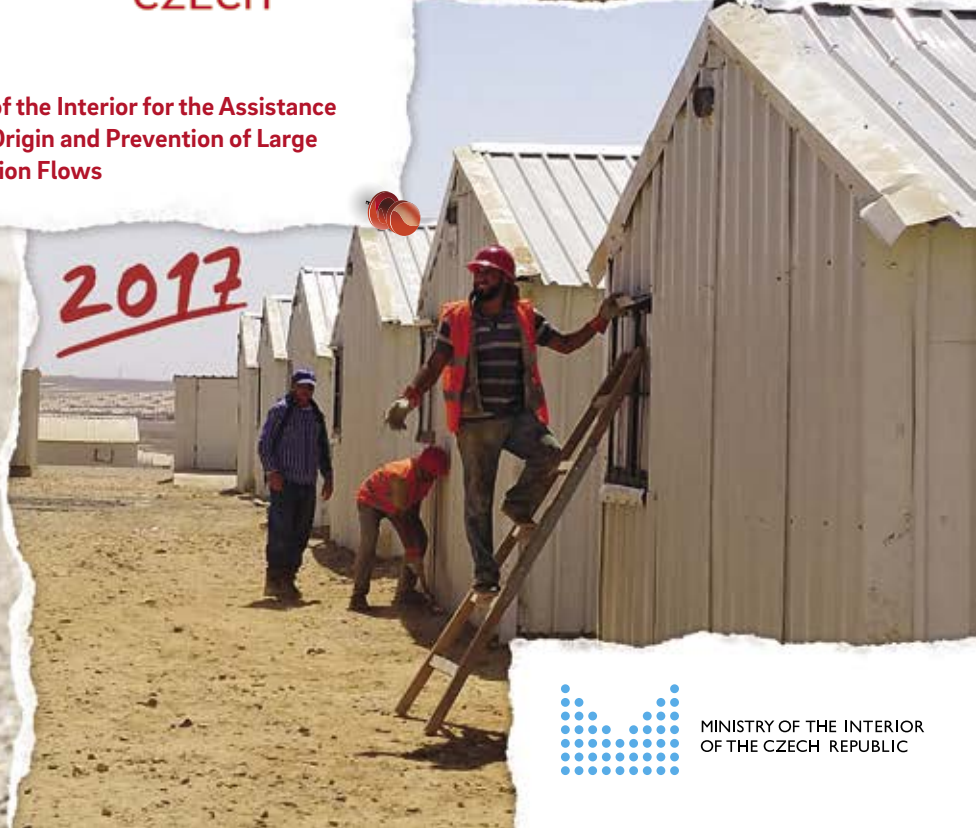




Programme of the Ministry of the Interior for the Assistance
to Refugees in Regions of Origin and Prevention of Large
Migration Flows



MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Programme of the Ministry of the Interior for the Assistance to Refugees in Regions of Origin and Prevention of Large Migration Flows in 2017

