

MULTI-ANNUAL PROGRAMME

MEMBER STATE:	GREECE
FUND:	EUROPEAN RETURN FUND
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY:	MINISTRY OF INTERIOR/ HELLENIC POLICE HEADQUARTERS/FINANCE DIVISION
PERIOD COVERED:	2008-2013

1. SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATE

A description of the baseline situation in the Member State in the policy field covered by the Fund's objectives

1.1. The national situation and the migratory flows affecting it

Greece, during the last ten years has been facing a huge number of migration flows, in terms of illegal immigrants' entry and residence, and has become a reception country of illegal immigrants, who come from Eastern, South-eastern Europe and third countries.

The sudden and vertical increase of the immigrants' influx, creates a lot of problems, since a large part of the specific migration flows comes mainly from underdeveloped countries, so that their return is particularly difficult and many times impossible, resulting to their long time stay in Greece.

Greece is also a country of destination for a large number of asylum seekers which number has risen substantially in recent years. The competent Division of the Hellenic Police Headquarters / Ministry of the Interior, which examines asylum applications, gives applicants an asylum seeker's card which is valid for six months and is renewed until a final decision is reached. In many cases, however, because of the large applications submitted to police departments, the Greek administration follows the practice of granting a service note certifying that an application has been lodged. Often asylum cannot be granted and, instead, if there are special reasons (e.g. health problems, international embargo or civil war in his/her country), humanitarian status is granted.

According to the legislation in effect, each decision concerning the asylum procedure is issued by the competent "Committee for refugees". Afterwards the Committee sends back the asylum applications with the relevant decision to the competent office in order that the refugee may be informed about his obligations. At the same time, the **Aliens Division** / HPHQ is notified, by the competent office, about the nature of the decision.

1.1.2. Institutional setup

The Ministry of Interior/ Hellenic Police, as regards the return of illegal immigrants, focuses on the implementation of an effective return management.

The duties of the Ministry of Interior/ Hellenic Police, concerning the combating of illegal immigration, are as follows:

- The essential controls of going through individuals at the authorized border crossing points (land, sea and air BCPs).
- The essential surveillance of land borders by the Border Police Units, which are distributed in three operational zones of survey and control and prosecution of Illegal Immigration.

- The target action for the investigation and arrest of illegal immigrants from Police Forces, the Border Guards and the control of the legal presence of third country national in the Greek territory.
- The imposition of strict penalties and economic sanctions against those individuals arrested for violation of human trafficking legislation.
- The returns of arrested illegal immigrants.
- The international co-operation with other countries (E.U. and Third Countries).
- The Bilateral co-operation with neighbour countries for the collaboration in the field of the return management and the transfer of the gained experience from the implementation of "Acquis Communautaire".
- The collection, elaboration, evaluation, analyses and dissemination of the gathered information, from ILO's, competent authorities of third countries, illegal migrants and other sources.
- The management of asylum policy.
- The fight against cross border crime and all forms of organized crime.

1.1.3. Migration flows in Greece

A. Hellenic-Albanian borders

Greece faces strong migratory pressure from Albania. In the years 2006 and 2007, 16.475 and 21.454 respectively Albanian illegal immigrants were arrested in order to be returned, while in the first 10 months of 2008, 22.064 Albanian illegal immigrants were arrested in order to be returned.

Albanian nationals enter illegally the Hellenic territory either on foot or with the assistance of facilitators hidden in vehicles. In the first case, they gather individually or with the assistance of facilitators in small groups near the Hellenic-Albanian borders, mainly at night hours, and they try to enter the Hellenic territory. In the second case, the facilitators take them to the Hellenic-Albanian borders and show them the way to cross illegally the borders to Greece. The vehicle crosses the passport control (usually from BCP Kakavia and BCP of Kristallopigi) and as soon as the illegal immigrants cross illegally the borders, they meet with facilitators in a predetermined area and continue their trip to the inland.

B. Hellenic-Turkish borders

Greece faces proportional migratory pressure to the green and blue borders with Turkey as well. More specifically, in the years 2006 and 2007, 283 and 396 illegal immigrants were relatively arrested in order to be returned to the land borders. In addition, during the first 10 months of 2008, 269 illegal immigrants were arrested in order to be returned.

The illegal immigrants coming from Turkey are third country nationals, coming mainly from Asia and Africa. Some of them reach Turkey from Iran and Iraq or from the Bulgarian territory and some of them from the African

coasts (Egypt). Their transportation is accomplished either with the same method as in Hellenic-Albanian borders or with the use of boats from the western Turkish coasts to the Hellenic islands.

C. Return-Readmission of illegal immigrants.

Albania

Greece has concluded a Police Cooperation Agreement with Albania. In this agreement there is a clause of readmission for those who are in irregular situation and enter illegally from the other contracting party. According to this agreement, the Albanian nationals that enter illegally the Greek territory are sent back to the neighbouring country, in a relatively short time - period.

Turkey

Greece has concluded a Readmission Protocol with Turkey, for those who are in irregular situation and enter illegally from the other contracting party. However, Turkey does not properly comply with the provisions of the protocol, denying the readmission of illegal immigrants who enter its territory and finally cross illegally the Greek borders.

1.1.4. Problems concerning the implementation of returns in Greece

After illegal immigrants get arrested, they have to be returned to their countries of origin or to a third country, in which they will be accept. However, the Hellenic authorities are facing problems during the process of the return. Some indicative problems are the following:

- **lack of air connection** with some countries (e.g. Afghanistan) or **lack of travel documents** or any other document from indicating the nationality of the illegal immigrant,
- due to the armed conflicts , in some countries, there is no possibility for planes or any other relative means of transportation to approach the specific country,
- there is no proper enforcement **of the existing readmission agreements** e.g. with Turkey, in terms of selective acceptance of immigrants, delay of answers etc,
- a big percentage of the returned immigrants **return back** to the Hellenic territory and in some cases they might return in the same day their return had been completed e.g. illegal immigrants coming from Albania,
- the refusal for collaboration on the part of consular authorities, mainly of those of African countries, concerning the supply of removal returnees with travel documents. It has to be mentioned that in 2007 and in the first 8 months of 2008, there have been 2.121 and 961 interventions respectively to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the issue of travel documents,

- A lot of third countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan and some African countries **have not signed readmission agreements** with E.U. or bilaterally with Greece,
- increasing number of failed **asylum seekers**, Greek authorities face problems, which refer to the following issues:

1.1.5. Asylum policy in Greece

Generally speaking, Greece has observed an increasing number of asylum applications over the past years as indicated in the table hereafter.

The big number of illegal immigrants **doesn't possess travel documents** or any other document which indicates their nationality. Most of them provide **fake identity data** and submit applications expecting to receive the **asylum card**. Only a very few applicants, are recognised as refugees or granted with humanitarian status. As a consequence, there is a growing number of failed asylum seekers who are becoming an increasingly important potential target group for return operations.

