



# External evaluation of the EUAA-Greece operational plan 2022-2024

## Ex post evaluation report

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## Contents

Contents .....	2
Acronyms and definitions.....	3
Executive summary .....	4
1. Introduction: purpose and scope .....	7
2. Intended results of the action .....	8
2.1. Description of the action and its intended results .....	8
2.2. Points of comparison.....	11
3. Implementation of the action: current state of play .....	12
4. Evaluation findings .....	16
4.1. To what extent was the action successful and why? .....	17
4.2. How did the Agency make a difference through the action? .....	23
4.3. Is the action relevant? .....	24
5. Conclusions and recommendations .....	25
5.1. Conclusions.....	25
5.2. Good practices and lessons learnt .....	27
5.3. Recommendations .....	29
Annex 1: Methodology and analytical models used .....	31
Annex 2: Intervention logic .....	32
Annex 3: Evaluation matrix .....	37

## Acronyms and definitions

Term	Definition
<b>CEAS</b>	Common European Asylum System
<b>CIP</b>	Communication and information provision
<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organisation
<b>EKKA</b>	(Greek) National Centre for Social Solidarity
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUAA</b>	European Union Agency for Asylum
<b>GAS</b>	Greek Asylum Service
<b>GSVIP</b>	(Greek) General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection
<b>IO</b>	International organisation
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>MoMA</b>	(Greek) Ministry of Migration and Asylum
<b>NERM</b>	(Greek) National emergency response mechanism
<b>OP</b>	Operational plan
<b>RIC</b>	(Greek) Reception and Identification Centre
<b>RIS</b>	(Greek) Reception and Identification Service
<b>SOP</b>	Standard operating procedure
<b>SSPUAM</b>	(Greek) Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors
<b>TP</b>	Temporary protection
<b>TPD</b>	Temporary Protection Directive
<b>UAM</b>	Unaccompanied minors
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>VSM</b>	Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism

## Executive summary

Between 2022 and 2024, the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) provided operational support in Greece, specifically in the area of asylum, reception, Dublin Regulation, voluntary relocation, and temporary protection. The EUAA-Greece operational plan (OP) 2022-2024 aimed to:

- Enhance the capacity of the Greek authorities to process asylum applications in compliance with the Common European Asylum System;
- Enhance the capacity of the Greek authorities to provide reception conditions in compliance with the Common European Asylum System;
- Enhance the capacity of the Greek authorities in providing protection to unaccompanied children;
- Enhance the capacity of the Greek authorities to effectively implement the Temporary Protection Directive.

**The effectiveness of the EUAA's intervention in Greece in 2022 and 2023 was very good overall**, with its support to the Greek General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection (GSVIP) (measure 3) being evaluated as good. For several activities, the results achieved by the EUAA exceeded the set targets<sup>1</sup>, namely in **capacity building and training** at the Greek Asylum Service (GAS) and at the Reception and Identification Service (RIS), in professional development activities for judges and rapporteurs, and in the development of standard operating procedures and operational tools at RIS and GSVIP. Other very effective activities supported by the EUAA were the handling of registrations for international protection, information provision on reception and temporary protection, relocation activities, Dublin procedures and different schemes for unaccompanied minors (UAMs) (accommodation, national emergency response mechanism, mentorship). The EUAA also facilitated the smooth transition of the registration procedure from GAS to RIS.

Likewise, the **EUAA managed to enhance coordination between co-competent authorities**, such as GAS, RIS and the GSVIP and streamline procedures and referral pathways across sites. External factors with an impact on the OP's results were the increase in arrivals in 2023, sudden changes in the legal framework, administrative guidelines or political leadership, gaps in the provision of interpretation services by the national contractor and technical problems with information and communication technology databases for a limited time. Despite these factors, the **EUAA was able to adapt to changing needs and build a robust, sustainable asylum system** that could smoothly manage asylum procedures with limited support from the Agency. Nonetheless, the reception system in Greece was still under development, which made the EUAA's support to reception crucial during the surge in arrivals at the end of 2023. The support provided to the GSVIP was also effective in building a resilient protection system for UAMs in Greece. Room for improvement existed in the planning, support, and delivery of training to GSVIP staff in 2023 and 2024. The EUAA's planned frontline support to vulnerable persons for 2024 did not materialise. Finally, the EUAA effectively assisted Greek authorities with the registration of beneficiaries of temporary protection and related communication and information provision (CIP), enhancing Greece's readiness to meet its needs through prompt training and resource allocation.

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<sup>1</sup> Although targets are set by EUAA staff on the basis of a precise methodology, they are based on assumptions (e.g. on flows of arrivals). Therefore, deviations for the targets can be observed in case the actual context diverges from EUAA's working hypotheses.

**The efficiency of the EUAA's intervention in Greece was good.** A challenge across measures was the time responsiveness of the EUAA's support in times of crises; Greek authorities and EUAA staff agreed that there was room for improvement. Inefficiencies also existed in the use of the EUAA's resources with a lack of interpretation services; the EUAA responded to this challenge with an ad hoc surge in support with interpretation for a few months in 2024.

**The coherence of the EUAA's intervention in Greece was very good** given the strong complementarity between measures or sub-measures and the good collaboration and regular exchange with other stakeholders in Greece (international organisations and civil society organisations).

**The added value of the EUAA's intervention was very good.** Over more than 10 years, the EUAA provided stable support to the Greek authorities, building a stable and trust-based relationship with them, as well as with other stakeholders.

**The relevance of the EUAA intervention was evaluated as very good.** The EUAA managed to respond to multiple shifts in needs, both at structural and operational level, acting within the framework of the OP but flexibly navigating between measures. The extension of the OP to three years allowed for long-term planning, along with the possibility to adapt the EUAA's response to evolving needs through yearly needs assessments.

Following on from this evaluation of the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024, recommendations for improving the EUAA's work are presented below:

**Recommendation 1: Support the authorities in building a sustainable system for the provision of interpretation services in the asylum and reception context**

1.1 Support the authorities indicatively with:

- The provision of technical advice in programming and funding;
- The transfer of knowledge on remote interpretation and flexible allocation of resources as per the needs;

1.2 Develop a surge support protocol in agreement with the Greek authorities and within the allocated budget to the Greece operation using pre-defined triggering conditions, such as:

- Bottlenecks created in different Regional Asylum Offices or RICs due to severe shortcomings in interpretation services; and/or
- Identified high risks of inefficiency in the use of the EUAA's resources.

**Recommendation 2: Further strengthen cooperation with national counterparts under the OP to maximise results**

2.1 Continue to enhance vertical coordination between GAS and Regional Asylum Offices and RIS and RICs/closed controlled access centres and other accommodation facilities by developing workflows per activity;

2.2 Establish a standing high-level interagency cooperation platform between the EUAA, GAS, RIS and the GSVPIP to ensure that all issues related to the implementation of the OP are identified in a timely manner, discussed, and decided jointly;



- 2.3 Promote cooperation between the EUAA and the Greek authorities at service level by appointing focal points per sub-measure.

**Recommendation 3: Continue to prioritise CIP and harmonisation of procedures and workflows between first and second- line reception on reception support**

- 3.1 Allocate resources to CIP and ensure continuity in CIP through support to information desks in all reception sites and in between transfers;
- 3.2 Standardise procedures and develop workflows on case management, identification of vulnerable persons and referral pathways between first and second-line reception;
- 3.3 Establish workflows and referral pathways between RIS and the GSVPIP on cases of vulnerable persons (UAM, victims of torture, trafficking, gender-based violence, etc.).

**Recommendation 4: Develop an internal communication strategy addressed at Greek authorities, international organisations, civil society organisations and the general public and train EUAA staff on the mandate and role of the EUAA in the context of operational support in Greece**

## 1. Introduction: purpose and scope

The ex post evaluation of the operational plan (OP) agreed between the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) and Greece focused on the period January 2022 to December 2024 (hereinafter ‘EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024’). This report presents the findings of the evaluation carried out between September 2023 and December 2024 by Ramboll Management Consulting Belgium.

The aim of the evaluation exercise was to provide a summative ex post evaluation of the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024. The temporal scope of the evaluation covered the implementation of the OP from January 2022 to the third quarter 2024. The report offers a retrospective and objective assessment of the degree to which the intended results were met over the implementation period of the OP. It also serves to identify the reasons for any shortcomings and to suggest lessons learnt that might be useful to the EUAA in the design and implementation of future interventions, in Greece and beyond.

In line with the European Commission’s Better Regulation Guidelines<sup>2</sup>, the ex post evaluation aimed to assess the **effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance, and EU added value** of the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024 in a proportionate manner (see Annex 3: Evaluation matrix). Aside from the general evaluation questions associated with these criteria, the following specific priority evaluation questions were addressed:

- **Priority question 1:** Over the duration of the multi-annual OP, the migration reality in Greece has changed and the needs of the Greek asylum authorities have fluctuated in response to this. How effective has the EUAA been in adapting its support to the needs of the asylum authorities in the context of these changes in the migration reality in Greece?
- **Priority question 2:** How effective was the support provided to the Greek Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors (now General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection)? What worked well and what worked less well? What are the lessons learnt?
- **Priority question 3:** To what extent was the EUAA able to respond appropriately to the invasion of Ukraine launched by Russian armed forces?

