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From: Secretary-General of the European Commission,
signed by Mr Jordi AYET PUIGARNAU, Director

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To: Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM-MIKKELSEN, Secretary-General of the Council of
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PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL
Sixth Report on the Progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey
Statement

Delegations will find attached document COM(2017) 323 final - ANNEX 1.

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ANNEX 1

ANNEX

to the

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

Sixth Report on the Progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement

Joint Action Plan on the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement

Priority actions	Current status and outstanding actions ¹
<p>Increasing the deployment of asylum processing staff at the islands</p>	<p><i>The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) to increase the number of caseworkers and interpreters at the islands to 100 respectively, and the Greek Asylum Service to increase its staff at the islands to 100.</i></p> <p>85 EASO case workers and 97 EASO interpreters are deployed on the islands as of 9 June. Member States are encouraged to enhance their efforts to reach and maintain the objective of 100 EASO case workers deployed on the islands (there had been 107 case workers in March 2017).</p> <p>117 members of the Greek Asylum Service are currently deployed on the islands.</p>
<p>Processing the Dublin family reunification cases</p>	<p><i>The Greek Asylum Service to examine, on a case by case basis and in full respect of Article 7 of the EU Fundamental Rights Charter the application of the inadmissibility procedure to Dublin family reunification cases with a view to their possible return to Turkey, subject to having received from EASO and Member States relevant information.</i></p> <p>The Greek Asylum Service has drafted a relevant legislative provision, which allows for the asylum seekers applying for family reunification under the Dublin III Regulation not to be exempted of the border procedure. The submission of the draft to the Parliament is pending.</p> <p>In parallel, EASO sent a second query to the Member States to provide the Greek Asylum Service with more information about family reunification from/to Turkey and the documentation requested from applicants in order to apply this procedure.</p>
<p>Processing the vulnerability cases</p>	<p><i>The Greek Asylum Service to examine, on a case by case basis and in full respect of Articles 6 and 7 of the EU Fundamental Rights Charter the application of the inadmissibility procedure to vulnerable applicant cases with a view to their possible return to Turkey, subject to receiving from EASO relevant information, particularly as regards the treatment of vulnerable persons in Turkey, which would enable the above mentioned examination.</i></p> <p>The Greek Asylum Service considers that vulnerable groups should remain exempted from the border procedure, taking into consideration the relevant provisions of the Asylum Procedures Directive, as well as the fact that examining asylum applications of vulnerable applicants within the context of the especially accelerated procedure provided by the relevant national law does not sufficiently ensure the special procedural guarantees (e.g. objective inadequacy of medical and psychiatric services) that vulnerable groups should benefit from.</p> <p>However, the Greek Asylum Service suggests that, when the different vulnerability categories are better defined and the vulnerability assessment is conducted by the Greek Registration and Identification Service with the use of a standardised template, providing concrete information on the applicant's medical profile, the examination of the admissibility for some vulnerable applicants could take place on the islands, but</p>

¹ A short summary of the relevant actions is included in italics. For the specific details please revert to the Joint Action Plan annexed to the Fourth Report on the Progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement (COM(2016) 792 final of 8 December 2016).

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	<p>with regular procedure deadlines.</p> <p>The Greek Reception and Identification Service and the Greek Ministry of Health are expected to finalise a vulnerability template which will be used for the vulnerability screening shortly.</p>
<p>Speeding up the interviews and procedures for the assessment of asylum applications</p>	<p><i>The Greek Asylum Service with support of EASO to introduce segmentation by case categories, interview and decision support tools. The Greek Reception and Identification Service, with the support of EASO, to continue to inform migrants. The authorities to strengthen the enforcement of foreseen consequences of non-cooperation in the asylum process. The Greek authorities with the support of EASO to reduce the time lapse between the expression of interest to apply for asylum and the lodging of the application.</i></p> <p><u>Asylum process support tools:</u></p> <p>EASO shared the final version of the Standard Operation Procedures for the border procedure, together with an updated template for interviews (merged interview), vulnerability assessment and concluding remarks, with the Greek Asylum Service on 31 March.</p> <p>Merged workflow interviews for migrants from countries of high asylum recognition rate take currently place in all the Regional Asylum Units/Asylum Units.</p> <p>EASO has produced three scripts providing general guidance for the conduct of interviews of the top three nationalities apart from Syrians (Pakistan, Iraq and Afghanistan) and shared them with the Greek Asylum Service.</p> <p><u>Information for migrants:</u></p> <p>The information point is operational again in Lesvos since 22 May, after several months of inactivity due to works in the Moria hotspot. In Chios, the information point is operational since the end of September 2016. Both structures are successful, providing crucial access to information for the residents of the hotspots.</p> <p>In Samos, Kos and Leros, similar services have to be implemented by the Greek Reception and Identification Service as soon as possible.</p> <p><u>Time lapse between the expression of interest to apply for asylum and the lodging of the application:</u></p> <p>The current time lapse between the expression of interest to apply for asylum and the actual lodging of the application does not exceed two weeks on average in any hotspot.</p> <p><u>Consequences of non-cooperation in the asylum process:</u></p> <p>The issuance of automated reports to the relevant stakeholders now allows for the implementation of the consequences of non-cooperation in the asylum process (see the paragraph '<i>limiting the risk of absconding</i>' below).</p>
<p>Maintaining and further accelerating the</p>	<p>The finalisation of the Standard Operating Procedures for the abovementioned border procedure will further assist the scheduling and processing speed. In addition, a joint</p>