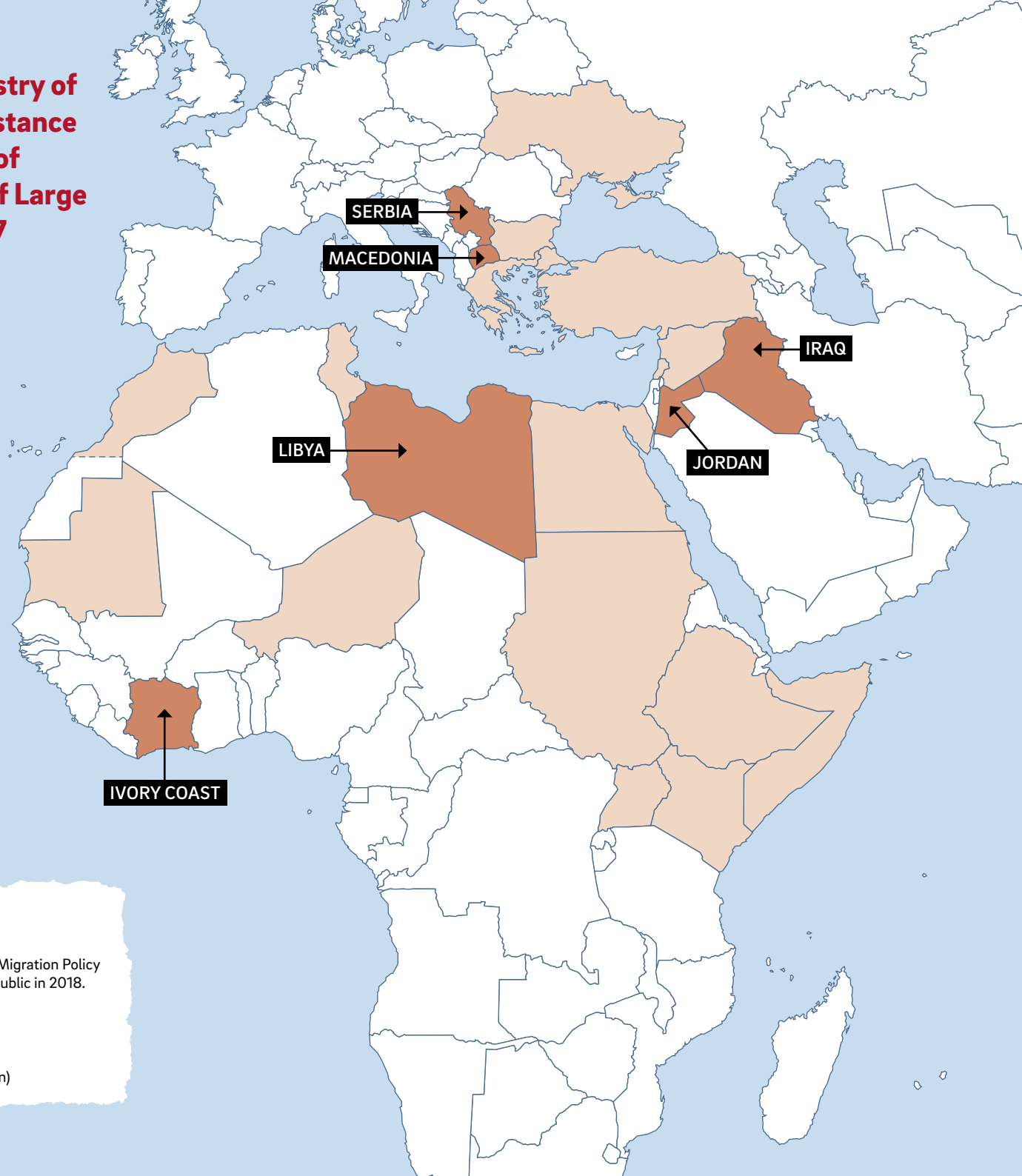
In the years 2015–2016 the programme was present in these countries:

Bilateral cooperation:

Bulgaria
Greece
Syria
Turkey
Ukraine

Multilateral cooperation:

Egypt
Ethiopia
Kenya
Lebanon
Morocco
Mauritania
Niger
Somalia
Sudan
Tunisia
Uganda



MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Published by the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic in 2018.

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Top left: ©UNHCR (Photo: Layse Farias)

Top right: ©Mol CR (Photo: Štěpán Lohr)

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A Word of Introduction by the Director of the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy

You have in your hand the annual report of the programme of the Ministry of the Interior, *Aid in Place*, for the year 2017. The programme was launched in 2015. Given that it has been three years since the start of its implementation, it is the right time to look back and review the up-to-date achievements and challenges of this programme.

I am pleased that the budget of this programme was already increased in the second year of its existence and the same amount of support was maintained in 2017. It is also a great achievement that we manage to offer our continuous support in three priority regions, which are the Middle East, the Balkans and North Africa, where we at the same time succeed to work on joint projects with other EU Member States.