Years	N° of asylum requests	N° of granted asylum status (Geneva Convention)	N° of granted humanitarian status	Total n° of granted asylum (Geneva Convention+ Humanitarian status)	N° of rejected asylum requests
2000	3.083	222	194	416	2.667
2001	5.499	147	233	380	5.119
2002	5.644	36	111	147	5.497
2003	8.178	4	31	35	8.143
2004	4.469	11	43	54	4.415
2005	9.050	39	85	124	8.926
2006	12.267	64	129	193	12.074
2007	25.113	140	75	215	24.898
2008	15.028	350	35	385	14.643

1.1.6. Statistical Tables

A. Table regarding the arrested and returned illegal immigrants, from 2004 to 2007

YEARS	CONTINENT	ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	RETURNED	PERCENTAGE (%)
2004		29.779	15.720	52,78%
	EUROPE	20.210	14.214	70,33%
	ASIA-OCEANIA	6.955	553	7,95%

2005	AFRICA	2.561	921	35,96%
	AMERICA	53	32	60,37%
		40.649	21.238	52,24%
	EUROPE	27.323	19.471	71,26%
	ASIA-OCEANIA	9.785	824	8,42%
	AFRICA	3.474	895	25,76%
2006	AMERICA	67	48	71,64%
		43.159	17.650	40,89%
	EUROPE	24.546	16.510	67,25%
	ASIA-OCEANIA	15.257	587	3,85%
	AFRICA	3.317	535	16,13%
2007	AMERICA	39	18	46,15 %
		58.602	17.077	29,14%
	EUROPE	25.640	15.883	61,94%
	ASIA-OCEANIA	27.353	726	2,65%
	AFRICA	5.566	450	8,08%
	AMERICA	43	18	41,86%

As it is demonstrated by the above data, the migration flows to Greece have increased in the last years and as a result the presence of various nationalities of illegal immigrants in the country accordingly increased. The number of arrested immigrants has increased, especially during 2007 and also the percentage of the implemented returns has an upward course. Consequently, the future tendencies are expected to be particularly augmentative.

B. The main nationalities of illegal immigrants who have been arrested in order to be returned and the main nationalities of illegal immigrants who have been returned, from 2003 to October of the year 2008:

YEAR 2003			
5 MAIN NATIONALITIES			
ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	29.538	RETURNED	14.993
ALBANIA	8.774	ALBANIA	6.406
BULGARIA	3.752	BULGARIA	2.659
RUMANIA	2.169	RUMANIA	1.492
IRAQ	1.855	POLAND	615
AFGHANISTAN	1.080	RUSSIA	627
YEAR 2004			
5 MAIN NATIONALITIES			

ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	29.779	RETURNED	15.720
ALBANIA	11.378	ALBANIA	8.602
BULGARIA	2.773	BULGARIA	1.999
RUMANIA	2.091	RUMANIA	1.395
AFGHANISTAN	1.700	EGYPT	836
IRAQ	1.448	TURKEY	451
YEAR 2005			
5 MAIN NATIONALITIES			
ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	40.649	RETURNED	21.238
ALBANIA	17.981	ALBANIA	13.945
BULGARIA	2.757	BULGARIA	1.889
RUMANIA	2.452	RUMANIA	1.603
IRAQ	2.296	EGYPT	797
PAKISTAN	1.938	GEORGIA	461
YEAR 2006			
5 MAIN NATIONALITIES			
ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	43.159	RETURNED	17.650
ALBANIA	16.475	ALBANIA	12.167
AFGHANISTAN	4.286	BULGARIA	1.484
IRAQ	4.367	RUMANIA	1.341
BULGARIA	2.181	EGYPT	484
PAKISTAN	2.100	GEORGIA	383
YEAR 2007			
5 MAIN NATIONALITIES			
ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	58.602	RETURNED	17.077
ALBANIA	21.454	ALBANIA	14.403
AFGHANISTAN	10.280	EGYPT	390
IRAQ	9.586	TURKEY	287
SOMALIA	3.481	GEORGIA	260
PAKISTAN	2.386	THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDAVIA	209
10 FIRST MONTHS OF YEAR 2008			
5 MAIN NATIONALITIES			
ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	67.116	RETURNED	17.342
ALBANIA	22.064	ALBANIA	15.561
AFGHANISTAN	16.157	EGYPT	218
IRAQ	8.961	GEORGIA	200

SOMALIA	5.262	TURKEY	192
PAKISTAN	3.141	F.Y.R.O.M.	113

C. Table which shows the number of arrested illegal immigrants, per nationality and those who finally were returned from 2004 up to 2008:

YEAR 2004			
Nu.	COUNTRY	ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	RETURNED
1	ALBANIA	11.378	8.602
2	BULGARIA	2.773	1.999
3	RUMANIA	2.091	1.395
4	AFGHANISTAN	1.700	7
5	IRAQ	1.448	26
6	EGYPT	1.030	836
7	GEORGIA	892	329
8	PAKISTAN	821	76
9	PALESTINE	758	116
10	RUSSIA	711	403
11	UKRAINE	661	318
12	TURKEY	513	451
13	BANGLADESH	475	28
14	INDIA	464	17
15	IRAN	437	59
16	SOMALIA	422	3
17	THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	329	147
18	SUDAN	299	4
19	REPUBLIC OF IVORY COST	239	-
20	SYRIA	206	51
21	F.Y.R.O.M.	178	162
22	NIGERIA	155	17
23	CHINA	141	42
24	ARMENIA	124	44
25	YUGOSLAVIA	115	87
26	REPUBLIC OF BELARUS	100	61
27	MAURITANIA	91	-
28	ALGERIA	76	13

YEAR 2005			
Nu.	COUNTRY	ARRESTED TO RETURNED	RETURNED
1	ALBANIA	17.981	13945
2	BULGARIA	2.757	1889

3	RUMANIA	2.452	1603
4	IRAQ	2.296	334
5	PAKISTAN	1.938	47
6	AFGHANISTAN	1.920	3
7	GEORGIA	1.446	461
8	PALESTINE	1.093	117
9	EGYPT	975	797
10	SOMALIA	827	2
11	RUSSIA	688	391
12	BANGLADESH	672	31
13	ALGERIA	580	22
14	TURKEY	499	412
15	THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	488	205
16	UKRAINE	475	194
17	IRAN	449	87
18	INDIA	358	24
19	SUDAN	269	1
20	SYRIA	242	52
21	FYROM	191	174
22	CHINA	188	24
23	MAURITANIA	187	1
24	NIGERIA	186	15
25	ARMENIA	145	50
26	LIBYAN	114	4
27	UNION OF MYANMAR	111	1

YEAR 2006			
Nu.	COUNTRY	ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	RETURNED
1	ALBANIA	16475	12167
2	IRAQ	4367	155
3	AFGHANISTAN	4286	15
4	BULGARIA	2181	1484
5	PAKISTAN	2100	76
6	RUMANIA	2094	1341
7	GEORGIA	1716	383
8	PALESTINE	1410	18
9	SOMALIA	1341	3
10	BANGLADESH	875	90
11	EGYPT	613	484
12	IRAN	548	70

13	THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	524	222
14	INDIA	500	23
15	RUSSIA	464	223
16	UKRAINE	322	134
17	TURKEY	283	200
18	SYRIA	272	49
19	MAURITANIA	260	-
20	FYROM	237	208
21	CHINA	234	8
22	ALGERIA	214	5
23	LEBANON	198	6
24	SUDAN	184	3
25	NIGERIA	170	12
26	ARMENIA	142	38
27	YUGOSLAVIA	107	73
28	SRI LANKA	101	3
29	LIBYA	94	2

