., including training of the relevant authorities aiming at ensuring effective access to asylum. The action will be implemented with EASO support.

Action 3: Ensuring provision of legal assistance and translation for asylum seekers needs under the RSDP.

Action 4: Measures to improvement of the social and psychological assistance mechanism in the phase of adaptation, including measures to improve the identification of vulnerable persons as well as measures to address their procedural and reception needs, including social and psychological assistance mechanism in the phase of adaptation.

Action 5: Measures aimed at development of computerized system for registration of accommodation, medical and psychological services etc. provided to asylum seekers. AMIF funding is not envisaged for implementation of this action.

As a result of the implementation of these actions further strengthening and improving of the Reception and Asylum System living conditions for the asylum seekers will be achieved as well as the identified shortcomings will be addressed. The outcome will focus on establishing better capacity for managing migration flows, especially in view of possible future increased migration pressure, through:

- Improvement of the available accommodation capacity of the accommodation centres (6000 places improved);
- Enhancement of the administrative capacity of the asylum authorities staff with specific tasks related to the asylum seekers (social workers, staff working with vulnerable groups, for UAM and RRC staff etc.) (490 persons trained in total);
- Enhancement of the administrative capacity of the asylum authorities to provide better facilitation services to the asylum seekers.
- Ensuring specific services to the asylum seekers – legal assistance, translation, social and psychological services.

National objective	2 - Evaluation
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Action 1: Measures to improve of the efficiency and quality of the RSDP, including through amendments to the Law on the Asylum and Refugees for reflecting the new EU Regulations and Directives. The action is aimed at improvement of the procedure for granting international protection, analysis and the system for monitoring of the RSDP. Efforts will be made towards improving the quality of procedures for granting international protection to enhance the implementation of the Common European Asylum System requirements. By implementing this action, Bulgaria seeks to accelerate the process of registering applications and reducing the stay of applicant for international protection, optimizing the interview process for ensuring detailed analysis of international protection applications in a fair and efficient RSDP, expansion of the information scope for the countries of origin and increased capacity for its analysis. It is intended to draw on the experience and best practices in Member States with similar asylum systems and experience in this area as well as to involve officials working on the Refugee Status Determination Procedure-judges, prosecutors from the administrative courts, local authorities etc.

Action 2: SAR, with the support of EASO and other EU countries, work on developing a guide for the preparation of a contingency plan in the field of asylum. And on developing a national contingency plan asylum. AMIF financial support is not envisaged for implementation of this action.

Action 3: It is planned to continue that the work on the common portal for information on countries of origin (Common COI Portal) in cooperation with EASO. Bulgaria will seek opportunities to provide appropriate software for translation of foreign language reports on countries of origin and to improve the existing capabilities of the Resource Centre for the countries of origin. AMIF financial support is not envisaged for implementation of this action.

Results:

- Accelerated process of registering applications and reduced stay of applicants for international protection.

National objective	3 - Resettlement
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Bulgaria intends to participate in actions related to resettlement after the establishment of the relevant capacity for reception of resettled refugees in terms of structures, systems and trained staff. Initial training of staff to conduct missions, to carry out interviews and to conduct medical and security screening was supported through the European Refugee Fund (2008-2013). With view to providing complementarity, actions aimed at further increase of the administrative capacity are envisaged in the national programme.

Action 1: Establishment and implementation of a pilot national resettlement programme for 20 refugees according common Union resettlement priorities. Due to the current situation the implementation of a program for resettlement has been postponed for the second part of the programme period, after the mid-term review of the AMIF

programme. The pilot program project will be further developed to reflect this in the regulation of AMIF common Union resettlement priorities.

Action 2: Implementation of measures to improve the administrative capacity: seminars and trainings of staff, establishment of partnerships with member states, participation in missions to refugee centres. The action is aimed at preserving and developing the administrative capacity already built in the resettlement field and to share best practices with countries with proven experience in the field.

