

NATIONAL  
STAKEHOLDER  
REPORT

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# MIGRATION

Migration-related conditionality  
in EU external funding





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The **National stakeholder reports** aim at taking the academic debate provided by the ReSOMA discussion briefs to the national level throughout the EU. For each topic, a **structured feedback process** has been implemented in a number of Member States where the issue at hand is most relevant in terms of current developments and upcoming trends. Leading experts discussed the **possible consequences of evolving (or lacking) EU policies for the Member State**, and the **country's role in shaping the EU agenda**. These feedback loops enabled researchers, practitioners and policy-makers to exchange experiences and strategies to face issues related to migration, asylum and integration matters.

## LINGUISTIC VERSION

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## National stakeholder report

# Migration-related conditionality in EU external funding\*

## Migration-related Conditionality in EU External Funding

In the last few years, a set of “hybrid” financial instruments has been established as a key instrument to address the perceived “refugee crisis.” It involves combining EU and member states’ contributions for development funds, namely EU Trust Funds for external action (EUTFs). Recent examples are the [Madad Fund](#) in response to the Syrian crisis (established in 2014) and the [EUTF for Africa](#) (established in 2015). These financial instruments have been accompanied by the launch of new platforms of cooperation with relevant partner countries, such as the EU-Turkey statement concluded in March 2016 and the new “partnership framework” with targeted countries in Africa and the Middle East.

There is a continuity between these new initiatives and earlier practices that fall into the so-called “migration-development nexus” and, from a preventive approach, combine the improvement of socio-economic conditions in countries of origin with the fight against irregular migration.<sup>1</sup> These initiatives lead to positive or negative conditionalities depending on the level of cooperation of the countries of origin and transit. Additionally, [Ask the](#)

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<sup>1</sup> See ReSOMA Ask the Expert Brief on migration and the ReSOMA Synthetic state of the art policy brief on EU conditionality, 2018.

[Expert policy brief on migration](#) shows that conditionality approach has its limits. Naturally there is no one-size-fits-all. Their effects change according to the degree of interdependency between third countries and the EU as well as the incentives offered by the EU that are embedded in quite fragile regional and domestic dynamics.

## Stakeholder outreach and feedback

This report reaches out to stakeholders from a variety of countries where the migration-related conditionality has been a concern. It provides an overview and analysis of the feedback provided by these stakeholders in relation to the strengths and limitations of conditionality that have been developed in earlier [ReSOMA publications](#). This involves the following countries:

- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Italy
- Spain

In each of these countries, between 6 and 10 stakeholders were consulted (see appendix for a full but anonymized overview). This includes policy actors working at the national as well as the local level, NGOs working in the social field and ex-



perts from the various national contexts with specific topic of the consultation. In many cases, the consultation took the form of an individual interview (via Skype or Gotomeeting); in several cases where this was seen as appropriate, the consultation took a form of a virtual meeting with several stakeholders at the same time, allowing for interaction on specific topics. The consultations followed a standardized template and were implemented by experts with access to networks in the selected countries. For this report, this involved the European University Institute (Italy, Germany and Greece), UPF-Barcelona (Spain, France) and the Institute for Minority Studies of the HAS Centre for Social Sciences (Hungary). Based on reports of the stakeholder consultations, this stakeholder outreach report was compiled by the ReSOMA team of Erasmus University Rotterdam.

The consultations focused on three topics that emerged as central from the [Ask the Expert policy briefs](#) and the synthetic state of the art report on migration-related conditionality in EU external funding. These three topics include:

- *Perceptions of migration-related conditionality*: What are the stakeholders' views regarding the EU's initiatives on migration-related conditionalities in external funding?
- *National debates and practices related to conditionality*: To what extent does member states introduce such conditionalities in external funding? Which actors are involved and how?
- *Importance of available information*: What are the stakeholders' view on availability of comprehensive infor-

mation regarding how relevant legal rules and procedures are applied in practice (implementation gaps) or informative statistics and numerical data on EU external funding instruments currently available? Do they consider it important to have such information?

