Dear Sir,

I would like to thank you for your request concerning the financial support to develop the national asylum legislation and system in third countries. Kindly note that the information provided below refers to an overview of the support to countries under the competence of the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations.

Under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI – Global Europe) and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III (IPA III) Egypt, Armenia and countries in the Western Balkans are receiving financial aid for this purpose.

In Egypt, a project implemented by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) worth EUR 1.5 million responds by half of its overall objective to supporting Egypt in the development of its national asylum law. The project title is “Implementing the EUAA-Egypt Cooperation: Enhancing the protection space for asylum-seekers and refugees in Egypt” (1). The purpose of the contract is to support Egyptian national authorities in enhancement of the international protection space in line with EU standards. In particular, EUAA intends to continue sharing asylum and international protection expertise in view of supporting the establishment of a solid national legal framework which in turn will have a positive impact on the well-being of refugees and asylum-seekers.

In Armenia, two ongoing projects from 2021 budget include asylum policies in one of its components. The first project “Enhancing Policy Framework and Capacity for Effective Migration and Asylum Management in Armenia” worth EUR 1,950,000 and implemented by IOM and UNHCR has the aim of developing the comprehensive Migration Strategy and relevant Action Plan, improving the international protection system and the refugee protection legislation. The second project “Support to Reorganization of the Migration and Citizenship Services” worth EUR 1,150,000 implemented by ICMPD targets the development of the Investment plan for reception centre for asylum seekers and further Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) on the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees for border guards and the asylum authorities.

In the Western Balkans, a regional programme “EU Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management Systems in the Western Balkans” covers this aim under

(1) Reference AD: Draft Action Document Template and Instructions (europa.eu)
one of its outputs. It is implemented jointly by Frontex, the EU Asylum Agency (formerly EASO), IOM and UNHCR and it is worth a total of EUR 19.2 million. The programme began implementation in January 2022, with the UNHCR contract beginning a year later. Two main areas of support are covering the implementation of international protection measures, including for vulnerable persons and the development of beneficiaries’ contingency plans in the areas of asylum and reception.

Under the current MFF, neighbouring countries receive financial assistance from the EU through the work of UNHCR, which strives to ensure that asylum-seekers can have their refugee status claims heard fairly and efficiently. The European Commission funds UNHCR in providing access to minimum standards of treatment and support while asylum-seekers await the outcome of their claims. Additionally, the Commission works with these countries in the long term to strengthen their asylum systems and laws.

Moreover, funding was allocated to these priorities under the previous MFF (2014-2020).

Through 2024 and future budget, we are considering allocating funding to a number of neighboring countries for similar purposes. As the design of these actions is still in progress, we cannot provide further details at this time.

Yours faithfully,

Francisco GAZTELU MEZQUIRIZ
Head of Unit (acting)