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration
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In view of the increased migration pressure towards Bulgaria in 2013-2014, a new normative and institutional framework is being prepared which provides for the implementation of measures for adaptation and integration of beneficiaries of international protection. The National Strategy for Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection 2014-2020 outlines the long term activities of the state institutions, the local authorities and NGOs for establishment of economic, social, political and cultural preconditions. The aim is to achieve successful integration of beneficiaries of international protection in the Bulgarian society and effective use of their potential for the social and economic development of Bulgaria.

The AMIF financial support within this specific objective will be used for both beneficiaries of international protection and legal migrants. The measures under this specific objective will be focused in three main areas - information campaigns in third countries, facilitation of integration in Bulgaria and capacity building. These measures will cover the entire cycle of migration beginning with pre-departure orientation, followed by assistance at the arrival and integration, as well as preparing the society to adequately respond to the integration challenges.

The fund will be used as supplementary instrument for financing actions for assisting the processes of legal migration. The main source of financing measures for assisting integration on the labour market (including professional training) will be the European Social Fund.

Bulgaria’s vision is to support, through the AMIF, the development of the integration process in the country through measures focusing on TCNs in Bulgaria as well as measures aimed at facilitating the integration in the receiving society.

According to the National Strategy for Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection the integration of the beneficiaries of international protection will be carried out on a local level. Municipalities will play the key role in reception and coordination of the integration of beneficiaries of international protection. The mayor will be signatory of individual integration agreements with every beneficiary of international protection who expressed his willingness to participate in the National Action Plan on Integration. After its adoption under this plan will be financed measures such as: transportation to certain municipality, access to Bulgarian language learning, employment, access to

health care, to housing, recognition of professional qualifications, social and cultural integration, etc.

Representatives of the National Association of Municipalities in Bulgaria are taking part in the overall coordination mechanism for integration as members of the National Council of Migration and Integration /NCMI/ (former National Council of Labour Migration). They will have important role in the decision making process in the Integration Commission to the NCMI.

National objective	1 - Legal migration
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Action 1: Information campaigns to raise awareness such as organization of conferences, trainings and workshops, distribution of information materials and other actions in third countries with which Bulgaria has bilateral agreements for employment, employment migration and social insurance.

Special attention will be paid to the countries of origin. Efforts should be focused on providing information on living conditions and employment in Bulgaria, both through clearly targeted information campaigns and through individual work with future migrants.

The type of these ‘pre-departure measures’ will depend mainly on the type of concluded agreements, the agreed employment measures and the countries involved. They will be in conformity with the identified shortages by sector; therefore the way of spending these funds shall retain certain flexibility. The Action will be aimed at the state institutions as well as the potential labour migrants of identified third countries as Moldova, Ukraine, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Armenia etc. in sectors of the Bulgarian economy with considerable shortage of workforce. The legal migration will contribute to the economic growth of the destination countries without negative effects for the countries of origin. For this purpose short and middle term economic migration should be encouraged, as well as circularity, in order to keep the balance between the interests of different countries involved in migration processes.

Result:

- Information provided on living conditions and employment in Bulgaria to 150 persons through pre-departure measures;

National objective	2 - Integration
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Action 1: Measures aimed at provision of education and trainings for TCNs and beneficiaries of international protection, including inter alia integration courses, language training, vocational training and social orientation.

Action 2: Measures aimed at provision of advice and assistance such as administrative and legal guidance, medical, psychological and social care for TCNs, incl. beneficiaries of international protection

Action 3: Information activities for the receiving society and TCNs, incl. beneficiaries of international protection on the territory of Bulgaria: periodic information campaigns, printing and distribution of information materials, work with the media; national conferences, seminars, round tables and events. The action will be generally aimed at introducing third-country nationals to the receiving society and actions enabling them to adapt to it, to inform them about their rights and obligations, to participate in civil and cultural life etc.

The actions under this priority will aim at providing support for integration of third-country nationals legally residing or in the process of acquiring legal residence in Bulgaria as well as their immediate relatives, beneficiaries of international protection, resettled or transferred persons. The national programme will support measures focusing on information to facilitate the adaptation of the third-country nationals and promote acceptance by the receiving society, training and tolerance, access to education and employment, social orientation and preservation of cultural diversity.