To answer these questions, the ex-post evaluation combined evidence from secondary data (notably the OP and its amendments, monitoring data and results framework from the EUAA and management response of the previous OP), with primary data collected through stakeholder interviews with the European Commission, Greek authorities, international organisations (IOs), civil society organisations (CSOs) and the EUAA staff. These sources of information were used to provide an in-depth assessment of the results of the intervention (see Annex 1: Methodology and analytical models used). Based on the results, the evaluation drew conclusions and presented lessons learnt from the implementation of the intervention, in view of a next generation of OPs.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox_en)

## 2. Intended results of the action

### 2.1. Description of the action and its intended results

On 9 December 2021, the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024 was signed for the period January 2022 to December 2024. The **general objectives** of the OP consisted in enhancing the capacity of the Greek authorities to process asylum applications and provide reception conditions in compliance with the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and provide protection to unaccompanied minors (UAM). These objectives were agreed to be achieved through the implementation of three measures: measure 1: asylum support, measure 2: reception support, and measure 3: support to UAM. It should be noted that, for the first time, a separate measure was dedicated to support to an entity of the Greek authorities, i.e., the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors (SSPUAM)<sup>3</sup>, to provide protection to UAM in Greece. The OP was **premised on the assumption that flows will remain at levels similar to the ones experienced in 2020 and 2021**, which allowed for a substantial reduction of backlog in applications for international protection and led to the de-congestion of reception facilities on the islands and, to a lesser extent, on the mainland. It was also agreed that, should this trend be reversed, and in the event of an increase in needs, surge support to the Greek authorities may need to be considered and alternative plans devised. The main **national counterparts** involved in the implementation of the OP were the Ministry of Migration and Asylum (MoMA), the Greek Asylum Service (GAS), the Appeals Authority, the General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection (GSVIP) which succeeded the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors (in the original OP), the Reception and Identification Service (RIS) and the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA). In the original OP, the Medical Examination and Psychosocial Support Unit was also mentioned.

On 1 April 2022, the **first amendment** to the OP was signed to also include support with the implementation of Council Implementation Decision EU 2022/382 (4 March 2022) adopted in response to the invasion of Ukraine launched by Russian armed forces in February 2022. By virtue of this amendment, **measure 4 on enhancing the capacity of the Greek authorities to implement effectively the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD)** was added.

On 3 March 2023, the **second amendment** was signed whereby it was agreed that a **gradual further phase-out of support in the field of asylum** would be considered on the basis of continued low arrival rates and provided that the sustainability of the response had been ensured. A 75 % decrease in first instance support, including the scaling down of registration and info-flow management, a 50 % reduction in Dublin support, and the phasing out of EUAA rapporteurs at second instance were agreed. The needs assessment concluded that GAS and the Appeals Authority had become self-resilient, and were capable of addressing the workload, with only limited, targeted support from the EUAA. **Where arrivals were to increase significantly, surge support was foreseen.** At the same time, continued support would be provided in the field of reception and protection of UAM to consolidate the implementation of recently launched initiatives, enhance the institutional capacity of national

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<sup>3</sup> As of the summer of 2023, the SSPUAM was succeeded by the General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection. It was established by Presidential Decree 77/2023 (Government Gazette A' 130/ 27-06-2023), to which the services of the SSPUAM of article 39 of Presidential Decree 106/2020 were transferred and falls under the competence of the Deputy Minister of Migration and Asylum.



authorities, and ensure long term sustainability of the response. Support to relocation continued after a new Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism (VSM) was launched, in addition to remaining pledges from the old relocation scheme. Moreover, the support to temporary protection (TP) would be limited given that the flows of beneficiaries of TP were steadily decreasing.

On 29 April 2024, a **third amendment** to the OP was signed following an increase in arrivals and the subsequent pressure on the national asylum and reception system as well as the structural changes at MoMA, i.e., the establishment of the GSVPIP. Measure 3 was amended to reflect the succession of the SSPUAM by the GSVPIP; therefore, it was renamed 'vulnerability support'. For the first time, frontline support under measure 3 was foreseen, i.e., the deployment of 15 vulnerability liaison officers (EL-VULN 3.1). Increased EUAA support for asylum processing, registrations, reception, and protection of vulnerable persons was agreed for the remainder of the OP.

**The OP has four measures**, each consisting of an expected outcome and several intended outputs (see intervention logic in Annex 2).

### Measure 1: Asylum support

**Expected outcome:** Enhanced capacity of the Greek authorities in processing asylum applications in line with the CEAS.

- Output 1.0: Support to governance, strategic planning, quality and procedures;
- Output 1.1: Support to asylum processing at first instance;
- Output 1.2: Support to relocation;
- Output 1.3: Support to the processing of Dublin requests.

Under this measure, it was foreseen that the EUAA would support GAS **at central level** on **strategic planning** and **coordination**, in the setting-up and roll-out of **processes, standard operating procedures (SOPs)** and **workflows**, in enhancing the **quality of procedures and data management through support to the Directorate-General of Information and Communications Technology of MoMA**. This measure also foresaw the provision of training and coaching to GAS staff, including tailor-made **training** and **guidance** on relocation. The EUAA also engaged in **professional development activities** with **judges and staff** from the Independent Appeal Committees operating under the Appeals Authority, including country of origin information briefings. **Frontline support** was provided with the **registration of applicants** for international protection (including support in administrative tasks and information provision), **interviews** and **opinions** at first instance (including **relocation** interviews, assessments and matching exercises and processing of outgoing and information **Dublin** requests). Legal rapporteurs were also deployed to the Independent Appeal Committees only in 2022 (output 1.4 of the original OP).

### Measure 2: Reception support

**Expected outcome:** Enhanced capacity of the Greek authorities in providing reception conditions in line with the CEAS.

- Output 2.0: Support to reception governance, strategic planning, quality and procedures;
- Output 2.1: Support to first and second-line reception.

This measure involved a **coordinated approach between support at central and operational level**. Support to MoMA and RIS was provided on **strategic planning** (the development and implementation of relevant strategies and operational frameworks), **coordination** (between central level and the field), **procedures** (roll-out and implementation of SOPs, guidance, and tools) and **training** (train-the-trainers, national training, roster, modules). RIS was furthermore supported in **site management** (the roll-out of the information management system, information provision, referrals, matching and placement in reception centres, the roll-out of the EUAA's assessment of reception conditions (ARC tool, etc.) and **case management** (vulnerability identification, assessments and referrals, identification of Dublin cases, etc.). Additionally, support was provided to the Office of the Deputy Minister on the implementation of **pre-integration activities**.

### Measure 3: Vulnerability support

**Expected outcome:** Enhanced capacity of the Greek authorities in providing protection to vulnerable persons, including UAM.

- Output 3.0: Structural support to the GSVPIP;
- Output 3.1: Frontline support to vulnerable persons.

Under this measure, horizontal support was provided through/on (1) the **training** of GSVPIP personnel, (2) overall **programming**, (3) the operation of the **national emergency response mechanism** (NERM) and (4) **coordination** and **cooperation** with other authorities or actors. On UAM support, the EUAA supported the SSPUAM (until 2023) and the entity that succeeded it (from 2023 onwards), the GSVPIP, in (1) enhancing **institutional protection** (development of SOPs, workflows, guidance and tools, including a framework for the operation of best interest procedures and for the prevention of violence, exploitation and abuse of UAM, implementation and monitoring of the national guardianship scheme), (2) **the management of accommodation requests and placements**, (3) the **mentorship programme**, (4) **the monitoring and evaluation of accommodation centres** and (5) pre-integration activities (added in 2023). Support for vulnerable persons, including the development and implementation of, amongst others, relevant policy, frameworks, workflows and tools, and accommodation schemes and pathways for victims of violence was added through the third amendment to the OP. Support to EKKA was transferred from measure 2 to measure 3.

### Measure 4: TP support

**Expected outcome:** Enhanced capacity of the Greek authorities to effectively implement the TPD.

- Output 4.0: TP support.

Under this measure, which was introduced in April 2022, the EUAA aimed to support the authorities in **registration** of TP beneficiaries, **communication and information provision** (CIP) activities and the **identification and referral** of individuals, particularly of vulnerable cases and UAM.

## 2.2. Points of comparison

This section outlines the situation prior to the implementation of the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024, to highlight the points of comparison relative to what is presented in Section 3 of the report on the current state of play. It is based on the EUAA's monitoring data, publicly available information and on the evaluation findings of the EUAA-Greece OP 2021.

In 2021, the number of asylum **applications** in Greece continued to follow a downward trend after a significant increase during 2016-2019 (applications decreased by 63 % between 2019 and 2021 according to Eurostat data). In 2021, 31 787 asylum applications were pending at Regional Asylum Offices whereas 28 320 new applications were submitted<sup>4</sup>. The EUAA **registrations** in 2019, 2020 and 2021 (until the end of July) accounted on average for 44 % of all applications for international protection in Greece. In 2021, Greece continued to receive more incoming **Dublin** requests than it sent out to other EU+ countries<sup>5</sup>, i.e. 13 792 incoming “Dublin” requests and 3 037 outgoing “Dublin” requests<sup>6</sup>. However, the number of actual **transfers** remained low, i.e. 1 771 persons were transferred to EU+ countries from Greece, while only 150 applicants were transferred to Greece following mainly accepted take-back Dublin requests. Through the EUAA's support as well as its own enhanced capacity, the GAS reduced the backlog from 2020 onwards. In fact, from March 2020 until the end of July 2021, the number of processed cases at first instance greatly exceeded the inflow of applications in the following months resulting in the gradual reduction of the backlog in Greece. From March 2020 the Greek authorities, with the EUAA's support and the involvement of different actors, started implementing a voluntary relocation scheme for UAM, vulnerable families and beneficiaries of international protection to participating Member States. The EUAA was instrumental in the relocation of 4 646 individuals between May 2020 and December 2021. On asylum processing at second instance, through the EUAA's support in 2021, the backlog in appeals was reduced and processing times improved, thanks also to legislative and administrative changes. At the end of 2021, 5 258 appeals were pending at the Appeals Authority<sup>7</sup>.