In my view, one of the prominent achievements of the year 2017 is the extension and reconstruction of dwellings in the Jordanian Azraq refugee camp with 31 000 inhabitants carried out within the Czech-German project. As for the Balkan region, which has always been and will remain our priority region due to its geographical and historical proximity, we provided the governments of Macedonia and Serbia with funds and know-how to reinforce the capacities of their asylum systems and border protection. And last, but not least, it is good news that together with the Italian government in Ivory Coast we were providing assistance to 15 000 ref-



ugees, who had returned to their home country, to stand on their own feet and start a new life in their homeland. This project has also become a basis for our involvement in the Sahel countries.

I am very well aware of the fact that there have been many more calls for help than we are ever able to cover from the programme. Sometimes it is not easy to make a choice between individual projects that shall have our support. But we endeavour to ensure as most effective assistance from the Ministry of the Interior as possible so that its impact is as most positive as possible and helps improve life and find an alternative to migration to as many people as possible. And that is why *Aid in Place* makes sense.

Mgr. Pavla Novotná

"We endeavour to ensure as most effective assistance from the Ministry of the Interior as possible so that its impact is as most positive as possible and helps improve life and find an alternative to migration to as many people as possible."



Introduction

Children from the Azraq refugee camp.
©MoI CR (Photo: Štěpán Lohr)

The Programme of the Ministry of the Interior for the Assistance to Refugees in Regions of Origin and Prevention of Large Migration Flows was founded in 2015 in reaction to the war in Syria and the subsequent migration wave. Due to the fundamental importance and needs even for future years, the programme's name was established as the *Aid in Place* programme and at the same time a new logo was created.

The permanent Aid in Place programme is administered by the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of the Interior, and together with the medical humanitarian programme MEDEVAC it forms part of humanitarian and assistance measures of the Ministry of the Interior to help coun-