Result:

- 4500 beneficiaries of international protection assisted through integration measures.

National objective	3 - Capacity
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Bulgaria plans to support the following main actions in 2014-2020:

Action 1: Capacity building – bilateral/multilateral events with MS, etc. The building and development of administrative capacity in managing the integration processes are of key importance for Bulgaria’s engagements in this area.

Capacity building is essential for the improvement of the coordination mechanism among the key players in of central, regional and local (such as ministries, state agencies, national institutes, executive agencies, municipalities, social partners (NGOs) and international organisations. Exchange of best practices with other MSs is also planned as part of this action as it is of crucial importance for the success of the integration process.

Specific action	3 - Joint initiatives
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National Integration Evaluation Mechanism. Measuring and improving integration of beneficiaries of international protection

Leader: PL

Duration: Jan. 2015 – Dec. 2020

Each partner will establish a coalition of relevant actors on national level, in which the leading role will be played by representatives of ministries and other public institutions responsible for shaping and implementing the integration policy. National coalitions will also consist of practitioners, researchers, beneficiaries of international protection and other actors engaged in various activities either directly targeted at asylum seekers and refugees or/and generally aimed at improving their situation in given countries in the following fields: education, employment, housing, health care, political participation, access to citizenship and family reunification. The active involvement of refugees and beneficiaries of international protection will ensure their direct impact on the implementation of the activities. The members of a partnership will regularly meet in order to plan further steps within the framework of the proposed action and evaluate already taken activities.

Bulgaria does not intend to contribute financially to the action.

Specific objective	3 - Return
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In accordance with the National Strategy on Migration, Asylum and Integration (2011-2020) and the Strategic Programme for Integrated Return Management, using support under AMIF 2014-2020 Bulgaria intends to achieve efficient prevention of irregular migration by enhancing the procedures relevant to compulsory administrative measures and encouraging and assisting voluntary return. The differentiated approach to vulnerable persons, the active cooperation with the countries of origin (consular services and diplomatic missions in Bulgaria) and the enhancement of the administrative capacity of the bodies dealing with migration are part of the Bulgarian national objectives aiming to optimize the return process and the achievement of sustained and permanent return.

In the context of the common European policy for encouraging voluntary return, the National Strategy 2011-2020 aims at adoption of a new complex of norms and measures which would assist the practical implementation of procedures for voluntary return. The strategy is orientated towards improvement of the procedures on forced return and compulsory administrative measures (compulsory taking to the border of Republic of Bulgaria and expulsion) and development programmes for cooperation on assisted voluntary return. In addition, the national strategy envisages measures related to increasing the administrative capacity of officials involved in return procedures. Thus Bulgarian national objectives are focused on both forced and voluntary return applied in balanced and humane approach guaranteeing the rights and dignity of irregular migrants.

The national strategic goal is to address the necessity of improving the procedures on compulsory return and the need to develop programmes for assisted voluntary return and reintegration measures after voluntary return.

The monitoring of forced return will include independent third-party observation involving monitoring by the national ombudsman, non-governmental or international organisations/bodies different from the authorities implementing the forced return.

The decision for voluntary return has two key elements: free choice based on no physical or psychological pressure and informed decision which requires time and sufficient accurate and impartial information on which this decision is based. To this end, the national programme includes measures for individual consultation and assistance which comprises all necessary actions prior to departure as well as during the voluntary return travel and post arrival assistance in the country of return. Specific measures will be envisaged to provide individually tailored assistance to vulnerable migrants both in pre-departure stage in Bulgaria and in the reintegration support after arrival in the country origin or third secure country.

In view of recent trends for sustainable increase in the number of irregular migrants inadequate capacity of the detention centres will also be addressed with complementary funding.