In the area of **reception**, the reduced number of arrivals, combined with the organised efforts of the Greek authorities to alleviate overcrowding on the islands, led to a substantial decline in the occupancy rate of reception facilities; at the end of December 2021, some 32 647 persons were residing in all official reception facilities in Greece, a 49 % drop compared to December 2020<sup>8</sup>. In 2020 and 2021, the Greek reception authorities assumed in full their responsibilities for coordinating and managing the national reception system; until then, other actors (Hellenic Army, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and CSOs) had been involved in the management and service provision in the reception and accommodation facilities.

The EUAA's interventions in 2020 and 2021 enabled the Greek authorities to release the pressure from the first-line reception system (borders), streamline the processing of asylum procedures and reduce significantly the asylum backlog.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Hellenic Ministry for Migration and Asylum, official statistics on international protection, December 2021, <https://migration.gov.gr/statistika/> (Note: statistics for year 2021 are only provided in Greek).

<sup>5</sup> EU Member States and associate countries.

<sup>6</sup> Eurostat data (online data code: migr\_dubri and migr\_dubro)

<sup>7</sup> <https://migration.gov.gr/statistika/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://migration.gov.gr/statistika/>

Finally, one of the key areas of the EUAA's activities in Greece was the tailored support provided to the SSPUAM on effectively implementing the national strategy for the protection of UAM and significantly improving the reception conditions for UAM in Greece. In 2021, the NERM was established with the EUAA's support and in collaboration with the UNHCR and other partners.

The EUAA's intervention in 2021 was evaluated as overall successful in achieving the intended results, with the most prominent example being the support to GAS on effectively tackling the bottleneck created in previous years with respect to regular and border asylum procedures and releasing the pressure from first-line reception.

### 3. Implementation of the action: current state of play

This section explains what happened during the implementation of the OP and presents the state of play. The data presented below have been extracted from internal monitoring data shared by the EUAA for the period January 2022 to September 2024. The monitoring data contained target values per output for each of the three years under observation. Targets were set on a quarterly and annual basis and were progressively monitored over the three years; the data reported in this section compared the values achieved with the targets, thus providing a quantitative overview of what was achieved during the evaluation period.

**Table 1. Overview of asylum applications, pending asylum applications, and TP decisions in Greece during the period 2022-2024**

	Asylum applications	Pending asylum applications	TP decisions
<b>2022</b>	29 125	22 585	21 530
<b>2023</b>	57 895	32 725	5 325
<b>2024 (up to end of September)</b>	46 065	21 625	4 930

Source: Eurostat data (20/12/2024)

For 2024, the internal monitoring data presented in this report compare the actual outputs with the progressive targets (where applicable) at the end of the third quarter 2024. This implies that at the time this report was written it was not possible to assess whether the annual targets would have been met or exceeded at the end of the year. Nevertheless, this had a minimal impact on the results of this evaluation, as in most cases the annual targets were already overachieved (or at least met) by the end of the third quarter 2024.

The reasons for under or overachievement relative to the foreseen targets are provided in Section 4: Evaluation findings.

## Measure 1: Asylum support

Overall, **91 % of the annual target<sup>9</sup>** was achieved in **2022** and **89 % of the same target in 2023**. In **2024**, **73 %** (out of the progressive target 80 %) was achieved by the third quarter.

The **targets set for quality reviews for 2022 and 2023 and the third quarter of 2024 were achieved** in full or over-achieved: 5 out of 5 planned quality feedback reports were delivered in 2022, 3 instead of the 2 foreseen in 2023 and 4 as planned by September 2024. In 2022, the EUAA also supported the Appeals Authority with the preparation of 1 310 essays for the Appeals Committees through deployed rapporteurs. The EUAA achieved the target almost in its entirety (91 %).

**In 2022, 49 % of application registrations were processed with the EUAA's support (output 1.1).** In 2023, registrations of applications conducted by RIS with the EUAA's support were moved under reception support (output 2.1). Only registrations of applications for international protection carried out by GAS (subsequent applications, detainees, UAM on the mainland, additional family members) remained as an activity under asylum support (output 1.1). At the end of 2023, only 4 % of the total lodged applications in Greece by GAS were supported by the EUAA (instead of 10 % as anticipated). For 2024, the target was set to 3 % of the total lodged applications. By September 2024, the percentage was 4 %<sup>10</sup> (143 % of the progressive target). **Results related to interviews in 2022 and 2023 exceeded the targets** (112 % in 2022 and 125 % in 2023). However, in 2024 results were underachieved: 76 % of the progressive target was met by the end of the third quarter. For reasons that will be explained in Section 4, there was **a difference between the achievement of the targets for opinions in 2022 and 2023**: 63 % of the target was achieved in 2022, whereas a 155 % achievement was recorded in 2023. By September 2024, 92 % of the progressive target was met.

The results under **output 1.2** exceeded the targets in all years. In 2022, relocation interviews stood at 136 % and assessments at 129 %. The number of candidates successfully matched for relocation with the EUAA's support was achieved at 90 % (252 individuals matched out of a target of 280). In 2023, there were no activities planned in the second half of the year for relocation assessments and matching, and the results **exceeded** the expectations (324 % in interviews and 358 % in assessments). The number of candidates proposed for relocation with the EUAA's support was achieved at 299 %. By September 2024, annual targets had already been achieved (397 % in interviews, 411 % in assessments and 340 % in the number of candidates proposed for relocation).

Regarding the EUAA's support to the Greek Dublin Unit (**output 1.3**), **the annual cumulative progressive targets were met**. Targets were met for the **number of persons covered by Dublin outgoing requests**, (98 % in 2022, 105 % in 2023 and 178 % by the third quarter of 2024). Targets were almost met in 2022 (86 %), overachieved in 2023 (248 %) and by September 2024 (163 % of the progressive target) for the number of persons covered by information requests for Dublin.

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<sup>9</sup> Percentages of completion of the targets for a measure are weighted across each output achieved under the measure. While results below the targets on a certain output have an impact on the overall percentage of completion for a given measure, overachievement of the targets (i.e. above 100 % of the target output) is not calculated and, thus, does not lead to a higher percentage.

<sup>10</sup> This share corresponds to 27 % of registrations lodged by GAS.

**Numbers were low in comparison with the targets in 2022 and 2023 but picked up in 2024 for training and capacity-building activities.** In 2022, the targets on the number of training sessions and workshops were achieved (113 % and 123 % respectively) whereas the number of coaching sessions fell behind (79 %). In 2023, training sessions were completed as planned (106 % of the target) whereas workshops and coaching sessions delivered attained the annual targets only at 67 % and 65 % respectively. **By the end of September 2024, the goals had been achieved in all three monitored activities;** 236 % of the progressive target was met in training sessions, 113 % in workshops and 100 % in coaching sessions. **As regards the number of participations in training sessions,** in 2022 the goal was almost achieved 82 % but then in 2023 and by the third quarter of 2024 the results had been relevant to the targets (105 % in 2023 and 129 % in 2024). The number of participations in coaching sessions did not reach the targets for 2022 and 2023: the percentages varied in fact between 52 % (in 2023) to 77 % (in 2022), while in 2024 88 % of the progressive target was achieved by September 2024. In 2024, the number of shadowing reports prepared with the EUAA's support exceeded the anticipated results (267 % of the progressive target was met)<sup>11</sup>. **Results exceeded the targets every year (140 % in 2022, 275 % in 2023 and 140 % by September 2024) for the professional development of judges and staff at second instance.**

## **Measure 2: Reception support**

Overall, **in 2022, 88 % of the annual target** was achieved, whereas **in 2023 87 % was met.** In 2024, the progressive results at the end of September were **69 % out of 73 %.** All through the implementation period, **targets were exceeded with respect to the EUAA's support for referrals and information provision (in the field).**

More specifically in **2022, certain targets were exceeded,** i.e., the SOPs and operational tools developed with the EUAA's support (217 %), the number of individuals covered by transfers managed by EUAA personnel (311 % which corresponds to 13 677 people being transferred) and the number of reception facilities in which the EUAA engineers/site managers provided support (125 %). In **2023, results exceeded the targets for a second consecutive year** in the number of individuals being transferred with the EUAA's support (497 % of the target, corresponding to 44 706 people being transferred). Slightly more SOPs and operational tools were adopted than foreseen (22 instead of 20). Monthly verification exercises conducted with the support of the EUAA were also monitored during 2023 and 2024 in the results framework<sup>12</sup>; 12 out of 12 planned exercises took place in 2023 and 9 out of 9 by the end of September 2024. By the third quarter of 2024, the progressive target was also met for the development of SOPs and operational tools (100 %) whereas results exceeded, for the third consecutive year, the targets set on transfers (129 % of the progressive target). **The national reception strategy and its implementation plan** which were close to being adopted (85 %) in 2022 **had not taken place** (by September 2024). According to the EUAA, it is planned for the last quarter of 2024. Likewise, for the first two-thirds of the OP implementation there was **no progress on the use of the ARC tool (0 %).** By September 2024, **11 out of 45 planned self-assessment exercises were conducted with the use of the ARC tool** (24 % of the progressive target was achieved).

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<sup>11</sup> This is a new indicator introduced in 2024 following Amendment 3.

<sup>12</sup> This indicator was introduced in 2023.