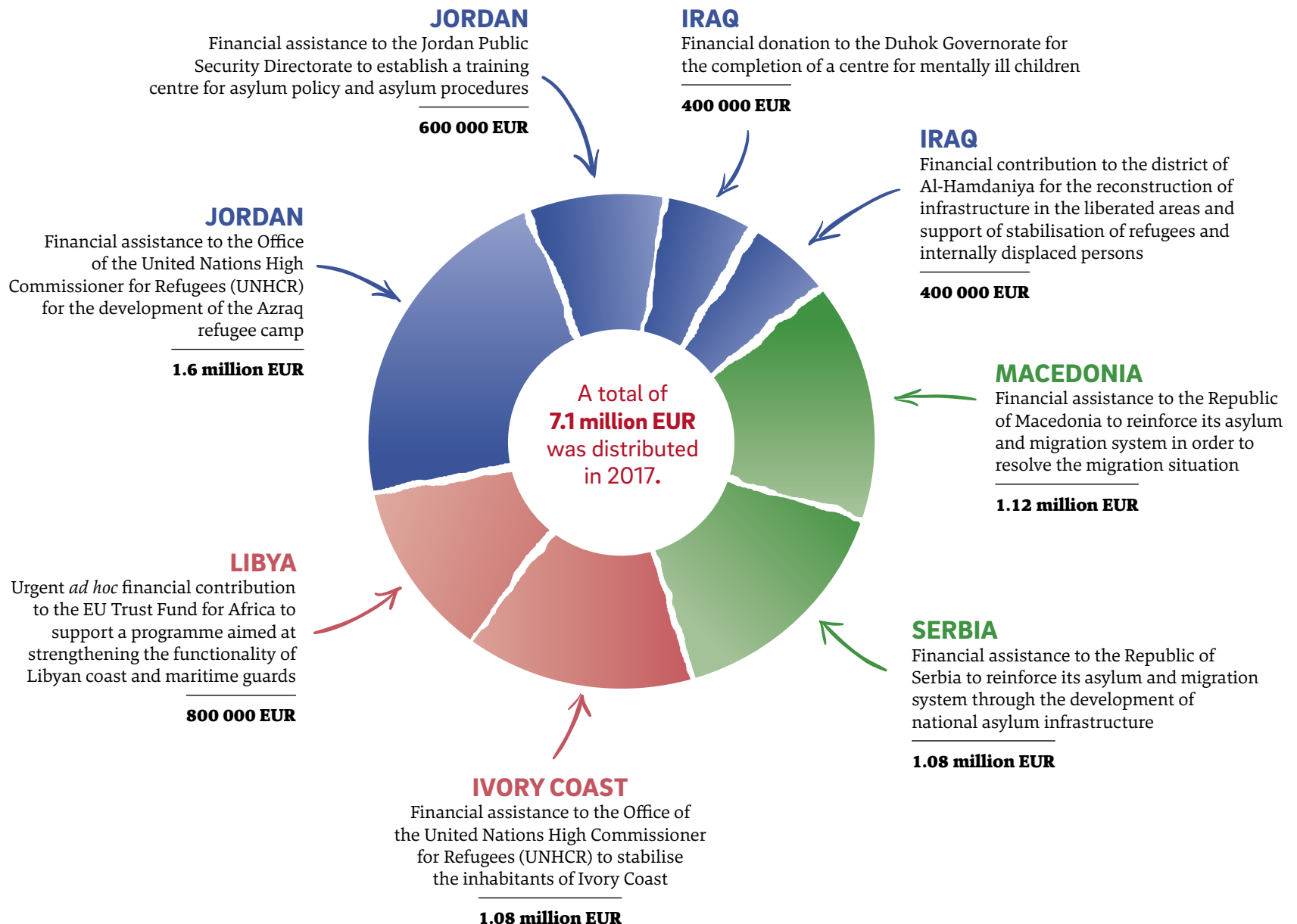
tries with large refugee populations and countries facing major migration pressures. The programme allocates financial donations abroad for assistance to refugees in the place of their first displacement, to internally displaced persons and to returnees coming back to their country of origin. It also provides donations to strengthen asylum and migration systems, border protection and fight against illegal migration. Beneficiaries of these funds include government partners, international organisations and international non-governmental organisations.

Since 2015 the programme has been focusing on three priority regions - the Middle East, southeast Europe and the region of North Africa. In addition

to the bilateral cooperation, the Ministry of the Interior also seeks to implement projects in these regions in collaboration with other EU Member States in order to increase the impact of its interventions.

In 2015, the programme's budget amounted to 4 million EUR and in 2016 it was increased to 6 million EUR. This amount of money was also preserved in 2017. Beside these funds, the Ministry of the Interior may also allocate *ad hoc* financial donations from its sources in case of emergency situations and urgent needs for assistance. In that way in 2017 the Ministry sent such voluntary *ad hoc* contribution to the EU Trust Fund for Africa to support a programme strengthening the functionality of Libyan coast and maritime guards.

Activities Implemented in 2017



The Middle East

As a result of the ongoing conflict in Syria, the neighbouring Middle East countries still host in their territory a large number of Syrian refugees whose situation is not sustainable from the long-term perspective. According to UNHCR data, up to 13 million Syrians have continuous need of assistance and the solution of their situation requires a long-term and more comprehensive approach. More than 5.5 million people have already left Syria and an additional 6.3 million Syrians have been internally displaced. The majority of Syrian refugees have moved to the neighbouring countries in the region – to Turkey (3.4 million), Lebanon (1 million), Jordan (656 000), Iraq (247 000) and Egypt (127 000). This situation has resulted in unprecedented pressure on these countries, their infrastructure and stability of local communities. Especially the northern part of Iraq

has also been severely damaged due to fight with the so called Islamic State which has resulted in an internal displacement of up to 3.4 million Iraqis. These countries have very limited options to provide sufficient protection and dignified treatment of refugees, which leads to increased frustration of both local communities and refugees who subsequently decide to seek security and protection somewhere else, including the European Union. For the Czech Republic, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been a priority country in the Middle East region. The country hosts more than 656 000 registered Syrian refugees in its territory, and many successful projects for assistance to these people have been implemented there in recent years. The Republic of Iraq is another country in the Middle East that was supported by the Czech Republic in 2017.