## **Perceptions of migration-related conditionality**

Across six countries, stakeholders show their concerns for border protection becoming the sole purpose of third country funding which would make asylum seekers more vulnerable to violations of human rights. Yet there are opposing views on how to prevent possible violations.

On the one hand, governmental actors in Hungary and Germany as well as some Greek and French NGOs underline that financial support on third countries may help capacity building for migration governance but this requires further transparency in the whole process. On the other hand, several NGOs and migration experts in Germany, Italy, Spain and France underline that if development funds are used mainly for border management, this would lead to the conclusion that migration is the problem. For them, to avoid this trap, the main goal should be fostering development in the countries of origin.

Yet there is no clear answer to what is meant by development in third countries. Especially NGOs and IOs in Italy, Germany and Spain remind that fostering economic development in certain areas would not automatically decrease migration levels from those particular areas. One stakeholder from Spain explained this with the example of Senegal being



more developed than Burkino Faso but Senegalese people emigrating much more. Some Italian NGOs working in the social field also express their suspicion towards the type of development EU wants to foster with external funding. Similarly, in one German migration expert's opinion, conditionality would be successful only if they are designed as bilateral cooperation agreements from which both the EU countries and the third countries equally benefit.

*"The African countries are not getting sufficient rewards for the service they are providing." (German NGO)*

As some German and French NGOs stress, economic relations between the EU countries and their third country partners require fundamental structural changes, such as stopping selling arms to to conflict-ridden regions in Africa. Otherwise, in stead of tackling the root causes of migration through external funding, conditionality would continue to "fund the flee causes."

## **National debates and practices related to conditionality**

In the six countries consulted, there has not been much public debate either on external funding in general or migration-relation conditionality. As underlined by one stakeholder from France, this seems related to lack of available information on national governments involvement in EU level instruments. Different stakeholders across several countries at least state that they have heard of funding for Niger. One Italian NGO mention Chad as well as Niger when asked about Italy's implementation of conditionality. A Hungarian

government representative speaks highly of external funding as a "competitive business" and specifically refers to Niger as an important target for Hungary. A German NGO also underline how suddenly Niger became so central for resettlement from Libya whereas until recently it was completely out of the range of EU funds.

In general, it seems that conditionality is either not completely embraced by officials at the national level or practiced in unproductive ways. According to one Hungarian NGO consulted, the Hungarian government acts quite inconsistently because she is an insignificant donor in practice with a pro-external funding rhetoric. In France, officials say that seeing the impossibility for third countries to cope with objectives of migration control, the government abandoned conditionality in policy practices.

*"We look at cooperation and development with African countries through old stereotypes. That makes it difficult to enhance the autonomy of these countries." (Italian NGO)*

Most NGOs reached out state that they are not involved in such funding and development activities in third countries. If they do, as one IO representative active in Italy says, they find themselves forced to choose either to do border control or to leave. The only exception is IOM/IT and its transnational "diaspora mobilization" project that supports entrepreneurs with a migration background to develop business relations with their country of origin in stead of offering directly external funding to third countries.



## Importance of available information

Many stakeholders in all six countries show hesitation to comment on this. The main reason is that this topic requires expert knowledge for even finding the right kind of information to make sense of the scope of external funding, let alone its relationship to migration control.

*"If you look for the information you will find it, but it is very complicated, you must have special knowledge." (German NGO)*

Especially NGOs working in the social field emphasize the importance of transparency. Next to the issue of how the funding is allocated at the EU or national level, NGOs see it even more necessary to have a clear picture of how the allocated funding is actually used in the third countries. Data collection on expulsions is another field in which transparency is key. This is especially mentioned by several stakeholders from Spain where police pushbacks in Ceuta and Melilla are highly contested and criticized by civil society organizations but are not possible to have a complete picture due to lack of clear and accessible information.

Furthermore, a common problem with funds targeting migration is the flexibility of its range of implementation. Apparently this makes it very hard to calculate the impacts of available funds that are used for various purposes and by different stakeholders, from national governments to local NGOs. As some French stakeholders underline, bilateral agreements with third countries require even closer examination with the expertise of differ-

ent policy areas. Related to this last point, some NGOs across several countries also stress that the main problem for them is not lack of data but lack of analysis of the existing information in order to understand and explain the impact and further implications of EU external funding instruments in an accessible way.