	YEAR 2007		
Nu.	COUNTRY	ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	RETURNED
1	ALBANIA	21.454	14.403
2	AFGHANISTAN	10.280	15
3	IRAQ	9.586	405
4	SOMALIA	3481	3
5	PAKISTAN	2.386	53
6	PALESTINE	2.378	31
7	GEORGIA	2.058	260
8	EGYPT	483	390
9	BANGLADESH	473	6
10	INDIA	470	11
11	THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	457	209
12	RUSSIA	411	170
13	TURKEY	396	287
14	CHINA	359	23
15	IRAN	325	46
16	ERITREA	313	-
17	LEBANON	274	10
18	SYRIA	271	60
19	UKRAINE	245	87
20	SUDAN	241	4
21	LIBYA	237	3

22	FYROM	192	181
23	MAURITANIA	157	1
24	NIGERIA	156	13
25	ETHIOPIA	137	1
26	ARMENIA	136	25
27	UNION OF MYANMAR	121	1
28	SRI LANKA	105	4

FIRST 10 MONTHS OF YEAR 2008			
Nu.	COUNTRY	ARRESTED TO BE RETURNED	RETURNED
1	ALBANIA	22.064	15.561
2	AFGHANISTAN	16.157	18
3	IRAQ	8.961	173
4	SOMALIA	5.262	5
5	PAKISTAN	3.141	61
6	PALESTINE	1.954	0
7	GEORGIA	1.793	200
8	ERITREA	1.174	218
9	BANGLADESH	793	6
10	LEBANON	547	3
11	UNION OF MYANMAR	413	1
12	INDIA	393	25
13	IRAN	363	30
14	EGYPT	349	1
15	SUDAN	334	0
16	RUSSIA	304	89
17	SYRIA	291	65
18	THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA	274	96
19	TURKEY	269	192
20	CHINA	227	4
21	UKRAINE	212	64
22	ARMENIA	148	19
23	FYROM	129	113
24	NIGERIA	127	0
25	ETHIOPIA	116	0
26	MOROCCO	104	4
27	SRI LANKA	103	4
28	SERBIA	93	72

1.2. The measures undertaken by the Member State so far

1.2.1. Voluntary Returns

Greece has limited experiences in voluntary returns of illegal migrants. However a programme for voluntary returns of the refugees and failed asylum seekers has been initiated in the framework of the ERF II. The Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity has confided the implementation of a programme to the International Organisation for Migration. The aim of the programme was to create the necessary mechanisms and procedures for the safe, well-ordered and dignified assisted return of refugees and unsuccessful asylum seekers, who wish to go back to their countries. Smooth reintegration in the country of origin is pursued through cooperation with the local missions of the Organisation, which implements social reintegration programmes.

The following actions focusing on voluntary returns were implemented in the framework of the European Refugee Fund in the period of 2005-2008:

E.R.F. 2005 :

Approved budget: 45.000,00 €

- Information Campaign conducted by means of brochures (2.500 persons have benefited).
- A meeting has been organized (150 persons have benefited, 100% covering of the aim).
- The refugees attended the information meetings (50 persons benefited-a 100% covering of the aim).
- Finally, a total of 20 persons have been repatriated (11 from Afghanistan, 6 from Iraq and 1 person from Somalia, Sudan and Yemen respectively).

E.R.F. 2006:

Approved budget: 79.645,00 €

- Totally 57 persons have been repatriated instead of 50 persons foreseen in the beginning, all of them being asylum seekers and in their majority males.
- A broad information by means of brochures, re-printing of the already existing material and distribution according to the procedures provided for.
- In the framework of the information campaign, bi-lateral meetings have taken place with representatives of the communities during all the programme as well as telephone communication with representatives from NGOs involved.

- A specialised briefing of 112 persons attending the information sessions has taken place.

E.R.F. 2007:

Approved Budget: 80.000,00 €

It has to be noted that the programme is being materialized at the present time period (ending: 31/12/2008), therefore no data can be provided concerning the results.

In order to achieve the final aim:

1. Information campaign by means of brochures and carrying out of an information meeting
2. Attending conferences
3. The plan is completed with the voluntary repatriation of **50 persons**, who will be reintegrated in the social structure of their origin countries by means of the relevant programmes realized by the Organization in question.

1.2.2. Forced Returns

In regard to forced returns the legal base determines two categories:

- the administrative and
- the judicial deportations.

The **administrative returns** are issued in accordance to article 76 of the Penal Code and concern immigrants who

- have been condemned to at least one year of imprisonment or independently of the penalty, for crimes concerning related to the offence of the constitution , betrayal of the country, drug traffic etc.,
- have violated the provisions of the above law,
- their presence on the Hellenic territory is dangerous for the public order or the security of the country,
- their presence on the Hellenic territory is dangerous for the public health and they refuse to comply with the measures ordered by medical authorities.

The return is ordered by the competent Police Director and the immigrant has a deadline of 48 hours to submit his objections. In case that the illegal immigrant is suspicious for escapement or dangerous for the public order, the Police Director orders his temporary detention, until the issuing of the return decision within 3 days. After the issuing of the return decision, the detention of the immigrant continues, **but, in any case, it cannot exceed the 3 months.**

Illegal immigrants can appeal against the return decision, in a 5 days deadline from its notification to the Minister of the Interior or to any other warrantee person. The final decision is issued in 3 working days from the day

of the appeal. With the submission of the appeal, the decision's implementation is suspended. In the case that the illegal immigrant is in detention, the suspension concerns only the implementation of the return.

If the illegal immigrant is not suspicious for escape or he is not dangerous for the public order or if the President of the Administrative Court of First Instance does not agree with his detention, the illegal immigrant has the opportunity to leave the country in 30 days.

The illegal immigrant is informed, in the language he understands, of his rights and for that reason he is provided with a special information brochure.

In the above mentioned cases, illegal immigrants are detained in the police authorities' facilities or in other specific facilities, until the implementation of their return. The Hellenic Police is the competent authority for guarding the above mentioned facilities.

The **judicial returns decisions** are issued in accordance to article 74 of the Penal Code and concern illegal immigrants who have been sentenced to imprisonment. If the stay of the immigrant in our country is legal, his return cannot be ordered, unless he has been sentenced to imprisonment for at least 3 months. The implementation of the return is carried out after the serving of the penalty. The same situation exists when:

- the return has been ordered by the court as a adjunct penalty or
- the return has been ordered in accordance to P.C. article 99 in the case of immigrants who are sentenced to imprisonment up to 5 years. In this case their return is ordered, with the same decision, and the court can command the reprieve of their penalty and the return is directly implemented.

Illegal immigrants are detained in specific organized places, until the implementation of their return.

Concerning the appeal against judicial returns:

- The Minister of Justice may allow the entry of the returned immigrants, for a definite time period in the country, after the expiration of 3 years from their deportation.
- By decision of the Minister of Justice the returned immigrant, whose penalty has been suspended in accordance to article 99 of the Penal Code, can re-enter into the country, after the expiration of 5 years from his/her return.