JORDAN

Financial assistance to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for further development of the Azraq refugee camp in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Allocated amount

1.6 million EUR

Beneficiary

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Implementation period

June–December 2017

Project description

The project aimed at improving the life quality in the Azraq refugee camp through construction of the local infrastructure. It complements the project of 2016 – **expansion and reconstruction of dwellings in a camp with 31,000 inhabitants**. The donation is **part of the Czech-German project** in Jordan negotiated by Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka and Chancellor Angela Merkel. Both the Czech Republic and Germany contributed CZK 40 million each, and thus significant results could be achieved. The Azraq camp was opened at the end of April 2016. It is sit-

uated in the eastern part of the country with adverse climate conditions having a negative impact on the service life of shelters.

Implementation status

The main part of the donation was allocated to expand the shelters for refugees to include a kitchen, a terrace and windows. UNHCR co-operated on the project implementation both with its partner organisation, *Norwegian Refugee Council*, and directly with refugees who were engaged in the construction works and could earn some extra income for their living.

A total of 5 576 dwellings were expanded, half of which were thanks to the Czech Republic's contribution. Some minor repairs of the existing shelters were also carried out to extend their lifetime. A total of **745 dwellings** were thus **repaired** from the Czech Republic's contribution. The remaining sum was used for gas distribution for cooking for the camp's inhabitants sufficient for a period of 20–30 days.

Financial assistance to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to establish a training centre for asylum policy and asylum procedures

Allocated amount

600 000 EUR

Beneficiary

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan – Public Security Directorate

Implementation period

December 2017–December 2018

Project description

The financial donation enables construction of a training centre focused on asylum policy and asylum procedures and purchase of related equipment, which was identified by Jordanian authorities as a priority for 2017. The donation also presumes an inter-connection of this national contribution with the prepared project of the Visegrad Group countries in cooperation with ICMPD (*International Centre for Migration Policy Development*) and EASO (*European Asylum Support Office*) related to the knowledge- and expertise-sharing when establishing an asylum system in Jordan.

Implementation status

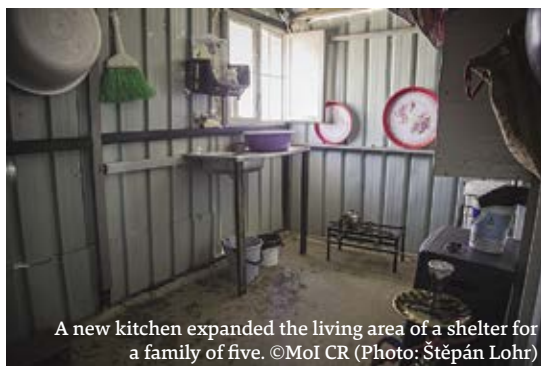
Funds from the donation will be allocated to the construction of a training centre for asylum policy and asylum procedures, as well as to the purchase of furniture, electronic equipment and vehicles for this centre. The project implementation is expected to be completed in December 2018.



Workers coming from the inhabitants of the Azraq camp in Jordan work to repair dwellings. ©MoI CR (Photo: Hany Ramadan)



An information board in Azraq. ©MoI CR (Photo: Štěpán Lohr)



A new kitchen expanded the living area of a shelter for a family of five. ©MoI CR (Photo: Štěpán Lohr)

IRAQ

Financial assistance to the Duhok Governorate to support stabilisation of refugees and internally displaced persons

Allocated amount

400 000 EUR

Beneficiary

Republic of Iraq – Duhok Governorate

Implementation period

December 2017 – March 2019

Project description

In 2017, the financial donation to the Republic of Iraq targeted areas impacted by a high inflow of refugees and internally displaced persons, both in the territory of the Nineveh Governorate administered by the central government and to the Duhok Governorate located in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The Duhok Governorate received a donation for the completion of a centre for mentally ill children.