National objective	1 - Accompanying measures
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Action 1: Setting up sustainable forced return monitoring system. The results of the implementation of the action will be: effective monitoring of the forced return, civil control of the compliance with legislative procedures, guarantying dignity and human rights of the TCNs;

Action 2: Counselling and encouraging voluntary return. The action will focus on development of information materials and organizing a campaign for distribution, provision of individual consultations to TCNs to acquaint them with the opportunities of voluntary return and reintegration measures, and encouraging the decision for voluntary return. Provision of specialized legal consultations;

Action 3: Training courses and seminars. The action will be focused on building capacity of national, regional and local authorities on uniform application of the standards for return.

Action 4: Increasing the capacity of the existing detention infrastructure and conditions. AMIF financial support is not envisaged for the implementation of this action.

Results:

- 150 persons trained on return related topics;**
- 50 removal operations monitored.**

Bulgaria will implement measures related to both voluntary and forced return of TCNs acknowledging their relation and reinforcing effect. Clear preference will be given to measures supporting voluntary return due to its sustainable character. As regards the voluntary return of persons, incentives for returnees, such as transport and/or pocket money, reintegration support and measures for enhanced return assistance, are foreseen. For facilitating the return procedures, measures related to improvement of the cooperation with the consular authorities of the countries of origin are also envisaged.

Actions:

Action 1: Implementation of assisted voluntary return measures, including return measures and post-return assistance; the action will include support during the process of preparation of the voluntary return, financing of return travel, reintegration assistance in the countries of origin after the return as well as other eligible measures. The main result of the implementation of the action will be better return management and achieving sustainable return and dignified return of persons referred in Art.11 of Regulation (EU) №516/2014 of European Parliament and the Council.

Action 2: Implementation of removal operations, including related measures in accordance with the standards laid down in the EU law. Compulsory administrative measures are recurrent during 2014–2020. The execution of effective measures will be supported for TCN's accommodated in the detention centres and for procedures of escorting these persons outside the EU. The action envisages covering translation and interpretation expenses, travel expenses to the country of origin or third safe country, obtaining the necessary travel documents, daily allowances, medical insurances, as well as medical exams before the return operation, etc. As of 2014 no removal operations in cooperation with FRONTEX are envisaged.

The result of the action will consist of improvement of the implementation of return operations, optimized planning and execution of the imposed compulsory administrative measures.

Action 3: Measures aimed at development of active cooperation of the Bulgarian authorities with the consular and diplomatic missions of countries of origin. The envisaged working meetings with representatives of the diplomatic missions and consular services of third countries in Bulgaria.

By implementing this action better coordination in resolving difficult cases will be achieved and the final result would be a higher effectiveness of return procedures. The relations with the diplomatic missions or consular services of the countries will be intensified and will further speed up the identification of persons.

Result: Persons returned voluntarily increased from 95(AP2013 RF) to estimated 140 on annual bases (AMIF)

National objective	3 - Cooperation
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Specific objective	4 - Solidarity
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Due to the strong migration influx Bulgaria will not be able to take part in the relocation program until the end of the programming period in 2020.

National objective	1 - Relocation
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INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Specific Objective	NO/SA	Main action	Name of action	Start of planning phase	Start of implementation phase	Start of closing phase
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	1	Action 1	2014	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	2	Action 2	2014	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	3	Action 3	2014	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO2 - Evaluation	1	Action 1	2014	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO3 - Resettlement	1	Action 1	2014	2016	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO3 - Resettlement	2	Action 2	2014	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO1 - Legal migration	1	Action 1	2014	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	1	Action 1	2014	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	2	Action 2	2014	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	3	Action 3	2014	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	1	Action 1	2014	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	SA3 - Joint initiatives	1	National Integration Evaluation Mechanism	2015	2015	2020
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	1	Action 1	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	2	Action 2	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	3	Action 3	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	1	Action 1	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	2	Action 1	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	3	Action 1	2014	2015	2022

4. SPECIAL CASES

4.1 Resettlement

Justification of the number of persons to be resettled

Bulgaria will not take part in the resettlement program in 2014 and 2015, but will continue capacity building. The aim is for the country to be included in the Resettlement Programme after 2017 with a quota of 20 refugees under the common Union resettlement priorities.