In the above – mentioned cases, there is no time limitation if the immigrant has married a Greek national or in the case that he/she is repatriated being of Greek origin.

1.2.3. Provision of Returns' expenditures

The return expenses and the expenses for food are ascribed to the illegal immigrants.

If they do not dispose over the total amount of these expenses, the amount that cannot be covered by them is charged to the Greek state budget.

In case the entry or the residence of the immigrant has been permitted by a letter of credit from another person, the expenditures of return and the expenses of maintenance are borne by the immigrant and the third person who guarantees for his/her entry and residence.

— The employer who occupies an illegal immigrant has to cover the above-mentioned expenses.

The removal of immigrants that do not create particular problems is realised voluntarily without escort, by road, air or even sea.

It is obvious that in the case of transit, there should be a previous briefing approval, by the country of transit.

In case unaccompanied minors cannot be deported e.g. due to lack of air connection to their country, the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity and the N.G.Os are cooperating so that the minors will be hospitalised in special centres of hospitality.

In individual cases where the removal of immigrants create problems, the return can be accomplished with the escort of safety personnel as long as the expenses of their tickets, residence and their return back to the country are provided for.

There is a catalogue of the undesirable immigrants in the Ministry of the Interior. The criteria and the procedure of the registration and deletion on this catalogue are determined by a joint decision of Ministers of the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Defense and Justice.

The immigrants who live in the Hellenic territory and they are included in the above-mentioned catalogue, must leave the country and in case they are not complying with this decision, they are returned.

In order to hinder the efforts of immigrants to re-enter into the country and on the other hand to discourage the facilitators, the following measures have been taken:

- The immigrants who try to enter the country and whose names are included in the before-mentioned catalogue have to depart immediately; otherwise they are deported to the country of origin or to a third country where their entry is permitted. The responsibility and the expenses are ascribed to the immigrants or the facilitators that transferred the immigrants.
- If the facilitators, refuse to fulfill their obligations, they are punished with a fine ranging from 3.000 € up to 15.000 € for any transferred person. The used means of transfer is confiscated until they fulfill their obligations and pay the fine.
- Any immigrant who tries to re-enter illegally into the Hellenic territory is punished with a penalty of imprisonment and a fine ranging from 3.000 € up to 10.000 €.

Our country, pursuant to the Schengen Acquis, receives a list of supplementary measures concerning prevention and repression of illegal immigration and cross-border criminality. These measures are supplementary and apply in the following fields:

A) Cooperation with third countries, especially countries of origin and transit on issues of information collection, trainings etc.

B) Cooperation with other Member States on joint flights. Our country has already participated in a joint flight with Spain. This return concerned 5 immigrants with a nationality from Pakistan and they were sent back to their country. The return was carried out under the auspices of FRONTEX.

Greece has also signed on 17 October 2008 its participation in the following joint flight to Nigeria, with Germany, Spain and Ireland. The joint flight will be realized on 12 December 2008 by Germany. The exact number of immigrants is not known yet.

C) Cooperation with consular authorities of third countries about the issuing of travel documents for returnees, as well as with the consular authorities of Turkey and Egypt.

D) Bilateral and International cooperation with neighbouring countries concerning the management of common borders, aiming at the improvement of return management. (Albania, F.Y.R.O.M., Turkey)

E) Greece has contracted Re-entry or Police Co-operation Agreements with the following countries, in which a clause of re-entry is included, having as a result that the nationals of their countries or even third countries become acceptable

**READMISSION AGREEMENTS and
POLICE CO-OPERATIONS (which include readmission agreements)**

Country which contracted the Agreement	Type – Object of Agreement	Place – Time of Signature
EGYPT	Agreement of Police Co-operation	Cairo 21/02/1998
ALBANIA	Agreement of Police Collaboration	Athens 17-07-1992
BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA	Readmission Agreement and Protocol of its Application	Athens 09-02-2006
CROATIA	Readmission Agreement	Athens 10-03-1995
TURKEY	Protocol on the application of re-entry clause (article 8) Agreement of Police Co-operation	Athens 08-11-2001

F) Activities inside the Territory

- Imposing strict penal and economic sanctions against the arrested traffickers.
- Imposing fines against the air and shipping companies, when they transport foreigners that do not fulfil the conditions of entry.

- An informative brochure in 70.000 copies, referring to the asylum procedures, in 5 languages, with the cooperation of the United Nations Organization for the refugees in the frame of EQUAL.

- The Hellenic Police in the frame of a National Strategic Plan related to the management of returns has adopted measures as follows:

- **The establishment of 2 Special Centers of Stay for illegal immigrants, one in the Municipality of Kyprinou (perfection of Evros) and another one on Samos island** which both correspond fully to the prescriptions of United Nations. The illegal immigrants, who have been arrested for any reason, remain there until the settlement either of their return or the issuing of the asylum.

The terms of hygiene are fully met; special provisions are provided for regarding the residence of families and minors, while places for recreation, sports and religious worship will be provided, too.

Apart from the administrative personnel, the special places will be staffed with the suitable medical and nursing personnel. In the cases of unaccompanied minors that apply for asylum and until the assessment of their application, their needs concerning accommodation in the Centres of Stay are ensured and satisfied by special regulations for minors, while proportional regulations are also in effect for women who are single. It is pointed out, as to the adoption of Directive of 2003/9/[EC] Council, that a draft Presidential Decree is in the process of being issued regarding the reception of asylum seekers, and more specifically as regards more sensitive groups and unaccompanied minors, special regulations are being promoted.

- Enhanced measures concerning the research of localisation and the arrest of illegal immigrants by Police Forces and special Prosecution of Immigration Departments.
 - Returns of arrested immigrants.
 - Participation in FRONTEX with common flights or trainings of the police personnel.
- The Greek Government (mainly the Ministry of Public Order, the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity, the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection and the Ministry of the Interior) has undertaken specific actions on voluntary return via ERF II (the latter measure was commenced in Greece in 2003) to improve the asylum procedures and to develop national law on asylum and migration in cooperation with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and NGOs.

It includes cooperation with EURODAC, EUROPOL, EUROJUSTICE, INTERPOL, CIREFI, FRONTEX, SECI, SCHENGEN etc., but it should aim at a more efficient collaboration with the Consular Authorities of countries of origin for the immigrants.

Beside the co-operation with the responsible administrative, juridical authorities and organisations that were mentioned before, there is co-

operation with the High Commission of the United Nations Organization as well as with N.G.Os.