The EUAA provided support in all first-line reception centres in 2022 (100 %) and then to 28 out of 30 reception centres in 2023 (97 % on average during the year) and 29 out of 31 by the end of September 2024 (95 %<sup>13</sup>), as requested by the Greek authorities. Additionally, the EUAA in 2022 supported RIS with the implementation of the **information management mechanism** in all second-line reception centres and then in 2023 it reached full coverage of both first- and second-line reception centres (100 %). By quarter 3 2024, it has maintained such support (100 %). The number of individuals benefiting from **information provision** with the EUAA's support reached **93 254 (instead of 90 500 anticipated) in 2022, 151 978 (instead of 95 000) in 2023 and 129 168 (instead of 85 000) by quarter 3 2024**<sup>14</sup>. The targets for **individual assessments** were met in 2022 (99.7 %) and exceeded in 2023 (116 %) and in the third quarter of 2024 (103 %). Targets were also exceeded in 2022 (212 % of the target) on **referrals**, whereas in 2023 and by September 2024 the targets were met (97 % and 104 % consecutively). An indicator to monitor the development of the **pre-integration strategy** was set in 2022. Results were achieved in the first quarter of 2022 and henceforth the indicator was abolished. Finally, in 2023 the target on **registration of applications** for international protection, set at 50 % of all registrations (GAS and RIS)<sup>15</sup> was met (51 %). The same applied in 2024 where the registration percentages (60 % on average across the first three quarters) were steadily above 50 %, which was the target set.

At the beginning of the OP (2022) there were limited participations (52 %) in **training**, whereas in the subsequent two years (2023 and 2024), numbers picked up and **exceeded expectations** (185 % of the target in 2023 and 125 % of the progressive target by the end of September 2024).

### Measure 3: Vulnerability support

Overall, in 2022, **72% of the annual target** was achieved, whereas in 2023, **93% was achieved**. At the end of the **third quarter of 2024, 45%** (against a progressive target of 69 %) was met although, in certain sub-measures, the annual targets had been met. Multiple changes occurred in the support provided to the Greek authorities under this measure and the EUAA adapted its performance measurement tools accordingly.

More specifically, in 2022 the target related to the number of **SOPs and tools developed with the EUAA's support was not met** (3 out of 4 (75 %)), whereas in the following years of the OP's implementation, the results exceeded the targets set (20 instead of nine planned (222 % of the target) in 2023, and 36 out of 12 planned by the third quarter of 2024, (300 % of the progressive target)). In 2023 and 2024, **targets were met for the number of requests of unaccompanied and separated minors (and other vulnerable persons since the second quarter of 2024) managed with the EUAA's support through NERM**<sup>16</sup>. In 2023 the target was met at 108 % and by the end of September 2024, the results were three times over the target set, already reaching the annual target (347 % of the progressive target, 225 % of the annual target).

**Throughout the implementation period of the OP the number of UAM benefitting from the mentorship scheme far exceeded the targets.** In 2022, 215 % of the annual target was met whereas

<sup>13</sup> Previously during the year, the support to reception centres reached up to 30 sites out of 31.

<sup>14</sup> The numbers do not correspond to unique individuals. In fact, a person can participate in multiple information provision activities.

<sup>15</sup> In 2023, the EUAA supported 63 % of RIS registrations.

<sup>16</sup> The indicator was introduced in 2023.

in 2023 206 % was met. By September 2024, 142 % of the progressive target was met. In 2023 and 2024, **the number of placements in accommodation centres exceeded the targets**<sup>17</sup>: in 2023, 133 % of the annual target was met and by September 2024, 214 % of the progressive target (representing already a 157 % achievement of the annual target) was met.

The annual target for 2024 for **monitoring visits carried out with the EUAA's support**<sup>18</sup>, was set at 12. **By the third quarter of 2024, 36 visits had been concluded, representing a 400 % achievement** of the progressive target and 300 % of the annual one. There was **no progress by September 2024 on the operationalisation of the new accommodation scheme for vulnerable persons ('Stirixis')**<sup>19</sup>. Likewise, **the EUAA had not supported the GSVPIP with personnel on sites by the third quarter of 2024.**<sup>20</sup> Therefore, both progressive targets were not met.

**During the whole evaluation period, the number of participations in training sessions were significantly behind the targets**, despite an increase in absolute numbers. In 2022, 12 people participated in training sessions (instead of 60), representing 20 % of the annual target. In 2023, 244 participated (instead of 390) reaching 63 % of the target. At the end of September 2024, 102 (instead of 220) participations were registered in training sessions, representing 46 % of the progressive target.

#### Measure 4: TP support

Overall, **during the whole implementation of the OP, results achieved were beyond planned targets.**

More specifically, in 2022, the number of registrations conducted with the EUAA's support **reached 68 % of all registrations** (the target was set at 50 %)<sup>21</sup>. On information provision, in 2022, 8 121 beneficiaries were reached (211 % of the annual target)<sup>22</sup>. In 2023, 11 151 beneficiaries (corresponding to 310 % of the target) and 11 946 beneficiaries by September 2024 (representing 230 % of the progressive target) were reached.

In 2022, 17 **training** sessions on TP or other subjects were delivered by the EUAA under this measure, reaching 281 participations. In 2023 training activities were neither foreseen nor delivered.

## 4. Evaluation findings

This section presents the findings associated with the five evaluation criteria and their analysis (including the answers to the priority questions) incorporating the results of the desk review and the series of interviews conducted with the European Commission, Greek authorities, IOs, CSOs and EUAA staff.

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<sup>17</sup> The indicator was introduced in 2023.

<sup>18</sup> The indicator was introduced in 2024 following amendment 3.

<sup>19</sup> The indicator was introduced in 2024 following amendment 3.

<sup>20</sup> Indicator introduced in 2024 following amendment 3 to monitor output 3.1.

<sup>21</sup> In 2023 this indicator was discontinued following amendment 2.

<sup>22</sup> The number of beneficiaries does not correspond to unique individuals.



#### 4.1. To what extent was the action successful and why?

Given the EUAA's large-scale operations in Greece (in numbers and levels of intervention), the inherent volatile character of migration flows and the EUAA's distinctive *modus operandi*, i.e. assisting the Greek authorities mainly with embedded (temporary) staff recruited through sub-contractors, **the effectiveness of the OP's outputs was susceptible to external factors, such as the national context, legal or political changes, and the provision of services by other actors.** The following challenges were identified:

- The increase in arrivals in 2023 led to the need to provide first surge support under measure 1 and then amend the OP to scale up support for asylum processing and shift resources to output 2.1 in measure 2. Based on the evaluation results, **the EUAA managed to respond swiftly and efficiently to the urgent needs in the field (asylum and reception).** On the other hand, the surge in arrivals affected the implementation of certain activities across measures, such as training and capacity building activities and the roll-out of evaluation tools (ARC tool) which were de-prioritised by the Greek authorities.
- Sudden changes in the legal framework (i.e. the transfer of responsibility for performing most asylum registrations from GAS to RIS) or in working modalities implemented by GAS (i.e. the instruction to case officers to prioritise interviews) affected the EUAA's outputs, such as the number of opinions delivered under output 1.1 in 2022, or the number of registrations conducted under measure 1 in 2023. The EUAA managed through **bilateral discussions and mutual understanding to adapt to the new realities at central or field level.**
- Frequent changes in political leadership of MoMA had an impact on the EUAA's effective support at strategic level, such as in the development of a national reception strategy and a national operational plan as well as in the implementation of the EUAA's frontline support to the GSVPIP under measure 3.
- Gaps, disruptions, or operational challenges in the provision of interpretation services by the national contractors remained the most significant hindrance to the effectiveness and efficiency of the OP. As of April 2024, the national contractor ceased all services and the **EUAA agreed to provide temporary surge support with interpretation services**, prioritising support in the activities conducted by EUAA embedded staff.
- EUAA staff and other stakeholders also noted the domino effect on the services of the EUAA in the reception sites when, for given reasons (lack of staff, end of contracts or other), other actors are not/no longer able to offer the services foreseen. For instance, transfers of UAM should be accompanied by a medical file, but if there are no medical services provided at a specific site, then the transfers cannot be made until an alternative solution is found.
- **Technical problems** during the transition period from Alkyoni I to Alkyoni II, and with the handling of Dublin cases (a Dublin indicator after registration of international protection applications) constituted a low-risk challenge.

A cross-cutting challenge to the EUAA's support to asylum and reception authorities had been the element of **time responsiveness of such support in times of crises**, where surge support was needed. Indeed, the Greek authorities and EUAA staff agreed that there was room for improvement on this aspect.

## Measure 1: Asylum support

The EUAA managed overall to swiftly and effectively adapt to the changing needs of the Greek authorities given the intense fluctuating circumstances (**priority question 1**) and external factors impacting its work. National authorities believed that thanks to the EUAA's support, the Greek asylum system had been highly effective and productive. A well-established collaboration between the EUAA and GAS facilitated positive results. In addition, focus was placed on maintaining the sustainability of the Greek asylum system already achieved prior to the 2022-2024 EUAA intervention while enhancing the quality of procedures.

### *Output 1.0: Support to governance, strategic planning, quality and procedures*

Through the OP, the EUAA intensified its support to GAS in enhancing the **quality of procedures**, with contribution from the EUAA's headquarters. Quality feedback reports produced in 2022 fed into the needs assessment for the following year's annual training plan (2023): **the link between the quality assessment and thematic training sessions increased their effectiveness**. In 2022 and 2023, quality review assessment on essays of rapporteurs at second instance were delivered with **high satisfaction rates from the participants and the Appeals Authority**. Shadowing activities as part of the EUAA's capacity-building plan were delivered throughout the OP but only monitored in 2024 (shadowing reports were introduced as an indicator).