Implementation status

In August 2018, the rough construction of the centre for mentally ill children in the Duhok province was completed. The final construction is scheduled to be completed in March 2019. Internally displaced inhabitants of Iraq who have found refuge in the Duhok province have been hired as construction workers. The Duhok Governorate thus provides them with an option to gain some extra income. The building will offer space for daily activities of 60 autistic children. Accommodation will be provided in another building in Duhok.



Rough construction of a centre for mentally ill children in the Duhok province in Iraqi Kurdistan. ©MFA CR



Workers coming from the internally displaced persons during a visit of the Czech Republic's consul general to the construction site of a centre for mentally ill children in Duhok. ©MFA CR

Financial assistance to the district of Al-Hamdaniya to support stabilisation of refugees and internally displaced persons

Allocated amount

400 000 EUR

Beneficiary

Republic of Iraq – the Iraqi Reconstruction Fund for Areas Affected by Terrorist Operations (REFAATO)

Implementation period

December 2017–December 2018

Project description

The 2017 financial donation to the Republic of Iraq went to the areas affected by a high inflow of refugees and internally displaced persons, both in the territory of the Nineveh Governorate administered by the central government and to the Duhok Governorate situated in Iraqi Kurdistan. Through the Iraqi Reconstruction Fund for Areas Affected by Terrorist Operations (REFAATO), the district of Al-Hamdaniya in the Nineveh province received a financial contribution for the renewal and completion of the electrical network and for the medical facility reconstruction.

Implementation status

The Iraqi Reconstruction Fund for Areas Affected by Terrorist Operations (REFAATO) started the project implementation by selecting a contractor for the reconstruction and completion of the electrical network in the district of Al-Hamdaniya; reconstruction works started after the respective contract was signed. The project implementation is scheduled to be completed in December 2018.

The Balkans

Within the framework of the Ministry of the Interior's programme, the Czech Republic also supports particular states that are significantly affected by the migration flow headed towards the EU. The area of the Western Balkans and South-eastern Europe has long represented an important land migration route to the EU, primarily for migration originating in the Middle East region and heading to (western and northern) Europe via the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkan migration route. Despite the drop in numbers on the Western Balkan migration route throughout 2016, risks related to migration flows still remained in 2017. In this regard, it was still necessary to support the Balkan states in strengthening the capacities and infrastructure of their asylum and migration systems so that they were able to effectively absorb any potential increases in migration pressure. In 2017, Macedonia and Serbia were the region's priority countries for the Czech Republic.

SERBIA

Financial donation to the Republic of Serbia to reinforce the asylum and migration system by developing the national asylum infrastructure

Allocated amount

1.08 million EUR

Beneficiary

Republic of Serbia – Commissariat for Refugees and Migration

Implementation period

October 2017–August 2019

Project description

The financial donation to the Republic of Serbia is intended to assist in strengthening the local immigration system through developing the asylum infrastructure. In particular, this includes mainly the costs related to the expansion and increased quality of the infrastructure of Serbian asylum facilities and reception centres, funding of a study trip to the Czech Republic for Serbian migration experts, and an exchange of employees for a determined period of time in order to gain new professional experience.

Implementation status

The financial contribution of the Czech Republic will be used mainly to reconstruct the Obrenovac reception centre, located close to Belgrade, into an integration asylum centre for beneficiaries of international protection in Serbia. The finalisation of technical project documentation will be followed by the centre's reconstruction, which is expected to be completed throughout 2019.

The donation was also used to fund project documentation for fire-safety measures at the Bujanovac, Bosilegrad and Presevo reception centres. The plan is also to reconstruct an educational centre for asylum and migration issues in the municipality of Plandiste.