## Conclusion

Migration-related conditionality is an issue area that is tackled more at the EU level than at the national level of policy making. For that reason, especially NGOs working in the social field have limited opinion and they mostly form their opinion based on mediated knowledge instead of first hand experience in the field.

Two key observations can be drawn from the feedback provided by stakeholders that are relevant for future policies:

- Especially NGOs have diverse opinions on the use of development funds for migration-related projects. While some NGOs in Hungary and Greece are not at all against the idea of using EU funding for migration management capacity building in third countries, it is widely accepted that there is not much to be gained from such conditional fund schemes in terms of substantive and sustainable development goals. In other words, development in third countries is seen as a separate field which has to be shaped with the involvement of different actors, such as diaspora or local societal organizations. This is proven by the fact that only IOM/IT's diaspora mobilization project is mentioned as a sustainable example.



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- Lack of information aggregated at the national level is one reason why there is not enough public debate on the relationship between funding and migration-related conditionality. Along these lines, gathering more information and making available knowledge accessible to larger public are seen equally

important to facilitate informed public debate and advocacy work.



## Appendix I: Consulted stakeholders

Country	City	Institution
France	Nantes	Expert
France	Paris	Coordination Sud
France	Paris	CERI-CNRS
France	Paris	Expert-Advocate
France	Paris	Expert
France	Paris	Forum réfugiés
Germany	Hannover	Lower Saxony Refugee Council
Germany	Berlin	Office of a member of Parliament
Germany	Berlin	Jesuit Refugee Service Germany (JRS)
Germany	Berlin	German Diakonie
Germany	Kiel	Medibüro
Germany	Gütersloh	Bertelsmann Stiftung
Germany	Berlin	University of Berlin
Greece	Athens	Solidarity Now
Greece	Athens	Norwegian Refugee Council
Greece	Athens	Ministry of Migration Policy
Greece	Athens	Danish Refugee Council
Greece	Athens, Thessaloni- niki	Diotima Centre for Research on Women Issues
Greece	Athens	Babel Day Centre for Migrants' Mental Health
Greece	Thessaloniki	Association for the Social Support of Youth (ARSIS)
Greece	Athens	Greek Council for Refugees
Hungary	Budapest	IOM Hungary
Hungary	Budapest	National Police Headquarters
Hungary	Budapest	Menedék Association
Hungary	Budapest	Menedék Association
Hungary	Budapest	Prime Minister's Office
Hungary	Budapest	Hungarian Helsinki Committee
Hungary	Budapest	UNHCR Regional Representation
Hungary	Budapest	Metropolitan Municipality of Budapest
Hungary	Budapest	Central Statistical Office
Italy	Rome	Civico Zero
Italy	Rome	IOM Italy
Italy	Rome	Caritas
Italy	Palermo	Centro Astalli
Italy	Bergamo	CESVI
Italy	Rome	"Victims of Torture Programs"- Médecins Sans Frontières
Italy	Milan	NAGA
Italy	Udine	SIMM
Italy	Rome	UNAR and Università la Sapienza
Spain	Barcelona	In Strategies
Spain	Murcia	Cepaim Foundation
Spain	Brussels	EU affairs adviser Autonomous Region of Catalonia
Spain	Barcelona	Barcelona Municipality
Spain	Madrid	ACCEM foundation
Spain	Madrid	ACCEM foundation
Spain	Barcelona	General directorship of equality migration citizenship. Au- tonomous Region of Catalonia



### ReSOMA - Research Social Platform on Migration and Asylum

is a project funded under the Horizon 2020 Programme that aims at creating a platform for regular collaboration and exchange between Europe's well-developed networks of migration researchers, stakeholders and practitioners to foster evidence-based policymaking. Being a Coordination and Support Action (CSA), ReSOMA is meant to communicate directly with policy makers by providing ready-to-use evidence on policy, policy perceptions and policy options on migration, asylum and integration gathered among researchers, stakeholders and practitioners.

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