**A substantive number of training sessions, coaching sessions and workshops took place throughout the OP, reaching out on average to more individuals than anticipated. Through the EUAA's support, GAS managed to establish a pool of national trainers who were able to independently conduct national training.** The EUAA, together with national trainers, delivered the activities as per the annual training plan agreed between the EUAA and Greece. Where new needs were identified (newly hired staff or refreshers), on top of what had been planned, the EUAA's headquarters took over the training sessions. Therefore, **smooth, close cooperation between the EUAA's headquarters, the EUAA's Greece operation and GAS's Department for Procedures and Training was key to the successful results attained.** A common characteristic of training sessions and other capacity-building activities, **such as country of origin information briefings, was that they usually involved mixed groups:** GAS and EUAA staff, first and second instance staff respectively. This was positively evaluated by interviewees. **Challenges** in the achievement of the desired number of participations in training/coaching sessions lay within the de-prioritisation of training and capacity-building activities by the Greek authorities in times of increased pressure on the asylum system (e.g. fourth quarter 2023) or was due to the low participation of EUAA embedded staff, given limits to their access to training due to workload. In response to the latter, the EUAA initiated a discussion with GAS and jointly revised modes for nomination and participation in EUAA training to secure equal treatment between national officers and EUAA embedded personnel.

### *Output 1.1: Support to asylum processing at first instance*

In 2022, there was **increased involvement of the EUAA in registrations in comparison with previous years:** 49 % of all registrations could be attributed to the EUAA's support. At the end of 2022, the support of the EUAA effectively helped GAS in **eliminating the backlog**. In 2024, **given the previous scaling down from asylum support at first instance, difficulties arose in reaching the agreed number**

**of case officers and other profiles to be deployed in the field.** Indicatively, pursuant to amendment 3, under output 1.1 (EL-AS 1.1), 119 experts were to be deployed in the field in comparison with 53 of the same profiles foreseen by the last version of the OP (twice the number). In the first quarter of 2024, the low number of case officers being deployed with respect to the increased needs in the field led to deviations from the OP targets on interviews and opinions. By the end of the third quarter of 2024, the EUAA steadily increased its support to GAS. Deviations from targets set were mainly due to interpretation gaps.

### ***Output 1.2: Support to relocation***

The EUAA's support to relocation was highly effective. The **main challenge** faced by the EUAA in the implementation of the support to relocation was the volatile character of pledges opened by Member States that affected its planning of resources and successful matches.

### ***Output 1.3: Support to the processing of Dublin requests***

The EUAA's **support to the Greek Dublin Unit was considered very effective** in terms of results in absolute numbers and in building the unit's capacity on processing outgoing requests. The EUAA's embedded personnel in the Dublin Unit was considered an asset by the Greek authorities. **Challenges** that slightly impacted the results were the shortage of staff in times of annual leave (both GAS and EUAA embedded staff, especially in summer) or delays in their replacement and the delay in agreeing on a workflow on the referral pathways after the competence of registration was assumed by RIS. Interviewees mentioned that time is of the essence in Dublin procedures, therefore any delays in identification and referral had an impact on the implementation of the transfers.

## **Measure 2: Reception support**

### ***Output 2.0: Support to reception governance, strategic planning, quality, and procedures.***

The EUAA's support to RIS under this sub-measure was at the core of **reception governance** in Greece, setting a standardised system for site management. The **EUAA worked intensively for the establishment of workflows, SOPs, and other tools to enhance the capacity of national authorities to manage 30 reception centres across Greece, in line with the CEAS.** According to EUAA staff and IOs, the deployment of EUAA personnel as well as thematic meetings organised per profile enhanced the coordination and cooperation between RIS headquarters and RIS in the field on all procedures to be established. **Despite slow progress in terms of quantity, in comparison to targets set, the tools developed and implemented improved the capacity of RIS and largely had a significant impact on streamlining procedures,** according to feedback received by EUAA staff. The **national reception operating plan** which was drafted in 2022 - henceforth pending finalisation and endorsement by the national authorities - was prioritised in the third quarter of 2024 in view of the national implementation plan under the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. On the roll-out of the **ARC tool, there were significant delays due to increased operational needs that deprioritised the relevant activities planned in 2022 and 2023.** In 2024, the ARC tool was rolled out and tested in eleven locations; the EUAA was positive about its use based also on the feedback received from the authorities. The Greek authorities in fact found the tool very useful in support of RIS's self-evaluation

and self-improvement. However, they also found room for improvement in terms of methodology and scope.

**The largest staff turnovers (both of national and EUAA embedded staff) occurred at RIS.** This had an impact on the EUAA's support provided through training since there was a simultaneous need for foundation modules, induction training and special thematic training. In addition, when RIS assumed the responsibility on registrations, additional training on registration and identification of Dublin cases was added to the training plan for 2024. In 2022, the EUAA managed to cover all reception officers with foundation modules and induction training: satisfaction rates of participants were over 90 %. In 2022 and 2023, it proved challenging to formalise training for newly recruited staff: this challenge was overcome in 2024. Despite an increase in training numbers, participation rates remained low mainly due to urgent needs in the field that led Greek authorities to deprioritise training. The pool of national trainers was not as developed as the pool of GAS trainers since the workload in the field remains high, not allowing for participation in train-the-trainers sessions; however, some national capacity had been developed with respect to basic modules. The fact that joint training for both EUAA and RIS staff of different profiles was delivered proved mutually beneficial, according to interviewees.

#### ***Output 2.1: Support to first and second-line reception.***

During the evaluation period, all sites (or almost all) were supported by the EUAA. Registration officers were deployed in 2024 in addition to profiles already deployed in 2022 and 2023. The EUAA's support for registrations of international protection was key during the implementation period of the OP. RIS assumed this responsibility in 2023 without adaptation of tools used by GAS and adequate training of its staff on asylum processing: interviewees from the EUAA, IOs and CSOs raised concerns on the quality and efficiency of RIS and its capacity to undertake registrations. The EUAA responded to that by shifting its resources from measure 1 to measure 2 to boost RIS's capacity on registrations. When arrivals substantially increased (September 2023), priority was given to the provision of additional registration assistants at MoMA's request. At that time, the prior establishment of a reserve pool of experienced experts by the EUAA added to the readiness of the Agency to provide an efficient response to the increased needs on the ground. In terms of numbers, the EUAA was **effective in reducing the backlog** of registrations since its embedded staff processed a high percentage of overall registrations. In 2024, focus was given also on enhancing the quality of registrations.

**The identification of vulnerable persons and Dublin cases improved** thanks to the EUAA's support in the development of relevant SOPs at central level and through the EUAA's training with the participation of mixed groups of RIS and EUAA embedded staff. Likewise, horizontal coordination between RIS and the GSVPIP on issues of vulnerability and RIS and GAS on asylum processing improved at strategic level thanks to the EUAA's facilitation. On CIP and harmonisation of procedures between first and second-line reception, there was room for improvement according to interviewees: the EUAA intensively worked on these from 2022 to 2024.

#### **Measure 3: Vulnerability support**

The EUAA was instrumental in the design, implementation, and operationalisation of a national strategy for the protection of UAMs in Greece, providing capacity building and operational assistance to the SSPUAM in all related activities throughout the OP. All interviewees commented on the

effectiveness of the EUAA's support to the Greek authorities in establishing a protection framework for UAM in Greece (**priority question 2**). Key factors that contributed to maximum results achieved under **output 3.0** were the involvement of highly skilled EUAA embedded personnel from day one in the planning and implementation of most of the activities, as well as the different modalities adopted to enhance regular exchange and cooperation between the EUAA and the GSVPIP. The SSPUAM's successful projects gained recognition and **acknowledgment beyond national level**: study visits were regularly organised with peers from other Member States to present good practices, such as the NERM and the mentorship project. **Thanks to the EUAA's support, the mentorship project reached a high number of UAM** who were empowered: according to national authorities, it provided a solution to protection and integration. With the expansion of the scope of competence of the GSVPIP, two vulnerability officers were deployed to the GSVPIP in the second quarter of 2024. However, **none of the vulnerability liaison officers foreseen under output 3.1 (frontline support to vulnerable persons) had been deployed in the field** since, as at the third quarter of 2024, the Presidential Decree on the GSVPIP's competences and the new organigramme of the MoMA were still pending.

**On support for the development of SOPs and operational tools, the EUAA was very productive.** Ad hoc operational needs led to the development of additional tools not originally foreseen in the OP. In addition, vacancies, resignations, terminations of short-term contracts and leave of absence contributed to a heavy workload for the remaining GSVPIP personnel, mainly constituted by the EUAA's embedded personnel. This factor affected participations in training which remained below targets set.

#### Measure 4: TP support

The EUAA was instrumental in assisting the Greek authorities in implementing the TPD and responding to the invasion of Ukraine launched by Russian forces (**priority question 3**). The fact that the EUAA was involved from the beginning in the implementation of the TPD, combined with the capacity that the Greek authorities had already developed in reception and asylum matters, helped to achieve the results in full. In 2022, the percentage of registrations concluded with the EUAA's support reached a record high given that the EUAA already had a strong presence in the respective Regional Asylum Offices. **In 2023, the EUAA scaled down support for TP registrations given that the Greek authorities demonstrated increased capacity** to assume all registrations. The EUAA also assisted with identification, referrals, and CIP. Occasionally increases in the arrivals of TP beneficiaries, group sessions and the assignment of an additional EUAA expert in 2024 led to the targets set being exceeded.

#### *Efficiency*

The **budget** allocated for the financing of the EUAA Greece OP 2022-2024 was EUR 41 354 426 in 2022<sup>23</sup>, EUR 21 785 145<sup>24</sup> in 2023 and EUR 31 848 443 in 2024. The consumption rate was 96 % in 2022, 95 % in 2023 and 61 % (estimated) in September 2024. In 2022, asylum and reception received equal

<sup>23</sup> According to the EUAA's single programming document 2022-2024, the planned budget for Greece was initially set at EUR 52 712 940, then revised in September 2022 at EUR 39 350 000.