Pledging plan

Vulnerable groups and Common Union resettlement priorities (Lump Sum 10 000€ per person resettled)	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020

4.2 Transfer of beneficiaries of international protection

	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Number of persons	0		

5. COMMON INDICATORS AND PROGRAMME SPECIFIC INDICATORS

Specific objective	1 - Asylum			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of target group persons provided with assistance through projects in the field of reception and asylum systems supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	31,400.00	Project reporting
C2.1 - Capacity (i.e. number of places) of new reception accommodation infrastructure set up in line with the minimum requirements for reception conditions set out in the EU acquis and of existing reception accommodation infrastructure improved in line with the same requirements as a result of the projects supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	6,000.00	Project reporting
C2.2 - The percentage in the total reception accommodation capacity	%	0.00	100.00	Project reporting
C3.1 - Number of persons trained in asylum-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	490.00	Project reporting
C3.2 - That number as a percentage of the total number of staff trained in those topics	%	0.00	80.00	Project reporting
C4 - Number of country of origin information products and fact-finding missions conducted with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate asylum policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting
C6 - Number of persons resettled with support of this Fund	Number	0.00	20.00	Authority in charge of transferring the persons

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of target group persons who participated in pre-departure measures supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	150.00	Project reporting
C2 - Number of target group persons assisted by this Fund through integration measures in the framework of national, local and regional strategies	Number	0.00	4,500.00	Project reporting
C3 - Number of local, regional and national policy frameworks/measures/tools in place for the integration of third country nationals and involving civil society, migrant communities as well as all other relevant stakeholders, as a result of the measures supported under this	Number	0.00	3.00	Project reporting

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
Fund				
C4 - Number of cooperation projects with other Member States on integration of third-country nationals supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate integration policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting

Specific objective	3 - Return			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of persons trained on return-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	150.00	Project reporting
C2 - Number of returnees who received pre or post return reintegration assistance co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	200.00	Project reporting
C3 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who returned voluntarily	Number	0.00	1,000.00	Project reporting
C4 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who were removed	Number	0.00	1,200.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of monitored removal operations co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	50.00	Project reporting
C6 - Number of projects supported under the Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate return policies in Member States	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting

Specific objective	4 - Solidarity			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection transferred from one Member State to another with support of this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Authority in charge of relocation
C2 - Number of cooperation projects with other Member States on enhancing solidarity and responsibility sharing between the Member States supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting

6. FRAMEWORK FOR PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME BY THE MEMBER STATE

6.1 Partnership involvement in the preparation of the programme

The procedure for elaboration of the multiannual national programme is in conformity with Art. 12 of the Regulation EU 514/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council.

With Decision from 10 April 2013, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria designated the Ministry of Interior as a leading institution for the development of the national multi-annual programme under the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund. The Minister of the Interior was commissioned to create the necessary organisation for developing the programme with the participation of the relevant organizations, according to the objectives and thematic scope of the fund /directorates at the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and the State Agency for Refugees/. In purpose to organise the inter institutional work on elaborating the programme, the Minister set up a working group chaired by the Deputy Minister of Interior.

On 16 July 2013 a policy dialogue was held between Bulgaria and the European Commission concerning the overall funding objectives/priorities for the national programmes.

Additionally, in May 2013 in order to popularise the new fund, the Ministry of Interior published on its website as well as in one daily newspaper information about the AMIF and an invitation to the NGOs for submission of proposals for priority strategic objectives which should be addressed under the national programme in order the national needs to be satisfied. Second Information day was held in in December 2013 and in July 2014 before the formal submission of the programme.

On the basis of the outcome of the policy dialogue, the regular meetings of the working groups and the information campaigns, the draft of the AMIF National Multiannual Programme has been elaborated in full compliance with the Specific regulation.