1.3. The total national resources allocated

With regard to illegal immigrants' returns expenditures, the total allocated national resources are roughly 73.173.610,54 €, taking into account the economical data of the last four years, i.e. 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. In the above total amount rental expenses for accommodation facilities, personnel's salaries, personnel's compensations for service out of the central office, buses' rental, fuels and vehicles' services as well as expenses that concern the nutrition, accommodation, medico-pharmaceutical care and tickets of the returnees, are included. Expenditures that are related with the police personnel that escorts the returnees in the processes of the returns are also included. A table is provided below, which presents the returns' expenditures for the year 2007:

RETURNS' EXPENDITURES OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS YEAR 2007	
Type of expenditure	Amount (in €)
Compensation of occupied Police personnel	11.785.497,39
Hires of buses and accommodation facilities	471.025,71
Nutrition of illegal immigrants	3.481.001,26
Functional expenses (fuel, tires of vehicles etc.)	2.369.915,72
Returns' expenditures (tickets and expenses of police officers who escort the returnees)	673.410,71
Hires of planes	146.060,00
Hospital and medical care of the illegal immigrants	49.038,12
TOTAL	18.975.948,91
OCCUPIED POLICE PERSONNEL IN RETURNS' PROCEDURES YEAR 2007	
Total number of occupied police personnel	52.434,00
Employment of police personnel in human days	851.996,00

2. ANALYSIS OF REQUIREMENTS IN THE MEMBER STATE

Taking into consideration the parameters of the phenomenon of illegal immigration in Greece and specifically:

- The geographical position of Greece in the South eastern external borders of EU,
- the negative socio-economical developments in third countries which lead their nationals to search for countries with better work and living conditions,
- the increasing numbers of the illegal immigrants during the last ten years and
- the lack of diplomatic representation of some countries in Greece (e.g. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sudan, Mauritania, Somalia),

the main requirement in terms of return management is namely the **achievement of the best possible integrated return management**, in order that the most efficient methods of return management in Greece are provided.

3. STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES

A description of how the Fund contributes to meeting the requirements, which priorities have been chosen and why

3.1. **Priority 1**: Support for the development of a strategic approach to return management by Member States

OBJECTIVE 1: Enhancing the capacities of return authorities in order to develop gradually the models for integrated return management (Requirement 2)

Examples of key actions:

- **The improvement of information provided to potential returnees, through the employment of interpreters and translators for their languages**

The employment of interpreters for languages of potential returnees, mainly from Asia and Africa aiming at:

- a) the interpretation and explanation to the arrested illegal immigrants-returnees of their rights, the reasons for their detention and the return procedures,
- b) the enhancement of services that are provided to the arrested illegal immigrants-returnees,
- c) faster and more effective return process completion and

d) a complete understanding of the return process by the returnees.

Interpreters will be employed in order that they are distributed in seven (7) regional Police Directorates, where a huge number of illegal immigrants are arrested daily and in the special organized immigrants' facilities. These services are:

- The Aliens Directorate of Attica
- The Police Directorate of Orestiada (special organized facility)
- The Police Directorate of Lesbos
- The Police Directorate of Samos (special organized facility)
- The Police Directorate of Chios
- The Police Directorate of Dodecanese
- The Police Directorate of Achaia

The action has been programmed to be implemented by all annual programmes (2008-2013), with a total financing of approximately 3.600.000,00 €. After the end of the implementation of the Multiannual programme 2008-2013, the possibility of the continuation of the services provided by the staff concerned will be examined .

- **Set up and operate of a special office for the implementation of the readmission agreements**

The setting up and the operation of a special **Readmission Agreements Office (R.A.O.)** within the Aliens Division of the Hellenic Police Headquarters, in order to ensure the observation, evaluation and coordination of the readmissions operations.

In order to be able to issue guidelines and coordinate, the **Readmission Agreements Office** will need to act as a central hub for information and reports channelled from the **Regional Police Authorities** and subsequently to transmit the readmission requests to the illegal immigrants' countries of origin.

Additionally, the competent Regional Police Authorities have to be reinforced with modern and functional technological equipment aiming at a more effective cooperation and exchange of information process with the RAO.

The action will require the purchase of technical equipment to meet the coordination, communication and information collection and management requirements with the competent authorities performing duties related to the return of illegal immigrants in the framework of the readmission agreements' implementation.

The above mentioned action has been programmed to be implemented by the annual programme of 2008, with a total financing of approximately 22.000,00 €.

- **Employment of specialised personnel for supporting potential returnees**

The employment of social workers or psychologists and legal advisers (lawyers), aiming at:

- a) the psychological support of the arrested illegal immigrants-returnees, during their detention period,
- b) the provision of information on the political and economical situations of the returnees' countries to the arrested illegal immigrants-returnees,
- c) the provision of, free of charge, legal aid and representation to the arrested illegal immigrants-returnees,
- d) the upgrade of the provided services to the arrested illegal immigrants-returnees and
- e) more effective implementation of the return process in terms of protection of the illegal immigrants' human rights.

In the framework of the action, social workers or psychologists and legal advisers (lawyers) will be employed in order to be distributed in seven (7) regional Police Directorates, where a huge number of illegal immigrants are arrested daily and in the special organized immigrants' facilities. These services are:

- The Aliens Directorate of Attica
- The Police Directorate of Orestiada (special organized facility)
- The Police Directorate of Lesbos
- The Police Directorate of Samos (special organized facility)
- The Police Directorate of Chios
- The Police Directorate of Dodecanese
- The Police Directorate of Achaia

The above mentioned action has been programmed to be implemented by all annual programmes (2008-2013), with a total financing of approximately 7.200.000,00 €. After the end of the implementation of the Multiannual programme 2008-2013, the possibility of the continuation of the services provided by the staff concerned will be examined.

OBJECTIVE 2: Improving cooperation on return with partner authorities in third countries, with special attention to cooperation with consular authorities of third-countries in order to speed up the process of documenting returnees (Requirement 1)

The scope of the objective

Unfortunately, for some third countries' Consular Authorities there are big delays in the process of issuing of the travel documents for their illegal immigrants and some third countries don't implement the signed readmission agreements. The issuing of the appropriate travel documents by the competent Consular Authorities and the implementation of the signed

readmission agreements is considered to be of major importance in order to ensure the immediate implementation of the return decisions.

The objective is to establish and improve effective, stable and lasting operational cooperation between the Greek authorities and consular authorities and immigration services of third-countries with a view to facilitate the obtaining of travel documents of third-country nationals and therefore ensure speedy and successful removals. The objective will also focus on improving the implementation of existing readmission agreements or on the establishment of the new ones.

Examples of key actions:

- **Bilateral meetings with migration authorities of the partner third countries**

The improvement of cooperation between experts of the Greek competent services and the respective counterparts in the third countries' services is extremely important in order to accelerate the above mentioned procedures.

This action will be realized by organizing **three** bilateral meetings in Turkey, with the participation of 5 executives from the Aliens Division of the HPHQ or any other competent national service, in order to examine the implementation of the signed readmission agreements and the settlement of problems related with its implementation.

Additionally, it is planned that **one** bilateral meeting in Iraq will take place with the participation of 5 executives from the Aliens Division of the HPHQ or any other competent national service. The purpose of the meeting will be to examine the possibility of the signature of a new readmission agreement with this country due to increasing number of illegal migrants coming from this country and the delays in issuing travel documents.

The above mentioned action have been programmed to be implemented as follows: a) the bilateral meeting with Turkey will be included in the annual programmes 2008, 2010 and 2012 and b) the bilateral meeting with Iraq in annual programme 2009. The total financing will amount approximately to 40.000,00 €.