<sup>24</sup> According to the EUAA's single programming document 2023-2025, the planned budget for Greece was initially set at EUR 36 477 700, then revised in September 2023 at EUR 22 050 000.

funding (35 % each), UAM support received 20 % of the budget and TP 10 %. In the following years, most weight was given to reception support (50 % in 2023, 45 % in 2024), then asylum (28 % in 2023, 30 % in 2024), followed by UAM/GSVPIP (20 % in 2023, 23 % in 2024) and TP (2 % in both years). Based on interviews with EUAA staff, the budget was sufficient to cover the activities implemented, including the increased support with asylum support teams provided under amendment 3 and the surge support in interpretation in the third quarter of 2024. The budget mostly covered personnel costs (Member State experts, interim workers and external experts), interpretation services, training costs and other direct costs (security, buildings rental and maintenance, office supplies, etc.).

**The use of human resources was mainly efficient during the evaluation period.** In the first two years of the OP's implementation, the EUAA improved its time responsiveness to replacements/new deployments of the EUAA's external experts thanks to **the maintenance of a reserve pool of experts**. On early termination of contracts (few in numbers), the EUAA was able to replace them immediately (in about two weeks). To this contributed the nature of needs, i.e., similar profiles for registration assistants and case officers, and the short time between scaling down and then again up of asylum support which made eligible candidates available to be re-deployed in the field. In addition, the EUAA's good planning and efficient management of resources allowed **flexible reallocation of resources between measures or sub-measures according to the needs**. For instance, human resources were not attached to TP or relocation activities, rather flexibly navigating across measures on the basis of ad hoc needs, with remote technologies also serving as a facilitating factor. On TP support, thanks to the reallocation of human resources from measure 2 to measure 4, there was no need to increase the budget in order to meet the new needs. A challenge identified by the Greek authorities is the fact that the **EUAA's embedded staff's working conditions** are not regulated by their direct managers. There is limited flexibility in case they do not have sufficient workload to be assigned different tasks or in case of increased pressure. The different employment status of EUAA staff working alongside national staff de facto introduced a two-tier system (in salaries and in terms and conditions of work). In 2024 the heavy workload of both EUAA statutory staff and external experts was noted.

In 2024, **inefficiencies occurred due to the lack of available eligible candidates from the reserve pool and the acute needs in the field**. The targets set for the number of asylum experts to be deployed in 2024 were high and had not been entirely met by September 2024. There was contradictory information with respect to the interim operational staff yet to be deployed under measures 2 and 3. According to the EUAA's internal monitoring data, the target for staff deployed had been reached by September 2024. Nevertheless, the deployed resources were not at the level agreed with the Greek authorities with gaps persisting. Without a reserve pool, or where the needs are extremely high and unexpected, a new recruitment can take about three months, causing gaps in the provision of services and dissatisfaction on the part of authorities. Some national authorities suggested that some gaps persisted even after six months. In addition to efficiency, this had an impact on the relevance and effectiveness of the OP.

Phasing out from the support with **interpretation services** in March 2023 resulted in a reduction in the OP's budget: in 2022, EUR 8 486 000 were estimated for interpretation service costs<sup>25</sup> whereas in 2023, an initial budget of EUR 4 800 000 was foreseen<sup>26</sup>. The EUAA maintained minimum support on an ad

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<sup>25</sup> According to the EUAA's single programming document 2022-2024 of September 2022 (revision 2).

<sup>26</sup> According to the EUAA's single programming document 2023-2025 of December 2022 (amendment 1).



hoc basis (e.g., relocation, TPD, rare languages). However, the fact that the national contractor did not provide uninterrupted or sufficient interpretation services from May 2023 onwards had an impact on **the efficient use of EUAA resources** across measures involving operational support. In the third quarter of 2024, the EUAA temporarily increased support with interpretation services within the existing budget. In order to overcome the identified challenges to the OP's effective and efficient implementation, priority was given to the activities conducted by the EUAA's embedded personnel.

### **Coherence**

In terms of **internal coherence**, the measures of the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024 followed a logical scheme, being divided per national counterpart responsible for its implementation (apart from measure 4 which is a stand-alone measure similar to other country operations). This facilitated a tailored approach for each national counterpart as per the needs. In practice, there is a strong interconnection and interdependence amongst the different measures. On asylum procedures, measure 2 was linked to measure 1 given that registrations of asylum applications fell under the competence of RIS. On reception, measure 2 was linked to the implementation of measure 3 given that referral pathways must be established between RIS and GSVPIP with respect to vulnerable persons. **Coordination among the EUAA, national authorities and other stakeholders was identified by all categories of interviewees as key to avoiding overlaps and gaps.** An example provided was case management activities whereby the EUAA supported the harmonisation of procedures through the facilitation of coordination between RIS and the SSPUAM and then GSVPIP.

In terms of **external coherence**, the EUAA's role was deemed **complementary** to those of other stakeholders and its mandate **unique**, supporting the national asylum and reception system from within, whereas other stakeholders assisted Greece from the outside. No overlaps were mentioned. **Feedback received by IOs, and non-governmental organisations was very positive** and the cooperation/interaction between the EUAA and IOs at managerial level was characterised as positive, constructive, and transparent. Stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation shared different perceptions on the EUAA's mandate, role and scope of activities in Greece. In fact, Greek authorities believed that the EUAA may supply all relevant activities to asylum and reception services. IOs believed that the EUAA may be involved in national advocacy towards alignment of national practices with the CEAS standards. CSOs believed that the EUAA's embedded personnel received instructions solely from the EUAA. Such inconsistencies in views and expectations could result in a misleading picture of the EUAA's mandate. Therefore, the EUAA's Greece operation could reflect on outreach communication activities to further stress to general and specific audiences what the EUAA's role is in delivering a positive impact in the field of asylum and reception.

On **other EU-funded initiatives** that could possibly overlap with the EUAA's support, it was noted that there were **different filters in place to avoid duplication, such as the involvement of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs in advising and monitoring the disbursement of EU migration funds.**

## **4.2. How did the Agency make a difference through the action?**

Most interviewees from different categories stressed the importance of having an EU agency assisting frontline Member States such as Greece with asylum and reception management, **bringing the EU**

**acquis into relevant procedures.** During the evaluation period, the EUAA assisted Greece in managing two emergency situations: people fleeing Ukraine in 2022 and increased arrivals in 2023 that led to increased asylum applications in 2024. The EUAA's embedded system was mentioned as an effective and powerful tool to achieve sustainability and on-the-job training of national staff.

**If the EUAA had not intervened in Greece in 2022-2024, the impact would have been severe** on both asylum and reception. According to interviewees, the EUAA's support on reception was crucial, especially the coverage of all reception sites. On asylum support, if the EUAA had not intervened, bottlenecks would have been created in times of increased demands on access to registration and asylum. All interviewees agreed that it was not only a matter of numbers but first and foremost the **quality of the embedded staff** that ensured added value. On vulnerability, with the EUAA's support, the SSPUAM and then the GSVPIP were able to build and operationalise a robust protection system. Examples of the EUAA's contribution to UAM support were the abolition of the protective custody for UAM in police stations, the development of professional foster schemes and mental health schemes. On TP support, if the EUAA had not intervened, resources would have been borrowed from asylum, impacting on procedures for applicants for international protection. Services to the beneficiaries of TP would also have been of lower quality, in the absence of the EUAA's special training.

#### 4.3. Is the action relevant?

**All interviewees agreed that the move from a one-year OP to a three-year OP had only benefits.** They stressed the sense of **stability** that it provided both to the EUAA staff and national authorities. Interim staff felt more secure, and this reduced turnover. Greek authorities felt reassured on the continuation of the EUAA's support and engaged more in long-term planning with the EUAA. It was also crucial for capacity building activities which require more time to produce and assess results. Another positive effect was the **flexibility** attached to it, especially on the use of resources which are not tied to given activities and can easily be reallocated. Annual reviews (needs assessments) were still being conducted to adjust to the changing needs and priorities and keep the OP relevant. Training plans were agreed annually and revised when necessary.

In general, the **EUAA was flexible, adaptable, and responsive to the changing needs and priorities throughout the implementation of the OP.** The EUAA responded flexibly in the fluctuating circumstances in the field, albeit not as quickly as desired by the national authorities and to the extent that authorities would have wished. A good practice mentioned by Greek authorities was the 'speedy reflexes' shown by the EUAA in times of pressure to the Greek asylum and reception system by providing extraordinary support to GAS and RIS with interpretation services.

#### Measure 1: Asylum support

Adaptation to the fluctuating circumstances was a result of close collaboration and communication between GAS and the EUAA. The EUAA successfully phased-out in 2023 from support to asylum processing and then scaled up a few months later. The EUAA smoothly navigated the ups and downs in demand on asylum processing albeit with a cost, i.e., the overburdening of its statutory staff with recruitment processes.



## Measure 2: Reception support

The EUAA's intervention was very relevant in the area of reception given the phase out of other actors (IOs, CSOs) in the field and the increased pressure on the reception system (both first-line and second-line) as a result of a high number of arrivals in the third quarter of 2023. Training provided to newly recruited reception officers was considered relevant to the needs, even if there were small delays in 2023 when immediate deployment was needed. In 2024 the situation was remedied. In terms of future planning, the Greek authorities prioritise the revision of referral pathways between the EUAA, RIS and the GSVPIP as well the upgrading of information management systems, to include also external actors in information systems in place.

## Measure 3: Vulnerability support

The EUAA swiftly adapted to the changing needs of the SSPUAM which was substituted by the GSVPIP throughout the implementation period, including through the signing of amendment 3. If the EUAA's support continues in the future, the Greek authorities identified the need for support in the management of funds.