6.2 Monitoring Committee

The Monitoring Committee shall be set up in order to monitor the progress of the AMIF national programme implementation and to consult the issues related to revision of the programme and the implementation reports under Art 54 , the evaluation reports under Art. 57 of Regulation (EU) No 514/2014) and the Audit reports under Art. 14 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1042/2014.

The Monitoring Committee shall be established with Ordinance on Ministerial level and shall be chaired by the head of the Responsible authority. The committee members and their substitutes shall be representatives of the relevant stakeholders. The relevant institutions representatives shall be designated on the basis of predefined and approved criteria by the Responsible Authority.

On the basis of the past experience under the RF, the Monitoring Committee shall assemble minimum twice a year and on the ad-hoc basis, if necessary.

6.3 Common monitoring and evaluation framework

The monitoring function will follow the current MCS under the EBF and RF. The “Monitoring and coordination of the implementation /MCoI/” unit at IPD will monitor both the post-contracting and post-call for proposals process. The MCoI at IPD will monitor the technical execution of contracts lifecycle. It will also be in charge of the administrative checks and the ex-ante and ex-post verifications of contracts execution. MCoI will assist “Financial Management and Control” unit when conducting ex-ante and ex-post verification of payments, incl. Technical assistance.

The data on projects and indicators will be collected mainly through regular monthly meetings with the beneficiaries, on-the-spot checks and examination of the mid-term and final reports sent by (grant) recipients.

Additionally, a computerised system, developed under the EBF and RF, shall be used for the monitoring of indicators and information required for tracking progress in achieving targets agreed in the national programme.

The evaluation shall be outsourced and assigned to experts functionally independent of the Responsible Authority, Audit Authority and Delegated Authorities. That may be a subject of public procurement. MCoI and beneficiaries shall engage to assist evaluation process.

6.4 Partnership involvement in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national programme

The implementation of the AMIF programme shall follow similar partnership principles as during its preparation. The main approach taken for partners will be broad publicity, ensured through providing the relevant information on the RA’s website as well as through newspapers publishing. Also a permanent role shall be played by the Monitoring Committee in order to monitor the progress of the AMIF national programme implementation, to consult and/or take decisions related to revision of the programme and/or to approve the monitoring reports

As under the RF the involvement of partners in the implementation of the programme will be ensured by regular public information events open to all interested parties/public and private organisations, NGOs/.

The main partners involved /consulted shall be the relevant state authorities/under the executing body method/ and the NGOs, state authorities and international organisations/under the awarding body method/.

In addition, prior to selection of projects, the proposals of partners /collected through the information events incl. newspapers and RA website publications for selection of projects under action/s supported by the national programme /will be considered before publishing public CFP in awarding body method and signing the project agreement with the beneficiary under the executing body method.

Notwithstanding the method of implementation, the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination shall be ensured and applied.

As regards to projects that will be implemented in third countries synergies and complementarities with EU policies and financial instruments in TC will be ensured through coordination with the EU Delegations in the programming and implementation phases of the relevant actions.

When projects are envisaged to be implemented in TC the concerned EU delegations will be duly informed at the appropriate time for any such measure. This will be ensured as part of the preparation and approval of the project by the RA.

6.5 Information and Publicity

According to the articles 14(2)(j) and 53 of Regulation (EU) No 514/2014) and the publicity measures effectively used under the RF, EIF and ERF, the publicity related to the absorption of AMIF fund will be provided through:

- 1. Publicising the AMIF multiannual programme on the Internet site of the RA /including a list of actions/designated authorities /if applicable/ and the beneficiaries, providing access to the programme;**
- 2. Informing potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities, results and impacts of the implemented actions under the programme through information campaigns, organized by the RA /information events and/or newspapers publications/.**
- 3. Providing updated information on the final beneficiaries, the name of projects and the amount of the Union funding allocated to them on the RA website.**

Nevertheless, the RA shall publish only this information, which is not restricted due to its confidential nature. All information and publicity measures shall follow strictly the Commission delegated and implementing acts, defining the technical characteristics of the information and publicity measures.