MACEDONIA

Financial donation to the Republic of Macedonia to reinforce the asylum and migration system in relation to solving the migration situation

Allocated amount

1.12 million EUR

Beneficiary

Republic of Macedonia – Ministry of the Interior

Implementation period

March 2017 December 2018

Project description

The project's objective was to stabilise the migration situation in the country by strengthening the capacities of the Macedonian asylum and migration system. A major share of the Czech Republic's financial donation, CZK 27 million, was provided to the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Macedonia for purchasing vehicles for the needs of the Macedonian border police. The rest of the financial donation, CZK 1 million, was provided to Macedonia for purchasing technical equipment in the area of asylum infrastructure within the framework of assistance and support organised by UNHCR.

Implementation status

Implementation of the first part of the donation was finalised in December 2017. Based on a tender procedure, the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Macedonia purchased **45 Škoda Octavia vehicles** from the donation provided by the Czech Republic. On 14 December 2017, the vehicles were ceremonially handed over at the Macedonian Ministry of the Interior to the Macedonian border police, with the participation of the top leaders of the Macedonian Ministry, representatives of the Czech embassy in Skopje and with a great interest of the media.

Implementation of the second part of the donation will run until the end of 2018. With a contribution from UNHCR, the Macedonian Ministry of the Interior has been developing a new asylum database. The hardware necessary for smooth operation of the new database will be purchased with the funds from the Czech Republic. Based on a tender procedure, new servers, computers and other equipment will be purchased by the end of 2018.



The Macedonian border police received 45 Škoda Octavia cars.
©Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Macedonia



Official handover of vehicles to the Macedonian border police was accompanied by a great interest of the media. ©Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Macedonia

Africa

The area of North Africa and wider Sahel has been a long-frequented transit and source region for migration to the EU by sea. The unstable situation in many countries in the region and the high porosity of the local coastal and maritime borders represent a big challenge for institutionalised collaboration with the EU. In the countries of North Africa, the European Union has already begun projects within the joint Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) focusing on the stabilisation, development and protection of refugees, including strengthening the capacities of local migration and asylum structures. The programme is likewise supported by the Czech Republic's finan-

cial contribution. The migration situation in this region remains, nevertheless, problematic. In Libya in particular, there are 1.3 million people in need of urgent humanitarian aid (including internally displaced persons, returnees, the most vulnerable Libyans, migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers). One of the main source countries for migration to North Africa and consequently to Europe in 2017 was Ivory Coast, with a large number of stateless persons living in its territory. Together with Italy, the Czech Republic supported an UNHCR project there to stabilise these people on site so that they did not have to leave Ivory Coast and migrate to neighbouring countries or further on to Europe.

LIBYA

A voluntary contribution to the EU Trust Fund for Africa to support a programme to reinforce the functionality of the Libyan coast and maritime guards

Allocated amount

800 000 EUR

(800 000 EUR of ad hoc assistance from the budget of the Ministry of the Interior, plus another 120 000 EUR from the budget of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic)

Beneficiary

EU Trust Fund for Africa

Implementation period

July 2017–December 2020

Project description

The financial contribution was a reaction to the results of the European Council meeting on 22 and 23 June 2017 which dealt with the continuous great migration pressures in the central Mediterranean. This is in support of the programme of strengthening the Libyan coast and maritime guards managed by the Republic of Italy, which faced great migration pressure from Libya in 2017. The Czech Republic also offered specific assistance to Italy in the form of

sending a police contingent to assist in return operations execution, or other forms of further direct support to solve the current situation, such as construction of a detention facility for foreigners.