- **Bilateral meetings with the consular authorities of the third countries**

This action aims at improving cooperation with the consuls of third countries having the biggest numbers of illegal immigrants in Greece. The action will be implemented by means of bilateral meetings during which the consular representatives of third countries will be given the possibility to discuss with the arrested illegal immigrants and, eventually to recognize their nationality. In addition to the consular authorities present in Greece, the Consuls from countries not represented in Greece will be invited. The meeting will give also the possibility for the immediate issuing of travel documents to

the illegal immigrants whose nationality will be recognised. The issuance of travel documents will take place either at the same time or right after the return of the Consuls to their consulates.

Approximately twelve (12) bilateral meetings per year lasting five days each will be organized in Greece for consular authorities represented in Athens. In addition, 2 members of consular personnel will participate in the meeting from the following consular Authorities:

- Consular Authority of Afghanistan in Brussels (four meetings per year),
- Consular Authority of Bangladesh in Rome (four meetings per year) and
- Dignitaries from Somalia (four meetings per year).

The above mentioned action has been programmed to be implemented by all annual programmes (2008-2013), with total financing of approximately 600.000,00 €.

OBJECTIVE 3: The simplification and the implementation of enforced or assisted returns of third-country nationals who do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry and stay (Requirement 3)
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The scope of the objective

The objective aims at the effective implementation of removal decisions by carrying out enforced or assisted return operations with a view to increasing the credibility and integrity of immigration policies and reducing the period of custody of persons waiting for forced removal. The implementation of this objective is becoming increasingly important in the context of the growing numbers of third countries nationals arrested and issued with removal decisions as shown in the table hereafter.

YEAR	ARRESTED ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS
2004	29.779
2005	40.649
2006	43.159
2007	58.602

Actions under this objective will in particular aim at ensuring that the proper conditions to implement the recent legal and operational developments as regards return at European level are met and seek to guarantee a cost effective and sustainable nature of returns. In the long term, the implementation of the objective should also lead to the simplification of enforced return operations, by establishing more effective procedures and practices for enforced returns.

The target groups of this objective are third-country nationals who do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry and stay in Greece, including also individuals who require special treatment before or during return.

The financial aspects of the actions under this objective will cover expenditure relating to the implementation of enforced/ assisted returns, such as the issuance of travel documents, the purchase of tickets or chartering of planes, the accommodation and food for returnees during the return operations as well as the expenditure related to police escorts accompanying the returnees during the return operations (tickets, food and accommodation in the third country).

Examples of key actions

- **The implementation of return operations by land**

This action aims to implement enforced/assisted return of third country nationals to countries of origin having land borders with Greece. The action has been programmed to be implemented in all annual programmes (2008-2013).

- **The implementation of return operations by regular flights**

This action aims to implement enforced/assisted return of third country nationals to countries of origin where there is the possibility to carry out enforced or assisted with use of the regular flights. The action has been programmed to be implemented in all annual programmes (2008-2013).

- **The implementation of return operations by chartered Flights**

This action aims to implement enforced/assisted return of third country nationals to countries of origin where there are no regular direct air connections, which are not covered under Community or national bilateral readmission agreements, e.g. Iraq, Afghanistan etc or with which cooperation in the field of return is particularly difficult. Such operations will require chartering of planes.

The action has been programmed to be implemented in all annual programmes (2008-2013), with approximately nine charter flights roughly each year, with the exception of the year 2008 (only five charter flights, with main destination to Egypt, Pakistan and Iraq and two other countries depending on the illegal immigrants' nationality).

- **The implementation of return operations for vulnerable groups taking specific needs into consideration**

This action aims to implement enforced return of vulnerable third country nationals having special needs.

The implementation of the objective will require a total financing of approximately 70.712.319,96 €.

3.2. Priority 2: Support for the cooperation between the Member States in return management.

OBJECTIVE 1: The achievement of effective cooperation on returns between Greece and other EU Member States (Requirement 7)

The scope of the objective

For the development and the implementation of integrated return management, Greece will seek to enhance the cooperation on returns with the competent authorities of other Member States through the exchange of best practice and the closer operational collaboration on a bilateral basis as well as in the framework of FRONTEX. The implementation of *joint flights* is in particular considered as important in this context.

Examples of key actions

- **Implementation of joint flights with other EU Member States**

The objective aims at pooling the different skills, experiences and resources of the Member States' Authorities involved in implementing joint flights.

In the framework of this action, Greece will implement several joint flights per year in cooperation with other Member States. For the moment, it is intended that **three (3) joint flights** to Pakistan **will be organize each year** in collaboration with Cyprus, and **one (1) joint flight** in collaboration with Germany **will take place each year** to Nigeria. Each flight will return approximately fifty (50) escorted or not returnees from Greece and a respective number of returnees from the other Member State.

However, it is also possible that joint flights with other Member States will be implemented. This cooperation will depend on the changing flows of illegal immigration in the EU area. It is impossible for the moment to determine the details concerning the joint flights' operation, e.g. the transit airports, the final Member State's airport for the illegal immigrants' destination, etc, because they depend on the agreement with the Member State concerned.

The above mentioned action has been programmed to be implemented in annual programmes 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013, with total financing of approximately 2.000.000,00 €.

3.3. Priority 3: Support for specific innovative (inter)national tools for return management.

OBJECTIVE 1: The introduction of a mechanism for voluntary return and the implementation of voluntary returns including reintegrated measures (Requirement 4)
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The scope of the objective

The objective is to develop a mechanism for voluntary return in Greece in the context of integrated return management and to implement assisted

voluntary returns in the future. The Greek experiences in voluntary returns are limited to some capacity building measures and a few voluntary return operations implemented under the ERF II. In this context, the introduction on a larger scale of voluntary returns and their implementation in Greece should be considered as innovative actions.

It is intended that the programme on voluntary return will ultimately cover all the target groups identified in article 7 (1) (a) (b) and (c) of Decision No 575/2007/EC establishing the European Return Fund:

- (a) all third-country nationals who have not yet received a final negative decision in relation to their request for international protection in a Member State and who may choose to make use of voluntary return, provided they have not acquired a new nationality and have not left the territory of that Member State;
- (b) all third-country nationals enjoying a form of international protection within the meaning of Directive 2004/83/EC, or temporary protection within the meaning of Directive 2001/55/EC in a Member State, and who choose to make use of voluntary return, provided they have not acquired a new nationality and have not left the territory of that Member State;
- (c) all third-country nationals who do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry and/or stay in a Member State and who, in accordance with the obligation to leave the territory of that Member State, make use of voluntary return

The programme on voluntary return will be composed mainly in principle of the following elements:

- information campaign on voluntary return possibilities among the larger population and individual counseling to those interested before their departure
- The implementation of voluntary return operations (logistical preparation of the operation, transport to the countries of origin etc.)
 - short term support measures aiming at the re-integration of returnees such as possible financial start-up support for economic activities or vocational training
 - reception

For the preparation of the programme on voluntary return, Greece would also like to benefit from the knowledge and best practice developed by other Member States on voluntary return.

It is intended that approximately a few hundred returnees will be voluntarily returned per year, mainly to Iraq and Afghanistan as well as to other countries like Soudan, Sri Lanka, Morocco, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Somalia.