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eligibility procedure for applicants from countries of origin with low recognition rates	operational meeting between EASO and the Greek Asylum Service took place on 12 May, in order to discuss several procedural issues, including scheduling and processing speed.
Improving the security and safety arrangements on the islands	<p><i>The Hellenic Police to increase the 24/7 presence of police officers in the hotspots. The Greek Reception and Identification Service with support of the Hellenic Police to increase controls at the entrances and patrolling at the hotspots, and to increase the security infrastructure. The Hellenic Police in cooperation with the Greek Reception and Identification Service to produce and test security and evacuation plans for the hotspots. The Greek Reception and Identification Service to increase the security infrastructure at the hotspots. The Greek authorities to continue providing safe areas for vulnerable groups.</i></p> <p>In Leros and Kos, platoons of anti-riot police are now deployed outside the hotspots.</p> <p>In Lesbos, the Hellenic Police officers perform security checks at the entrances of the hotspot and patrols.</p> <p>Nevertheless, additional Hellenic Police officers would contribute to better control of entry/exit points and patrolling inside the hotspots. The Greek Reception and Identification Service, in cooperation with EASO, is looking into establishing electronic entry/exit control systems at all hotspots.</p> <p>Surveillance and security in the dedicated areas for unaccompanied minors in the hotspots also needs to be improved, especially in Samos.</p> <p>The Hellenic Police has finalised evacuation plans regarding all islands. They will be sent to the Commission for official translation before being distributed to the key stakeholders on the islands.</p>
Appointing permanent coordinators for the hotspots	<p><i>The Greek authorities to appoint permanent coordinators and adopt Standard Operating Procedures for the hotspots.</i></p> <p>The permanent coordinators have been officially inaugurated on 18 February and officially assumed their tasks on 20 February 2017.</p> <p>Following consultation with the concerned stakeholders, the draft Standard Operating Procedures have been finalised and, after translation, will be circulated to all actors concerned.</p>
Increasing the number of Appeal Committees	12 Appeal Committees are currently operational, supplemented by an alternate Committee.
Increasing the number of decisions per Appeal Committee	<p>The legislative amendment to allow for the use of legal assistance in drafting decisions was adopted by the Greek Parliament on 15 March and published at the Government Gazette on 29 March. The Appeal Committees are currently assisted by 22 rapporteurs: 10 staff of the Appeal Authority who assumed their tasks in the beginning of April and 12 rapporteurs deployed by EASO, who assumed their tasks following training in mid-April.</p> <p>On 8 May, the Council of State Plenary confirmed the constitutionality of the Appeal</p>

