



Emily O`Reilly

European Ombudsman

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Chairperson

Contact:

Mag. Petr Kudêlka, MA

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Dear Ms O`Reilly,

On behalf of my colleagues Ms Gertrude Brinek and Mr Günther Kräuter, I am pleased to respond to your request from 17 December 2015 regarding the activities of the Austrian Ombudsman Board in the assessment of compliance of Austrian authorities with international Human Rights standards in the context of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

Austria submitted its “National Programme AMIF” - Proposal for the intended use of the resources to be drawn from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) to the European Commission for review and approval. According to a notification by Section III/B (Asylum, Migration and Human Rights) of the Federal Ministry of Interior, the evaluation procedure conducted by the European Commission is currently approaching its final phase. Austria is expecting a decision regarding the awarding of the funds for the implementation of the National Programme AMIF in the near future, but so far no money from the fund has been made available to the Austrian Government.

However, the National Programme AMIF, containing a detailed outline of the envisaged utilisation of the funds once they are granted, has been published by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs on its website and provides detailed and comprehensive information about the programme’s objectives, specific actions, beneficiaries and authorities responsible for the implementation, management and supervision. The Ministry of Interior also confirmed that outcomes of the evaluation of the Austrian National Programme AMIF by the European Commission as well as the entire distribution of the expected funds will be publicly disclosed. The Austrian Ombudsman Board welcomes this approach taken by the Austrian Government and hopes that the responsible ministries will maintain this level of transparency during the entire implementation process.

As no funds of the AMIF have been distributed to Austria yet, there is currently no need for the Austrian Ombudsman Board to initiate an ex officio investigation of the human rights compliance of the utilisation of these resources. In addition, it should be noted that in principle it is for the court of audit to consider such transactions and the AOB does therefore not see it as its primary task.

I hope to have been of some assistance in providing you with this information. Please do not hesitate to contact the AOB if you need any further clarifications concerning Austria’s activities in regard to the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Peter Fichtenbauer



Chairperson AOB