



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

EU External Borders Fund to allocate €370 million to Member States in 2012

Brussels, 5 August 2011 – The Commission proposed to allocate €370.1 million to Member States for actions in the field of border management and visa policy in 2012. This envelope will be available under the External Borders Fund to support investments in Member States and non-EU countries participating in Schengen, in particular those most affected by increased migratory pressures.

"The available support by the External Borders Fund will significantly increase in 2012. The proposed allocation is a concrete example of EU solidarity in action and will help enhancing border security and visa management", said Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Home Affairs.

A total envelope of €370.1 million will be distributed in 2012 to Member States and associated countries for improving the security at the EU's external borders. The amount allocated to national programmes (€321.9 million) will increase by 35 % compared to 2011. The rest will go to transnational actions and actions of interest to the EU (€22.2 million), specific actions at specific border sections (€10 million) and the special transit scheme for Russian citizens travelling to Kaliningrad through Lithuania (€16 million)¹.

The distribution among Member States and associated countries is decided by the Commission on the basis of factual criteria and an assessment of the difficulties and risks associated with the controls of the common external border. It also takes into account the recent events in the Mediterranean region which have prompted large numbers of people to flee the region, some of them towards Europe. Italy will therefore benefit from a significant increase of its allocation, from €32 million in 2011 to €52 million in 2012. Malta, Cyprus, Spain, Greece and France will also benefit from a substantial increase of their allocation.

With the assistance of the External Borders Fund Member States are purchasing equipment, means of transport for border control, developing IT systems, refurbishing the offices for visa handling and providing training to border guards and consular staff. Co-financing by the Fund has led to improvements at external borders and at border crossing points, such as reductions of time needed for passenger checks and the modernisation of surveillance systems. Moreover, past investments in modern technology, such as biometric capture devices, have contributed to swifter processing of visa applications of third-country nationals in Member States' consulates.

¹ The amounts are based on the EU 2012 Draft Budget and are therefore still indicative. The final allocations will be communicated after the adoption of the 2012 EU budget by Budgetary Authority.

Background

For 2012 the Commission identifies 5 areas where significant investments should benefit from support by the Fund:

- Investments at national level for the Schengen Information System II (SIS II), in particular the last necessary investments to complete the national system and the testing phases of the central system;
- Investments at national level for the Visa Information System (VIS) and additional testing, the equipment of all external border crossing points with fingerprint scanners and connection of all consulates to the central system;
- Setting up of national coordination centres in the framework of the European Surveillance System (EUROSUR) project
- The implementation of state-of-the-art technology equipment for border control (e.g. automatic border controls systems in airports for crossing of external borders);
- The promotion of consular cooperation between Member States for the issuing of visas (notably by setting up common application centres).

The construction of the Schengen area means that one Member State controls its section of the external borders on behalf of all the others. The External Borders Fund² establishes a **financial solidarity mechanism** to support those Member States that face different situations due to their geographical location, and the patterns of travel flows and migratory routes. It is one of the four financial instruments managed by DG Home Affairs under the General Programme on "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows".

Schengen Associated States (Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein) have been participating in the External Borders Fund since 2010. The United Kingdom and Ireland do not participate in the Fund.

The overall budget of the External Borders Fund for 2007-2013 is €1820 million. The allocations as approved for 2011 and the indicative allocations for 2012 are as follows:

² Decision No 574/2007/EC, OJ L144, 6.6.2007, p.22

Member State	Amount allocated in 2011	Amount expected to be allocated in 2012
1. Austria	2.243.530	2.407.777
2. Belgium	2.665.902	4.151.704
3. Bulgaria	7.869.318	10.861.347
4. Cyprus	3.107.214	7.099.121
5. Czech Republic	2.012.084	2.741.306
6. Denmark	1.103.500	1.542.210
7. Estonia	3.452.677	4.860.920
8. Finland	7.024.598	9.780.747
9. France	17.889.234	24.060.716
10. Germany	10.279.864	14.384.407
11. Greece	40.919.760	44.745.804
12. Hungary	7.966.622	10.630.422
13. Iceland	67.134	100.500
14. Italy	32.715.581	52.787.940
15. Latvia	2.293.373	3.197.746
16. Lithuania	4.340.245	5.975.997
17. Luxembourg	93.350	131.206
18. Malta	2.709.034	14.931.533
19. Netherlands	5.899.784	7.403.041
20. Norway	2.102.826	2.838.543
21. Poland	9.508.340	13.132.873
22. Portugal	3.156.378	3.978.321
23. Romania	12.343.864	16.697.659
24. Slovakia	1.080.589	1.418.484
25. Slovenia	5.733.549	7.651.980
26. Spain	44.819.608	48.154.233
27. Sweden	1.320.946	1.945.364
28. Switzerland	3.053.097	4.299.020
Member States Total	237.762.00	321.910.920
Community Actions	10.000.000	22.207.080,00
Specific Actions	5.000.000	10.000.000,00
Transit Scheme	16.000.000	16.000.000,00
TOTAL	268.762.000³	370.118.000,00

For more information

Homepage of Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Home Affairs

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/malmstrom/welcome/default_en.htm

Homepage DG Home Affairs:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/index_en.htm

³ A request for an increase of the budget is with the budgetary authority.

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