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	<p>Committees.</p> <p>Despite those developments, the number of second-instance decisions delivered by the Appeal Committees remains low.</p>
Limiting the number of appeal steps in the context of the asylum process	<p><i>The Greek authorities to explore the possibility to limit the number of appeal steps.</i></p> <p>Following the recent Council of State decisions clarifying the constitutionality of the current composition of the Appeal Committees, the Greek authorities will explore the legal possibility and practical merit of limiting the number of appeal steps.</p>
Maintaining European Border and Coast Guard deployments at the necessary levels	<p><i>The European Border and Coast Guard to respond quickly to demands for additional deployments and transportation means required by an increase in return operations, on the basis of accurate needs assessment by the Greek authorities.</i></p> <p>Member States and the European Border and Coast Guard are responding appropriately to requests for deployments and transportation means for ongoing return operations.</p> <p>Readmission operations by ferry are technically possible from Lesbos, Chios and Kos. Officers from the pool of forced return escorts of the European Border and Coast Guard are permanently deployed in Lesbos only (around 50-60). Escort officers may be deployed to Chios and Kos, following an official request from Greece at least 21 working days prior to the start of the deployment/operation. In order to ensure a sound management of the available resources, the possible deployment of Member States' escorts to regularly carry out readmissions directly from the other Greek islands will have to be carefully assessed in close liaison with the Greek authorities, taking into account the number of possible migrants and expected frequency of the operations.</p> <p>The Head of the Return Support Unit of the European Border and Coast Guard met the Hellenic Police Readmission Office on 25 May to agree on future support of island-to-island transportations of migrants.</p>
Limiting the risk of absconding	<p><i>The Greek authorities to keep a clear and accurate system of registration and case follow-up on all irregular migrants in order to facilitate the planning and carrying out of return procedures, introduce an electronic case follow-up system and continue to enforce the geographical restriction for migrants present on the hotspot islands.</i></p> <p>The Greek authorities are currently applying geographical restriction of movements to newly arrived migrants and asylum applicants who, as a consequence, are not allowed to leave the island where they arrived.</p> <p>Automated reports, designed by the Hellenic Police IT department in collaboration with the Greek Asylum Service, are currently operational. The relevant stakeholders (the Hellenic Police, Greek Reception and Identification Service, Greek Asylum Service and EASO) receive some of the following reports, according to their functions: 1) daily list of scheduled interviews, 2) daily list of appointments for registration, 3) weekly list of no-shows for interviews, 4) weekly list of no-shows in registration appointments, 5) daily list of decisions with undelivered notifications, 6) daily list of returnable cases, 7) daily list of discontinued cases, and 8) daily list of archived cases. The suitable use of those reports allows for the swift localisation of migrants to ensure the appropriate follow-up and completion of their asylum</p>

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	<p>application process, or implement a return process where applicable.</p> <p>In addition, the European Border and Coast Guard is currently working with the Hellenic Police to introduce an end-to-end electronic Return Case Management System.</p>
<p>Scaling up the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programme in the islands</p>	<p><i>IOM with EU financial support to intensify campaigns promoting Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration among migrants, and the Greek authorities to remove administrative obstacles to swift voluntary return.</i></p> <p>The Minister of Migration Policy, Mr. Mouzalas, introduced on 29 March a cut-off date for the application to the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme on the islands. Henceforth, asylum applicants who have received a first-instance negative decision have a five-day period in which they can apply for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (they can apply at any point up to the cut-off date). After the cut-off date the possibility to apply for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration is not available, unless the migrant is proposed for return to Turkey but is refused.</p> <p>Since the beginning of 2017, on average around 130 persons per month have been transferred via the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme, while in June-December 2016, around 70 beneficiaries were transferred on average every month.</p>
<p>Issuing return decisions at an earlier stage in the return process</p>	<p><i>The Hellenic Police to issue return decisions at the same time as the notification of negative first instance asylum decisions.</i></p> <p>The technical and IT adjustments to implement the action in question are being considered by the Hellenic Police.</p>
<p>Creating additional reception capacity on the islands and upgrading the existing facilities</p>	<p><i>The Greek authorities, with EU support, to create additional reception capacity and to upgrade the existing facilities, in cooperation with local authorities whenever possible.</i></p> <p>In Lesbos, works for improving sheltering in Moria are still taking place. The levelling works have now been completed, and shelters, containers and rubbish halls have been installed. No migrants are living in rudimentary summer tents anymore: they are all accommodated in proper shelters. The capacity in Karatepe has increased by further 1,000, i.e. to 1,500 places available.</p> <p>In Samos, the number of makeshift tents has been reduced significantly since February and replaced by "Lifeshelters" installations.</p> <p>The recent flow of arrivals in Chios is currently a challenge on the island where the reception capacity is already full. New migrants are forced to accommodate in tents on the beach.</p>
<p>Creating sufficient detention capacity on the islands</p>	<p><i>The Greek authorities, with EU support, to create sufficient detention capacity on the islands as soon as possible, in cooperation with local authorities whenever possible.</i></p> <p>Major efforts have resulted in an increased capacity of the pre-removal centre in Kos (224 places) and in Moria (74 places).</p>

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	<p>In Kos, additional prefabricated structures have been delivered to provide for 500 places at full operational capacity, and the installation process is expected to be completed in July 2017. Works have also proceeded to extend the pre-removal detention area within the Lesvos hotspot to reach 200 places, with works expected to be completed in June 2017.</p> <p>On Samos, the pre-removal detention area, which is to be built in the upper area of the hotspot, is expected to be completed by the end of June 2017.</p> <p>Regarding Chios, a political decision has been taken to proceed with the development of a pre-removal centre in a site away from the city.</p>
<p>Complementing the AMIF and ISF National Programmes, when necessary</p>	<p><i>The Commission to continue to provide additional funding (emergency assistance, humanitarian support, etc.) and technical support to Greece for the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, where needed.</i></p> <p>The Commission works closely with the Greek authorities to implement the Financing Plan for 2017 agreed between the two sides, and any identified bottlenecks are addressed with additional funding if and where necessary.</p>