Examples of key actions:

- **Capacity building on voluntary returns for the Greek authorities competent in the field of returns.** This action aims to build the expertise of the Aliens Division of the Hellenic Police Headquarters and of the Responsible Authority as regards the organization and the implementation of voluntary return operations. The capacity building will take the form, among others, of study visits to other Member States having more extensive expertise as regards voluntary returns.
- **Information campaigns on the possibilities of voluntary returns** for the target groups. The campaigns will be carried out by means of brochures, posters and radio spots. Posters and brochures will be printed in the most common languages spoken by immigrants residing in Greece. The posters and the brochures will be distributed largely in public places and services and NGOs . The messages in these languages will be broadcasted by the state radio and/or private radio stations. In addition, information actions will be carried out locally in regions with larger populations of third country nationals.
- **A pilot project on individual counseling in selected location for certain target groups**
- **Preparation and implementation of voluntary return operations.** This action will include measures relevant for the preparation and implementation of voluntary returns such as the issuance of travel documents, where needed, the ticketing, escorting to the airport, rendering of services at the transit airports, when there is no direct flight, and transfer to another plane for the final destination.
- **Reception and re-integration measures in the country of origin.** This action will include the following measures: the reception of returnees in their countries, provision of a small re-integration allowance, optional participation in a re-integration program and transport to the final destination in the country of origin.

Timeframe

The objective has been programmed to be implemented in all the annual programmes starting as of 2009, with the exception of the action concerning **capacity building** which will start as of 2008 until 2009, with a total financing of approximately 3.040.000,00 €.

3.4. Priority 4: Support for Community standards and best practices on return management.

OBJECTIVE 1: The promotion of best practice on returns among the Hellenic Police personnel (Requirement 5)

Examples of key actions:

- **The implementation of a training programme for the Hellenic Police personnel in relation to returns**

a. Training on *return procedures* of the illegal immigrants

These courses aim at training the personnel who deal with the return procedure in general and serve in competent Police Services, beginning from the preparation and issue of the return decision until the return of the arrested illegal immigrants. The trained personnel will be familiarized with the National and Community legislation on a theoretical and practical level.

The above training, lasting **two (2)** days, will be carried out in Athens and Thessaloniki and it is expected that **two hundred (200)** personnel, from various competent Police Services, will be trained.

This component of the action has been programmed to be implemented in all annual programmes (2008-2013), with a total financing of approximately 300.000,00 €.

b. Training on *return procedures concerning escorted arrested illegal immigrants*

This action seeks to provide further training of police personnel in effective techniques and to modernize methods concerning the escort of illegal immigrants' to their countries of origin. The police personnel will be trained on issues related to the confrontation of problems arising from the forced return or from the undisciplined behavior of the returnees.

The above training, lasting **two (2)** days, will be carried out in Athens and it is expected that **fifty (50)** personnel, from various competent Police Services, will be trained.

This component of the action has been programmed to be implemented in all annual programmes (2008-2013), with a total financing of approximately 78.000,00 €.

c. Training on *readmission procedures*

These courses aim at training the personnel who deal with the implementation of readmission agreements, concerning the management of the obligations arising from the signature of the above mentioned agreements. The police personnel will be trained on effective methods on implementation of the agreements in order to shorten the detention period of the illegal immigrants.

The above training, lasting **two (2)** days, will be carried out in Athens and it is expected that **fifty (50)** personnel, from various competent Police Services, will be trained.

This component of the action has been programmed to be implemented by all annual programmes (2008-2013), with a total financing of approximately 78.000,00 €.

d. Training on issues related to the protection of potential returnees ' human rights

This action aims at training the police personnel who deal with guarding the arrested illegal immigrants in terms of **protection of their human and fundamental rights**, during their detention period. The above mentioned training will contain issues related to National and Community legislation as well as to the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**, in order for the police personnel to become familiar with the above mentioned obligations.

The above training, lasting **two (2)** days, will be carried out in Athens, in Thessaloniki, in Patra, in Alexandroupoli and in Ioannina and it is expected that **two hundred fifty (250)** personnel, from various competent Police Services, will be trained.

This component of the action has been programmed to be implemented in all annual programmes (2008-2013), with a total financing of approximately 360.000,00 €.

e. Training on the *treatment* of potential vulnerable returnees

These courses aim at training the personnel who deal with vulnerable potential returnees (e.g. minors, persons with special needs, pregnant women etc) concerning special treatment methods in order to be ensure the protection of their human rights.

The above training, lasting **two (2)** days, will be carried out in Athens, in Thessaloniki, in Alexandroupoli, in Dodecanese, in Samos and in Lesvos and it is expected that **two hundred forty (240)** personnel, from various competent Police Services, will be trained.

This component of the action has been programmed to be implemented in all annual programmes (2008-2013), with a total financing of approximately 420.000,00 €.

- **Publication of handbooks concerning return procedures**

In order to ensure the implementation of an integrated return management, the publication of a handbook-guide is considered to be extremely important. This will include an analysis and explanation of the return process, the National and Community legislation as well as description of the competent national authorities concerning the return procedures. It will be distributed to all police authorities who are dealing with the returns.

Approximately **fifteen thousand (15.000)** handbooks – guides will be issued in order to be distributed to all police authorities who are dealing with the return of illegal immigrants.

The above mentioned action has been programmed to be implemented in the annual programme 2009, with a total financing of approximately 30.000,00 €.

4. COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER INSTRUMENTS

An indication of how this strategy is compatible with other regional, national and Community instruments

4.1. The development of the multiannual programme

All the objectives described under the priorities that are planned to be implemented under the Fund, follow on from national actions taken for the same reasons at central, regional and local level.

The actions to be implemented complement and follow on from actions taken under the national ordinary budget of the Hellenic Police as well as under Community Programmes which have been and are being implemented under the European Refugee Fund II, regarding the implementation of voluntary returns. The knowledge and experience gained from implementing operational programmes under the 3rd Community Support Framework, INTERREG II and III, EQUAL and ARGO were also applied. Particular attention was paid when drafting the multiannual programme to the results of the implemented actions in the framework of the Community Initiative EQUAL and of the joint European operations, programmed and coordinated by Frontex, in the field of the integrated return management.

Specifically, via the Community Initiative EQUAL has been financed the printing of handy booklets in six (6) languages, which describe the process of asylum and the applicant asylum's rights.

The preparation and the finalisation of the booklets' text in the applicant asylum's basic languages (Greek, English, French, Turkish, Iranian, Arabic), have been drafted with the collaboration of the Hellenic Police and the UNHCR.

These booklets were printed out by the Printing-house of the Hellenic Police in 75.000 copies and were distributed in the Services of the Hellenic Police in order to be covered the needs of the particular target group (asylum seekers).

Hellenic Police Headquarters has also been implementing various projects co-financed from operational programmes under the 2nd and 3rd Community Support Frameworks since 1995 and particular attention was therefore paid when preparing the multiannual and annual programmes to applying the knowledge and experience gained in order to include the best practices developed when planning the programmes.

As such, and given that the application of the provisions of the European Return Fund depends on cohesion with projects defined mainly in Objectives of the European Social Fund, the strategy developed within the framework of the European Return Fund is compatible with the objectives of the European Union Structural Funds (mainly of the European Social Fund), being pursued through sectoral and regional operational programmes in the 2007-2013 financial period.

