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## **OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS**

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	ST 10745/24
Subject:	Council Conclusions on Special Report No 06/2024 by the Court of Auditors: 'The Facility for Refugees in Turkey: Beneficial for refugees and host communities, but impact and sustainability not yet ensured'

Delegations will find attached the above-mentioned Council conclusions as approved by the Council (Environment) on 17 June 2024.

1. The Council recalls that the EU's 'Facility for Refugees in Turkey' was set up as an answer to an unprecedented refugee crisis faced by the EU and Türkiye. The EU and its Member States have committed to assist Türkiye in dealing with the challenge. The Council commends Türkiye's significant efforts in hosting and addressing the needs of more than 4 million refugees, and welcomes the continuous EU-Türkiye dialogue in the framework of the EU-Turkey Statement. In line with its conclusions on Enlargement of 12 December 2023, the Council reiterates the importance of the full and non-discriminatory implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, which remains the key framework for cooperation on migration.
2. The Council recalls that the Facility, managing a total of EUR 6 billion, provides for a joint coordination mechanism and is designed to ensure that the needs of refugees and host communities in Türkiye are addressed accordingly. The Facility's priority areas are humanitarian assistance, education, health, municipal infrastructure, and socio-economic support.
3. The Council thanks the European Court of Auditors for its Special Report No 06/2024 concerning the Facility and takes good note of the conclusions and recommendations therein. The Council notes that the objective of the audit, which covered the period from December 2022 to July 2023, was to assess whether the Facility supported the refugees and host communities in Türkiye efficiently, effectively and sustainably, focusing on the development strand of the support provided. The Council notes that this Special Report also follows up on the recommendations made by the Court in its Special Report No 27/2018, which focused on the design of the Facility and the humanitarian strand of funding.

4. The Council broadly welcomes the overall conclusion of the Court that, in a challenging context, the Facility provided relevant support to refugees and host communities. The Council also welcomes the finding that the Commission improved the functioning of the Facility in line with the Court's 2018 recommendations, such as by improving the needs assessment and scaling up the monitoring framework, streamlining financing instruments, improving aid coordination, and significantly improving the efficiency of cash-assistance projects. The Council also underlines the strategic importance of a sustainable transition, with a view to achieving increased ownership and continued commitment by the Turkish authorities, and notes the Commission's efforts towards handing over projects to the authorities. The Council also notes the efforts by the Commission to improve the operating environment for (international) non-governmental organisations and recalls the responsibilities of the Turkish authorities towards this end.
5. The Council welcomes the Court's assessment that the Facility has provided relevant support and delivered the planned outputs, notably in the areas of health and education, although support in the socio-economic area and municipal infrastructure was assessed as having been less advanced. The Council also takes good note of the Court's positive assessment that the Commission responded quickly and efficiently following the earthquakes of February 2023, which had a significant impact on the implementation of projects financed by the Facility.
6. The Council takes note of the Court's assessment that improvement is needed in terms of sustainability and measurement of impact of support implemented under the Facility, especially concerning the socio-economic support and flagship projects on education and health. In this regard, the Council takes good note of the Court's four recommendations to the Commission: improve the assessment and monitoring of costs; encourage the Turkish authorities to make available more relevant data on education regarding refugees and host communities; improve the measurement of the impact of projects; strengthen the sustainability of projects.

7. The Council takes note of the Commission's replies attached to the Special Report including that the Commission has accepted three out of four recommendations, and welcomes that the Commission already has started to address them, notably what concerns monitoring systems and data management issues, as well as specific issues identified in the Special Report in the areas of health and education. The Council welcomes that the Commission has partially accepted the recommendation on initiating a discussion with Member States and the Turkish authorities on how to ensure sustainability to maximise the impact of Facility funding for beneficiaries. In this respect, the Council acknowledges that the full implementation of this recommendation is beyond the Commission's control.
8. The Council invites the Commission to regularly inform the Council and the Steering Committee of the Facility, on the issues raised by the Court's Special Report and on the implementation of the aforementioned recommendations, and to ensure that they are addressed systematically and, to the extent possible, in full. Without prejudice to potential future discussions on the additional refugee support as part of a coherent, efficient and comprehensive refugee support strategy, the Council furthermore encourages the Commission to reflect the report's findings in its programming of the additional refugee support in Türkiye, notably on impact and sustainability, as well as in its discussions with the Turkish authorities, in line with the continuation of EU support to Syrian refugees in Türkiye as decided by the European Council in the framework of the mid-term revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024.
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