## Measure 4: TP support

According to the Greek authorities, the EUAA's support was **extremely timely and very helpful**. In 2023, GAS took over registrations and for the remainder of the time, the EUAA provided support mainly with information provision and registrations. In the third quarter of 2024 flows increased and the EUAA swiftly adapted to the changing needs by shifting resources from measure 1.

# 5. Conclusions and recommendations

## 5.1. Conclusions

**The effectiveness of the EUAA's intervention in Greece in 2022 and 2023 was overall very good, apart from the EUAA's support to the GSVPIP (measure 3) being evaluated as good.** For several activities, targets set by the EUAA were exceeded, namely on capacity building and training for GAS and RIS, on the development of SOPs and operational tools at RIS and the GSVPIP, on the handling of registrations for international protection, on information provision on reception and temporary protection, on relocation activities, on Dublin procedures and on UAM different schemes (accommodation, NERM, mentorship). The EUAA's role was also critical at RIS's central level supporting transfers. The professional development activities for judges and rapporteurs under measure 1 steadily exceeded anticipated results. In 2024, extensive input from the EUAA to capacity building of the Greek asylum and reception authorities was documented. **Nonetheless, in 2023 and 2024 there was a higher expectation as to the number of participations in the EUAA's training for the GSVPIP** which was not fulfilled due to increased needs in other outputs, vacancies in positions foreseen under the OP and legal challenges. Likewise, the provision of the EUAA's frontline support to vulnerable persons first introduced by virtue of amendment 3 did not materialise.

On **priority question 1**, the findings of the evaluation conclude that the EUAA managed to swiftly and effectively adapt to the changing needs of the Greek authorities given the intense fluctuating circumstances. **Greece, with the EUAA's support, built a robust, sustainable asylum system that can smoothly manage asylum procedures with limited support from the Agency.** In times of pressure, the EUAA intervened within the existing OP with surge support by reallocating resources from other measures, making use of its existing pool of resources and prioritising, in agreement with the Greek authorities, the needs in the field.

On the other hand, the reception system in Greece was still under development and to a large degree dependent on EUAA resources. **This is why the surge in arrivals at the end of 2023 affected mostly the EUAA's support for reception**, especially the intended results at strategic level (on training and quality and procedures). **The fact that the EUAA supported RIS both centrally and locally and delivered joint training to national and the EUAA's embedded staff constituted an asset** to ensure coordination and streamlined procedures and workflows across sites (first and second-line reception) and at both levels (central and field).

The EUAA developed several SOPs, workflows, and tools mostly in 2022 and 2023, although there was still room for improvement in the unification and formalisation of procedures and tools. Moreover, the **EUAA facilitated the smooth transition of the registration procedure from GAS to RIS**, even though this was not part of the original planning under the OP. Given that the Agency already supported GAS with the same activity, it flexibly shifted resources to RIS when needed.

On **priority question 2**, the conclusions from the evaluation exercise point to an effective support to the SSPUAM (now GSVPIP) on UAM protection. **Building a resilient UAM protection system in Greece was a common strategic goal for the EUAA and Greece and the results were successful so far:** the EUAA was instrumental, from the establishment of the SSPUAM, in setting up the framework for the protection of UAM in Greece. Throughout the implementation period of the OP, the EUAA assisted in the operationalisation of the national strategy, in planning and funding and in the coordination of the GSVPIP with non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders.

On **priority question 3**, the EUAA succeeded in providing timely and effective support to the Greek authorities in the registration of beneficiaries of temporary protection and related CIP. In particular, through the early delivery of training and the speedy deployment of human resources in the field, the EUAA strengthened the preparedness system to cover the needs of beneficiaries arriving in Greece. This support was still relevant given the increased flows of TP beneficiaries in summer 2024.

**The efficiency of the EUAA's intervention in Greece was good.** Despite flexibility in reallocation of existing resources and temporary support with interpretation services, the EUAA experienced difficulties in recruiting (mainly delays and struggles to identify candidates in remote locations) and replacing personnel at the same time, mostly for reception and UAM/vulnerability support. When interpretation was not provided by the EUAA, an inefficient use of its resources occurred: supporting Greek authorities with interpreters and clarifying the line management of the EUAA's embedded staff is key to achieve better results. These shortcomings being horizontal in nature, affected the scores on efficiency of all measures.

**The coherence of the EUAA's intervention in Greece was evaluated as very good** given the strong complementarity between measures or sub-measures. Coordination pathways between the EUAA, the national authorities and, where applicable, other actors improved in 2022-2024.

After many years of operations, the EUAA has built a trustworthy relationship with IOs and non-governmental organisations active in Greece. The same applied to national authorities. The EUAA, through its stable support for more than ten years, provided reassurance to the Greek authorities: when other actors phased out, the EUAA boosted its support to Greece, ensuring a viable system. If the EUAA had not intervened, the impact on the ground would have been significant and in certain aspects detrimental. The EUAA also supported the Greek authorities to manage two emergency situations: i) the reception of people fleeing Ukraine and ii) a new surge in arrivals in 2023. For all these reasons, **the added value of the EUAA's intervention was rated as very good.**

The move from a one to a three-year OP added to this sense of stable support as it allowed for long-term planning, coupled with the possibility to adapt the EUAA's response to evolving needs through the continued organisation of yearly needs assessments. **The relevance of the EUAA's intervention was evaluated as very good** since the EUAA managed to respond to multiple shifts in needs, both at structural and operational level, acting within the framework of the OP but flexibly navigating across measures.

The overall level of implementation of the OP was therefore rated very good. The table below presents a scoring for each criterion and each measure, formulated on the basis of the results presented in this ex post evaluation report. The ratings<sup>27</sup> cover the spectrum from good to very good.

**Table 2. Scoring of achievements of the Greece OP 2022-2024 (during the evaluation period) based on the achievement of the targets**

	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4
Effectiveness	Very good	Very good	Good	Very good
Efficiency	Good	Good	Good	Good
Coherence	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good
EU added value	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good
Relevance	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

## 5.2. Good practices and lessons learnt

The results of the final evaluation of the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024 point to three particularly good practices:

- During the three years of implementation of the OP, the EUAA encountered multiple changes in the original planning and managed to smoothly adapt by swiftly reallocating resources across

<sup>27</sup> The rating is mainly based on the degree to which activities were completed at the time of writing, coupled with judgements about the degree to which non-implementation was caused by factors outside of the control of the Agency.

measures or sub-measures. When needs in relocation increased, the EUAA shifted resources from output 1.1 to 1.2. Then with the change of responsibility on registration of applications for international protection from GAS to RIS, resources were moved from measure 1 to measure 2. Finally, to provide support on the TPD, the EUAA used existing resources from measure 1 which moved to measure 4. **This flexibility in smoothly navigating between measures contributed to the effectiveness and efficiency of the OP and represented a good practice.**

- The EUAA intervention in Greece was multi-dimensional. Support was provided to both asylum and reception systems, at central and field level, on structural and operational level. In the management of the asylum and reception system, different Greek authorities were involved. The EUAA established focal points at each Greek authority who benefitted from its support to effectively coordinate on the implementation of the OP's sub-measures but also to ensure efficient communication and collaboration between central and local level of intervention. Through the establishment of these tailor-made channels, the **EUAA managed to enhance coordination between co-competent authorities, such as GAS, RIS and the GSVPIP**. Moreover, with the use of the EUAA's extensive network of embedded personnel across locations, departments and services, **the streamlining of procedures and the harmonisation of referral pathways** were achieved to a certain degree. These results, despite not being at the forefront of the EUAA's intervention in Greece as set out in the OP, contributed the most to the effectiveness of the EUAA's support by creating an enabling environment.
- The EUAA's support for UAM and TP was overall successful given that the EUAA supported the SSPUAM and GAS/RIS from the beginning and contributed to building the system and the response to the identified needs. Furthermore, measure 4 was a small-scale project and measure 3 was larger, but divided into smaller scale autonomous projects (such as guardianship system, NERM, mentorship scheme). This facilitated planning, performance and monitoring.
- The EUAA has established a good collaboration with other stakeholders in Greece. For instance, both the EUAA and IOs regularly consulted each other and sought feedback when planning activities or mapping the needs in the field. At the operational level, the development of a toolkit for best interest assessment under a tripartite cooperation scheme between the GSVPIP, EUAA and UNHCR was seen as a good practice. In the field, the cooperation between the IOM and EUAA ran smoothly both during the hand-over of information management to the Greek reception authorities and the launching of the new Hippocrates programme<sup>28</sup>.

The following lessons learnt are particularly relevant:

- Given the level of robustness of the Greek asylum system and the situation in the field, the EUAA agreed with the Greek authorities that in 2023 its support to asylum processing would have phased-out with a view to exit. An option to scale up in times of pressure was included in the relevant agreement. Indeed, the EUAA successfully phased out in the third quarter of 2023. However, at the same time, the situation in the field changed, given the increased arrivals recorded. At first, the EUAA successfully met the urgent need for registration assistants by re-allocating current resources to GAS and benefiting from the pool of resources that it already had. **However, when the needs became more acute, the pool of experts was exhausted, resources**

<sup>28</sup> The project foresees the provision of medical, nursing and psychosocial support services to the residents of the regional services (accommodation facilities) of the Reception and Identification Service (RIS). The duration of the implementation of the Project is set at twelve (12) months starting from 01/07/2024 (source: IOM official webpage).

were no longer available and new recruitment had to be run to fill new positions or vacancies. This had a double effect: **the Greek authorities were dissatisfied with the time responsiveness of the EUAA's support**, suggesting there was room for improvement in its selection criteria and working methods for recruitment; on the other hand, the EUAA's Greece operation staff was involved in new recruitments of around 150 persons within 9 months, leading to their **overburdening and the de facto prioritisation of recruitment over any other tasks**. Lessons learnt from this activity involved the need for constant reassessment of stand-by resources and the adoption of a proactive approach and early planning on anticipated vacancies, due to resignations or terminations of contracts.