In order to be ensured the above mentioned compatibility : 1) were taken into consideration, for drafting the multiannual program, the general

axes of the approved European programs in Greece in the framework of the Structural Funds, which describe the fields of their actions and interventions, which will be implemented during the period 2007-2013 and **2)** the final approved multiannual program of the R.F. will be transmitted to the Managing Authorities of, **the related to the objectives of the R.F.**, rest Community programs of the National Strategic Reference Framework (N.S.R.F.), which are financed by the Structural Funds of the European Union for the financing period 2007-2013.

4.2. The implementation of voluntary returns in regard with ERF II

Voluntary repatriation is carried out, for the moment, in the framework of the European Refugee Fund. The Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity has assigned, since the establishment of the European Refugee Fund in 2005, the implementation of the relevant programme to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), given that no other body has ever submitted a proposal regarding the realization of a repatriation programme.

The aim of the programme was the establishment of the necessary mechanisms and procedures for the secure, smooth and decent assisted return of the persons of the target group in Greece, wishing to return to their homeland. The smooth re-integration in the country of origin is carried out with the cooperation of the Organization's missions at different places which realize social re-integration programmes.

More specifically:

- Preparation of the target group before their departure, information and advice services.
- Assistance regarding the issue of travel documents and the covering of the transfer expenses.
- Re-integration activities in the country of origin.

In order to achieve the final aim the necessary following stages are to be realized in advance:

1. Information campaign by means of brochures:

A widely ranging information campaign in the target group with a view to publish the programme and to have persons being interested in returning to their homeland.

2. Attending meetings:

Personalized information provided by means of meetings to persons wishing to return to their homeland.

3. Voluntary repatriation :

Realization of the voluntary return to the target group's homeland and social re-integration, training and professional rehabilitation of the repatriated persons by means of a re-integration mechanism with the cooperation of the various offices of the Organization.

Until today have been implemented voluntary returns, through the ERF II of the years 2005, 2006 and 2007 which is materialized at the present time period (ending 31/12/2008).

The voluntary returns will be implemented by the Return Fund, as the continuation of those which have been implemented in the framework of ERF II, with almost the same approach, as it is presented to the proposed action (Priority 3 – Objective 4).

5. FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

5.1. The publication of the programme

The multiannual programme will be published on the official website of the Ministry of Interior/ Hellenic Police as and when it is approved.

Publication of the objectives and instruments of the European Return Fund is designed to:

- inform public opinion in general about the role played by the European Union and the Greek authorities in the programme and the results of its implementation;
- inform the public in general at central and regional level about the objectives, aims, priorities and actions of the Fund and the level of EC co-financing through a selection of communication and promotional actions;
- guarantee actions under the programme are visible by providing a full range of information for all social agencies.

5.2. The approach chosen to implement the principle of partnership

The multiannual programme was prepared together by all the concerned services of the Ministry of Interior/ Hellenic Police Headquarters. In addition, the preparation took into account the actions concerning voluntary returns implemented in the framework of ERF II and the contribution of the International Organization for Migration to the implementation of the above mentioned action. In this context, the Responsible Authority for the Return Fund held discussions and meetings with the executives of the Responsible Authority of ERF II as well as with the executives of IOM.

In addition, after the beginning of the Responsible Authority's functioning, a coordinative body, named the Monitoring Committee, will be established. It will bring together the high level representatives of the Ministry of Interior/Hellenic Police. In the above mentioned Monitoring Committee will participate, among others, representatives of the IOM, in order to be expressed the aspects of the specific Organization.

The Monitoring Committee, among other tasks, will examine and approve the actions proposed for financing in the annual programmes before their submission to the European Commission and it will ensure an overall monitoring of the implementation of the Fund in Greece.

It has to be underlined that the Responsible Authority, which is in charge of daily management of the Fund, could also consult in the future other stakeholders relevant for the implementation of the Fund.

6. INDICATIVE FINANCING PLAN

6.1 Community Contribution

6.1.1. Table

Multiannual Programme – Draft Financial Plan Table 1: Community Contribution							
Member State : GREECE							
Fund : EUROPEAN RETURN FUND							
(in euros – current prices)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	TOTAL
Priority 1 :	5.109.892,00	6.455.847,00	6.754.500,00	9.987.500,00	15.097.500,00	18.225.500,00	61.630.739,98
Priority 2 :	0	300.000,00	300.000,00	300.000,00	300.000,00	300.000,00	1.500.000,00
Priority 3 :	15.000,00	465.000,00	450.000,00	450.000,00	450.000,00	450.000,00	2.280.000,00
Priority 4 :	154.500,00	177.000,00	154.500,00	154.500,00	154.500,00	154.500,00	949.500,00
Technical Assistance :	100.000,00	100.000,00	100.000,00	100.000,00	100.000,00	100.000,00	600.000,00
TOTAL :	5.379.392,00	7.497.847,00	7.759.000,00	10.992.000,00	16.102.000,00	19.230.000,00	66.960.239,98

6.1.2. Comments on the figures/trends

The budgets given for 2008 and 2009 have been adequately determined in accordance with Commission documents SOLID/2007/15/REV 2 (July 2008) and SOLID/2007/13. The budgets for 2010 to 2013 have been estimated in accordance with Commission document SOLID/2007/25, as the precise budgets for these years have not yet been

determined. The national contribution (viz. 25%) must be covered by the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Economy and Finance, through the Public Investment Programme or perhaps the ordinary budget. **The technical assistance is financed at 100 % by Community Contribution** and the above amounts concern only the European Return Fund and not the External Borders Fund. However, some of the above mentioned amounts of the technical assistance of the RF and some amounts of the technical assistance of the EBF are intended for the Responsible Authority's' expenses, which will be common for the two Funds.

6.2 Overall financing plan

6.2.1. Table

Multiannual Programme – Draft Financial Plan Table 2: Overall Financing							
Member State : GREECE							
Fund : EUROPEAN RETURN FUND							
(in euros – current prices)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	TOTAL
Community Contribution	5.379.392,00	7.497.847,00	7.759.000,00	10.992.000,00	16.102.000,00	19.230.000,00	66.960.239,00
Public co financing	1.759.797,00	2.465.949,00	2.553.000,00	3.630.666,00	5.334.000,00	6.376.666,00	22.120.079,00
Private co financing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	7.139.190,00	9.963.796,00	10.312.000,00	14.622.666,00	21.436.000,00	25.606.666,00	89.080.319,00
% Community Contribution	75,35 %	75,25 %	75,24 %	75,17 %	75,11 %	75,09 %	75,16 %

6.2.2. Comments on the figures/trends

The budgets given for 2008 and 2009 have been adequately determined in accordance with Commission documents SOLID/2007/15/REV 2 (July 2008) and SOLID/2007/13. The budgets for 2010 to 2013 have been estimated in accordance with Commission document SOLID/2007/25, as the precise budgets for these years have not yet been determined. The national contribution (viz. 25%) must be covered by the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Economy and Finance, through the Public Investment Programme or perhaps the ordinary budget.

THE DIRECTOR OF THE FINANCE DIVISION-

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY

ANASTASIOS KANTZILIERIS

GENERAL

HEAD OF THE

POLICE BRIGADIER