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

Delegations will find attached document COM(2017) 470 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**

**Seventh 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>86 EASO case workers and 99 EASO interpreters are deployed on the islands as of 28 August. Member States are encouraged to enhance their efforts to reach and maintain the objective of 100 EASO case workers deployed on the islands.</p> <p>115 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>Adoption by the Hellenic Parliament of a 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, is pending.</p> <p>In parallel, as of 3 June, EASO had received replies from 15 Member States in response to its request for more information about family reunification from/to Turkey and the documentation requested from applicants in order to apply this procedure. EASO provided this information to the Greek Asylum Service.</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 suggests that, when the different vulnerability</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>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 with regular procedure deadlines.</p> <p>The Greek Ministry of Health, the Greek Asylum Service and UNHCR are providing their comments on the final version of the 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>An updated version of the Standard Operating Procedures for the implementation of the border procedure in the context of the EU-Turkey Statement to be used by the Greek Asylum Service and EASO staff in the islands was issued on 29 June.</p> <p>In order to support the border procedure in the hotspots and standardise it in all islands, EASO has set up, in cooperation with the Greek Asylum Service, a helpdesk based in Athens, for quality review and guidance. The helpdesk provides ad hoc advice on the processing of single files, as well as on methodology-related issues. On 21 August, the first senior Member State expert was assigned to the helpdesk which will be fully operational by mid-September, with a team of three senior experts.</p> <p><u>Information for migrants:</u></p> <p>In addition to the information booths in Lesbos and Chios, the Greek Reception and Identification Service has recently established information points in Kos and Samos.</p> <p>Following the success of the info booth in Chios, information on the asylum procedure as well as the consequence of non-compliance is provided by EASO at the Agora Centre in Chios town on a weekly basis.</p> <p><u>Time lapse between the expression of interest to apply for asylum and the lodging of the application:</u></p> <p>The time lapse between the expression of interest to apply for asylum and the actual lodging of the application remains unchanged since the Sixth Report and does not exceed two weeks on average in any hotspot.</p>
<p>Maintaining and</p>	<p>The finalisation of the Standard Operating Procedures for the abovementioned</p>

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further accelerating the eligibility procedure for applicants from countries of origin with low recognition rates	border procedure, updated on 29 June (see the paragraph 'speeding up the interviews and procedures for the assessment of asylum applications'), aims to increase the 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>Additional Hellenic Police officers are needed to better control entry/exit points and for 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, starting with a pilot project in Moria.</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>Following the finalisation of the evacuation plans regarding all islands by the Hellenic Police, they are being officially translated by the Commission before distribution to the key stakeholders on the islands.</p> <p>Successful evacuation drills for the staff of the stakeholders working in the hotspots took place in Chios (31 July), Kos (9 August), Leros (10 August), and Lesbos (31 August).</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 are present at the hotspots.</p> <p>Following finalisation of the Standard Operating Procedures for the hotspots, they were transmitted to the Greek Reception and Identification Service in both English and Greek. A draft manual on the application of the Standard Operating Procedures has also been shared with the Greek Reception and Identification Service for review.</p>
Increasing the number of Appeal Committees	12 Appeal Committees are operational, supplemented by an alternate Committee.

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Increasing the number of decisions per Appeal Committee	The Appeal Committees continue to be assisted by 12 EASO rapporteurs but the number of second-instance decisions delivered by the Appeal Committees remains low.
Limiting the number of appeal steps in the context of the asylum process	<i>The Greek authorities to explore the possibility to limit the number of appeal steps.</i>
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 continue to respond appropriately to requests for deployments and transportation means for ongoing return operations.</p> <p>Readmission operations by ferry continue to be 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 to assist in return operations.</p> <p>On 30 August, a meeting took place between the European Border and Coast Guard and the Hellenic Police, where return-related issues have been discussed, including the implementation of the European mechanism on returns, further needs of Greece for support, and proposals of further steps.</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 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>The Hellenic Police, Greek Reception and Identification Service, Greek Asylum Service and EASO continue using the automated reports, put in place in order to enable the appropriate follow-up to the migrants' asylum application process and to implement return procedures where applicable. The automated reports comprise of: 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.</p> <p>The Greek Asylum Service also sends lists of closed cases to the Hellenic</p>

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	<p>Police.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Greek Asylum Service receives the following types of data: Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration and readmissions (regularly) as well as shelter allocation and Cash Assistance (on ad hoc basis). It processes them in order to help the Greek Reception and Identification Service and the Hellenic Police monitor the whereabouts of the applicants at each stage of the asylum procedure.</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>Since the beginning of 2017, on average around 143 persons per month have been transferred via the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme from the Greek islands, 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>Despite important progress regarding the reception conditions in Samos and Lesbos, the recent flow of arrivals is a challenge in terms of accommodating all the migrants appropriately. Rudimentary tents have been set up in both islands. The situation is also challenging in Chios.</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>The pre-removal capacity in Kos is now at 500 places and in Moria at 210 places.</p> <p>On Samos, the pre-removal detention area, which is being built in the upper area of the hotspot, will be completed as soon as the residents of this area are transferred to another part of the hotspot, which is difficult to implement in the immediate future given the recent increase in arrivals.</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 and the Greek authorities continue to implement the Financing Plan for 2017. Discussions regarding the Financing Plan for 2018</p>

Priority actions	Current status and outstanding actions ¹
	are currently underway.