6.6 Coordination and complementarity with other instruments

The complementarity and coordination with the European Structural and Investment Funds includes four main components:

- 1. Participation of representatives of the Ministry of Interior in the thematic working groups for the elaboration of the national operative programmes, financed under the European Structural and Investment Funds.**
- 2. Setting up of inter-institutional working groups, chaired by the deputy Minister of Interior /the Ministry of Interior is designated as a leading ministry in the development of the national multiannual programme under AMIF/ with participation of representatives of the potential beneficiaries in the migration field.**
- 3. Bilateral meeting held in July 2014 between representatives of the Ministry of Interior and the responsible authority within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Human resources Development Operational programme where projects aimed at implementation of measures at the labour market and support for vulnerable groups are envisaged for being financed during 2014-2020 period.**

4. Regular meetings of the Monitoring committee. As representatives of the relevant authorities discuss projects under ISF, they are also able to detect any possible synergies and complementarily, or double-financing and overlapping with initiatives and projects, financed under other EU funds or national resources.

6.7 Beneficiaries

6.7.1 List of five main types of beneficiaries of the programme

There are three main types of beneficiaries under the Asylum Migration and Integration National programme programme:

- 1) State authorities – ministries / directorates at the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and the State Agency for Refugees;**
- 2) Non-governmental organisations;**
- 3) International public organisations.**

6.7.2 Direct award (if applicable)

In line with the draft of the delegated regulation with regard to the designation and management and control responsibilities of the RAs and with regard to the status and obligations of AAs, direct award method is planned in cases where a public body has de jure or de facto monopoly established through administrative jurisdiction due to security reasons. Under AMIF, this relates to all activities falling within the following specific objectives:

- Specific objective 1 National objectives 1, 2, 3 - improvement of the capacity of the accommodation centres, improvement of the quality of the of asylum procedure, improvement of the administrative capacity of the national asylum authorities, establishment and implementation of a pilot national resettlement programme /the competent body is State agency for refugees/.

- Specific objective 3 National objective 2 Return measures - implementation of forced return measures /the competent body is Chief Directorate Border Police/.

7. THE FINANCING PLAN OF THE PROGRAMME

Table 1: AMIF Financial plan

Specific objective / national objective / specific action	Total
SO1.NO1 Reception/asylum	2,437,500.00
SO1.NO2 Evaluation	60,000.00
SO1.NO3 Resettlement	116,250.00
TOTAL SO1 Asylum	2,613,750.00
SO2.NO1 Legal migration	52,500.00
SO2.NO2 Integration	1,771,500.00
SO2.NO3 Capacity	225,000.00
TOTAL NO SO2 Integration/legal migration	2,049,000.00
SO2.SA3 Joint initiatives	
TOTAL SA SO2 Integration/legal migration	0.00
TOTAL SO2 Integration/legal migration	2,049,000.00
SO3.NO1 Accompanying measures	408,750.00
SO3.NO2 Return measures	3,585,277.00
SO3.NO3 Cooperation	
TOTAL SO3 Return	3,994,027.00
SO4.NO1 Relocation	
TOTAL SO4 Solidarity	0.00
Technical assistance	1,350,000.00
TOTAL Special Cases	0.00
TOTAL	10,006,777.00

Table 2: Special case pledges

Special case pledges	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Resettlement total								0.00
Transfer total	0.00	0.00						0.00
TOTAL	0.00	0.00						0.00

Table 3: Total Annual EU commitments (€)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
Asylum and solidarity	392,779.95	392,776.00	422,989.00	392,776.00	483,417.00	422,989.00	513,630.00	3,021,356.95
Integration and return	908,108.05	908,104.00	977,958.00	908,104.00	1,117,667.00	977,958.00	1,187,521.00	6,985,420.05
TOTAL	1,300,888.00	1,300,880.00	1,400,947.00	1,300,880.00	1,601,084.00	1,400,947.00	1,701,151.00	10,006,777.00
	13.00%	13.00%	14.00%	13.00%	16.00%	14.00%	17.00%	100.00%

Justification for any deviation from the minimum shares set in the Specific Regulations

N/A

Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
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