Implementation status

The programme supporting the border and migration management in Libya, funded through the European Union Trust Fund for Africa, counts with the implementation period lasting until 2026, with the first phase completed by the end of 2020. The programme's main priorities are: supporting and building up the capacities of the Libyan coast guards (including supplies of ship equipment and maintenance); setting up a Libyan national coordination centre and maritime rescue coordination centre; establishing situation rooms; and implementing a pilot project to increase capacities to monitor the southern border. The programme's direction is determined by a steering committee, under the leadership of the Italian Ministry of the Interior.

UNHCR workers in Ivory Coast during the census of stateless persons. ©UNHCR (Photo: Layse Farias)





IVORY COAST

Financial contribution to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to stabilise the inhabitants of Ivory Coast

Allocated amount

1.08 million EUR (800 000 EUR from the programme budget and 280 000 EUR from the budget of the Ministry of the Interior)

Beneficiary

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Implementation period

September 2017–December 2018

Project description

This is a **joint Czech-Italian project**.

In August 2017, the Czech Republic received a proposal from the Republic of Italy to implement a joint project in Ivory Coast, which is one of the main countries of origin of migrants heading for Europe. The intention was mainly to improve the civil registration and the stateless person status in Ivory Coast, thus contributing to stabilisation of the migration situation in the entire West African region. The target group consists of approx. 700 000 stateless persons and persons at risk of becoming stateless. The project will also focus on the reintegration of 15 000 Ivorian migrants who returned back to their country. The project likewise includes improved health care and water access and prevention of sexual violence. The project is being implemented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Implementation status

The project was launched in November 2017 and is expected to be completed in December 2018. In 2017, UNHCR closely cooperated with the Ivorian authorities in order to ensure the registration and granting of citizenship to stateless persons. The activities included supporting legislative changes, training state officials, and organising awareness campaigns on the topic of the status of stateless persons. Within the UNHCR project, **960 supplement-**

tary birth certificates for stateless persons were arranged and 95 persons were granted Ivorian citizenship. In May 2018, in collaboration with the statistical office of Ivory Coast, UNHCR began counting and identifying stateless persons living in the territory of the country.

Within the framework of the second objective, UNHCR and its partners focused on reintegrating Ivorian refugees who returned back to their country. **A total of 278 houses for 1 390 persons were built. A total of 305 young persons were provided with vocational training, and 60 of the best students were provided with necessary equipment to start their own business. A total of 345 persons working in agriculture were provided with agricultural starter kits and trained in new, sustainable agricultural techniques.** In 2017, **rehabilitation of 10 water sources** also took place and local water management committees were created, as access to drinking water continues to be one of the main causes of tension among local communities on the west coast of Ivory Coast.



An information board in the village of Tuambly, Ivory Coast, where reintegration of Ivorian refugees is taking place after their return to the country. ©UNHCR

The Year 2018

Despite the measures adopted by the European Union and individual European countries to mitigate the migration crisis, the current situation still requires urgent solutions. The 2018 budget of the Aid in Place programme remained at **6 million EUR**. The priorities for 2018 were approved by the Czech government in Regulation No. 194 of 27 March 2018, and similar to the previous years, the programme will focus on the regions of the Middle East, the Balkans, and North Africa and wider Sahel. In particular, the following activities are planned:

JORDAN

Financial contribution to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to further develop the Azraq and Zaatari refugee camps in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

1.6 million EUR

NORTH AFRICA AND THE SAHEL

Financial assistance to selected countries in the region of North Africa and the Sahel to support refugees and internally displaced persons and to stabilise the local population

1.6 million EUR

IRAQ

Financial donation to the Republic of Iraq focused on stabilisation and reconstruction of the liberated areas and on assistance to internally displaced persons and returnees

400 000 EUR

MIDDLE EAST

Co-funding of the European Regional Development and Protection Programme for the Middle East (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq)

400 000 EUR

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Financial donation to Bosnia and Herzegovina designed to reinforce the migration system in order to resolve the current migration situation

1 million EUR

MACEDONIA

Financial donation to the Republic of Macedonia to strengthen the asylum and migration system related to the resolution of the migration situation

1 million EUR

