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ANNEX 3

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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL**

**Managing the refugee crisis: State of Play of the Implementation of the Priority Actions  
under the European Agenda on Migration**

## **Annex 3: Italy – State of Play report from 11 October 2015**

### **I. Hotspots**

#### **What has been done**

1. The Italian authorities opened the first hotspot in Lampedusa two weeks ago. The hotspot is fully operational with the presence of both EASO and Frontex. Fingerprinting compliance in the hotspot has been increasing, even though migrants continue in several cases to resist fingerprinting.
2. All the other hotspots have already been identified. Most can start working in the coming weeks. Two of them, Taranto and Augusta, will be operational only by the end of 2015.
3. In all hotspots, the core presence foreseen is 10 Frontex fingerprinters, 2 debriefing teams and 2 screening teams, alongside a team of 3 EASO experts for information provision. The ongoing calls by Frontex and EASO should allow all needs in all hotspots to be covered, provided that MS commit a sufficient number of experts.
4. An EU Regional Task Force (EURTF) has already been working in Catania since July and is fully operational with the presence of all Agencies. However there is a need to better integrate the work of Europol in the hotspot concept, in particular to enhance exchange of information from Italian Public Prosecution officers and law enforcement to Europol.
5. In order to support the full functioning of the hotspot approach, the Italian authorities are currently gathering their needs into one comprehensive needs assessment, to ask for a package of support from European Funds. A dedicated technical meeting with the Commission is foreseen for 16 October.

#### **What remains to be done**

1. The remaining hotspots need to be made operational on schedule in order to ensure the full functioning of the system and relieve pressure on Lampedusa. The situation of inflow and outflow needs to be constantly monitored to assess any possible need for further hotspots.
2. Italy should ensure full use of the existing detention capacity to ensure compliance with the rules on identification and should open further places in detention centres to provide the capacity needed for an effective identification and return process.
3. Member States should ensure the immediate availability of experts for the calls issued by Frontex and EASO. Such experts should be available for long term deployments to be as operational as possible.
4. Italy should consider reforms of existing norms concerning detention, to ensure that longer-term detention is possible where this is essential for identification to be completed in difficult cases.
5. The Italian authorities should issue further guidance on the proportionate use of force in cases where migrants refuse identification, on the basis of the indications issued by the Commission.

6. To ensure the swift transfer of migrants from the hotspot areas to the second-line reception facilities, or to detention facilities, the Commission is likely to be asked soon for logistical support, through the mobilization of a dedicated ECHO Framework Contract for plane chartering.

## **II. Return**

### **What has been done**

1. The Italian authorities have invested significant resources in the field of return and the procedure is now well established in many cases (Egyptians, Tunisians). Since the beginning of the year, 72 return flights have been organized.
2. Italy is currently negotiating with several Sub Saharan countries operational agreements to ensure swift return of third country nationals (particularly in Western Africa). An agreement has been reached already with Gambia, while others have been proposed to other Third Countries. Cooperation with Nigeria has also been enhanced.
3. Italy participates in joint flights organised by Frontex on a regular basis.

### **What remains to be done**

1. Italy should enhance its efforts to return irregular migrants from Sub Saharan countries. The Commission and the EEAS should support the Italian authorities to conclude operational agreements with Sub Saharan countries in order to ensure an efficient and effective return of irregular migrants. This can include the provision of financial support to cooperation on readmission between Italy and Sub-Saharan countries.
2. Italy should establish a framework contract for long-haul return flights (Sub Saharan Africa) which require tendering above 250.000 EUR. The Commission may support such flights and Frontex return flights could also be used to this end.
3. Italy should ensure swift processing of asylum applications which are clearly an attempt to frustrate return efforts. This could be achieved by ensuring dedicated processing capacity for such cases. The possible reform of suspensive appeals for manifestly unfounded cases could also be considered.
4. Italy should provide Frontex and the Commission with a clear assessment of needs in the field of return in time for the technical meeting on 16 October 2016.
5. Frontex joint return flights should wherever appropriate ensure stopovers in Italy, in particular flights to Sub Saharan countries.

## **III. Relocation**

### **What has been done**

1. A first relocation flight to Sweden of 19 Eritreans has taken place on 9 October. The flight is the tangible expression of the fact that procedures are now in place for the roll out of the relocation system.
2. Italy has identified dedicated centres for persons who are eligible for relocation. One in Villa Sikania is already operational, with EASO staff available to undertake the

relocation interviews. Two others in Crotona and Bari need to be made operational without delay.

3. Meetings with the Liaison Officers in Rome and with the other European Dublin Units have been organised together with the Commission in order to facilitate the procedure and explain to all Member States the technicalities of the process.
4. In order to ensure the absorption of the existing backlog, EASO teams have been deployed in the main transit cities (Rome and Milan) to support the Italian authorities with the registration of the applicants for relocation.
5. EASO has launched a call for experts to reinforce the Italian Dublin Unit (10 experts requested – 3 deployed so far and 2 to be deployed soon).
6. A dedicated circular has been issued to all Italian Prefecturas to inform them of the start of the relocation process and ensure awareness throughout Italy, before individuals approach the authorities.

### **What remains to be done**

1. All Member States should provide details of how many relocation places they will provide to the end of the year. The pledges should be initially limited in order to allow a gradual increase of the transfers before reaching cruising speed.
2. Italy should ensure that the relocation procedure first applied with Sweden is now crystallized into standard operating procedures followed throughout the territory and should reinforce its Dublin Unit in order to allow the swift roll-out of the process.
3. Italy should establish a dedicated database in the Dublin Unit in order to support the matching procedure and ensure the swift roll out of the IT adjournments needed.
4. Italy should open the remaining two centres identified for relocation and EASO should swiftly deploy experts there.
5. Italy with the support of EASO and UNCHR should develop information targeting potential persons to be relocated. The Commission could support this effort, for example by financing a pool of dedicated cultural mediators.
6. Member States should consider preparing dedicated information kits to be provided to identified relocation candidates.

### **IV. Medium term actions**

Italy should consider as a matter of priority possible ways to increase the overall efficiency of its asylum procedure in order to ensure swift treatment of people who are not eligible for relocation and to ensure consistency of decisions. This could include also the appeal system in order to streamline it and achieve faster decisions at second instance.

Italy should also consider how to ensure a more uniform quality of reception conditions throughout the territory in order to build on the good practices existing in several regions and extending them to other areas.