- **Challenges occurred in balancing capacity building and urgent needs in the field when arrivals picked up.** In 2023, the intermediate solution given was to move ahead with planned training sessions with the participation of EUAA staff only. This led to the deployment of personnel in the field (reception support) without any prior induction training. To secure an adequate response to the reception needs, in line with the CEAS and the sustainability of the system, **better preparedness was required** in terms of deployment either of already qualified staff or of new staff adequately trained for the job profiles: in 2024, RIS personnel took part in an induction training.

This evaluation also takes note of **horizontal considerations** which can be taken forward by the EUAA's senior management.

Based on the evaluation findings, a horizontal challenge across measures was the timely filling of both new positions and old ones after a resignation or a short-term contract expiring. While this affected the effectiveness of the results of this OP, issues related to the timely deployment and replacement of human resources are relevant to other country operations too. In fact, an expansion of the pool of eligible candidates across different OPs (preferably with prior EUAA experience from other operations that had phased-out) and of the qualification criteria (lower qualification criteria for general service positions) would likely increase the pool of eligible candidates, which is key to the provision of timely support by the EUAA.

### 5.3. Recommendations

This section provides recommendations in view of implementation of the next OP.

#### **Recommendation 1: Support the authorities in building a sustainable system for the provision of interpretation services in the asylum and reception context**

##### **1.1 Support the authorities indicatively with:**

- The provision of technical advice in programming and funding;
- The transfer of knowledge on remote interpretation and flexible allocation of resources as per the needs;

##### **1.2 Develop a surge support protocol in agreement with the Greek authorities and within the allocated budget to the Greece operation using pre-defined triggering conditions, such as:**

- Bottlenecks created in different Regional Asylum Offices or RICs due to severe shortcomings in interpretation services and/or
- Identified high risks of inefficiency in the use of the EUAA's EUAA resources.



**Recommendation 2: Further strengthen cooperation with national counterparts under the OP to maximise results**

- 2.1 Continue to enhance vertical coordination between GAS and Regional Asylum Offices and RIS and RICs/closed controlled access centres) and other accommodation facilities by developing workflows per activity;
- 2.2 Establish a standing high-level inter-service cooperation platform between the EUAA, GAS, RIS and the GSVPIP to ensure that all issues related to the implementation of the OP are identified in a timely manner, discussed, and decided jointly;
- 2.3 Promote cooperation between the EUAA and the Greek authorities at service level by appointing focal points per sub-measure.

**Recommendation 3: Continue to prioritise CIP and harmonisation of procedures and workflows between first and second- line reception on reception support**

- 3.1 Allocate resources to CIP and ensure continuity in CIP through support to information desks in all reception sites and in between transfers;
- 3.2 Standardise procedures and develop workflows on case management, identification of vulnerable persons and referral pathways between first and second-line reception;
- 3.3 Establish workflows and referral pathways between RIS and the GSVPIP on cases of vulnerable persons (UAM, victims of torture, trafficking, gender-based violence, etc.).

**Recommendation 4: Develop an internal communication strategy addressed at Greek authorities, IOs, CSOs and the general public and train EUAA staff on the mandate and role of the EUAA in the context of operational support in Greece**

## Annex 1: Methodology and analytical models used

The evaluation took a mixed methods approach, combining the use of existing sources of evidence with primary data collection, notably through interviews.

**Desk research** included the Agency's monitoring data, the OP document itself, the needs assessment, and to a lesser degree statistics on asylum and reception which were used as contextual background information. While the Agency's monitoring data allowed for a systematic collection of the relevant information for the purposes of the evaluation, some gaps in publicly available data limited the quality of the contextual data (e.g. on backlog and arrivals).

As explained previously in Section 3, the cutoff data for this evaluation (end of the third quarter 2024), did not allow an assessment of the annual targets for 2024. Nevertheless, this had a minimal impact on the results of this evaluation, as in most cases the annual targets were already overachieved (or at least met) by the end of the third quarter of 2024.

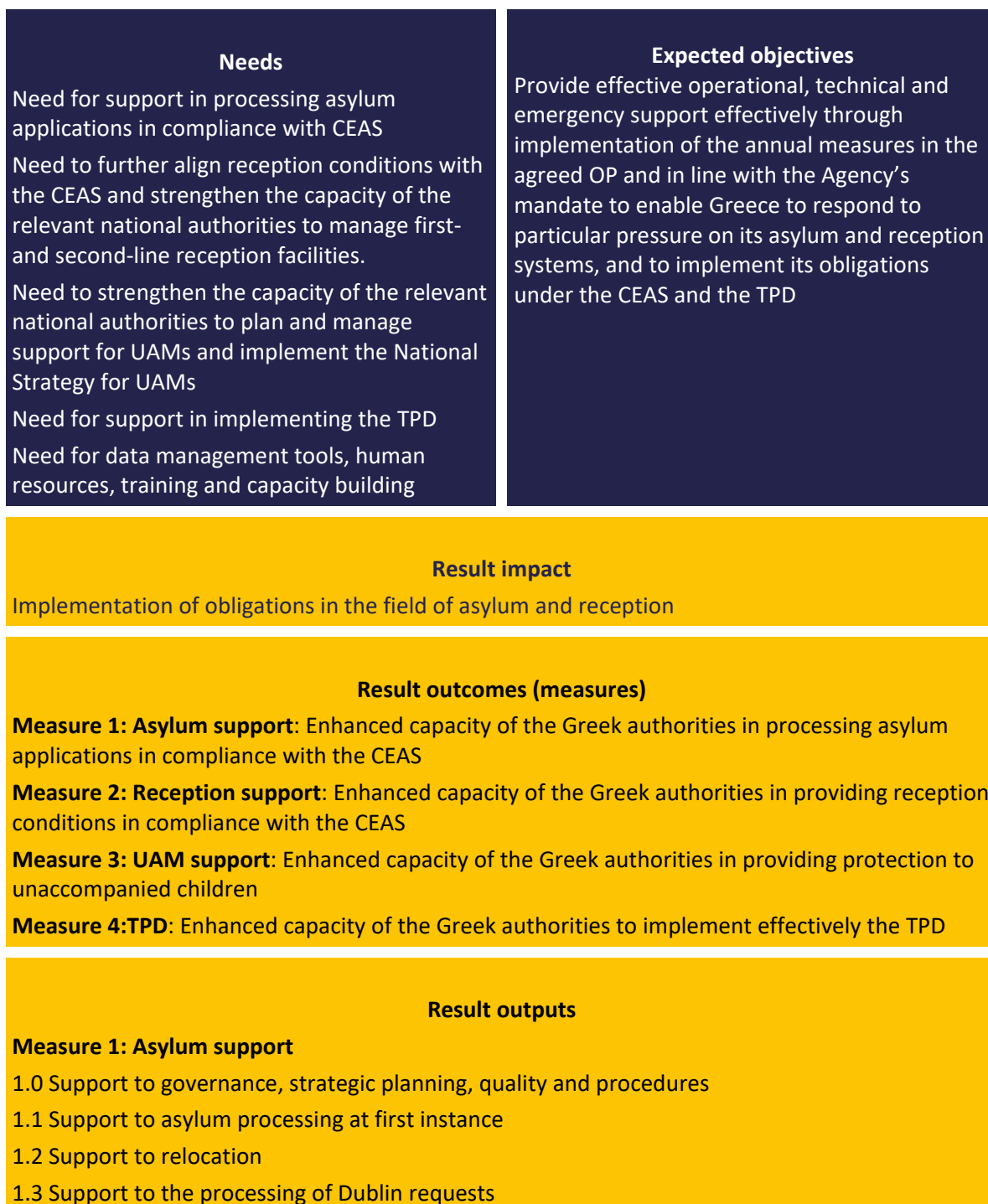
The evaluation process also encountered a challenge related to interviewees' responsiveness at the beginning of the consultation phase. However, this was mitigated later in the evaluation and almost all the foreseen stakeholders were consulted. In fact, in terms of **interviews**, the evaluation made use of evidence collected through a total of 30 interviews: the consulted stakeholders include relevant staff members from the EUAA and relevant Greek authorities, IOs and one CSO.

The collected primary and secondary evidence underwent a process of **triangulation and synthesis**, with a view to derive robust, evidence-based answers to the evaluation questions, and formulate conclusions and lessons learnt for the future on that basis.

The **conclusions and lessons learned**, as well as **recommendations** resulting from them, were validated with the Agency's personnel after the submission of the draft report to ensure they are valid and appropriate, and workable given any contextual constraints faced by the Agency and/or other stakeholders.



## Annex 2: Intervention logic<sup>29</sup>



<sup>29</sup> The intervention logic here reflects the latest amendment of the OP (March 2023).





## **Measure 2: Reception support:**

2.0 Support to reception governance, strategic planning, quality and procedures

2.1 Support to first and second-line reception

## **Measure 3: UAM Support**

3.0 UAM support

## **Measure 4: TPD**

4.0 TP support

### **Activities**

Support to the MoMA as well as Asylum Service at central level on strategic planning and coordination

Support to Asylum Service at central level in the set-up and roll-out of processes, SOPs and workflows, in view of establishing an integrated, harmonised approach to asylum processing

Support in strengthening the Asylum Service in enhancing the quality of its procedures, including through maintaining close communication mechanisms between central level and the field on quality issues, in particular liaising with quality focal points, implementing quality assessment tools and organising explanatory sessions and workshops

Support in strengthening the Asylum Service at central level on country of origin information and country guidance, including through the delivery of information sessions and workshops

Support in strengthening the Asylum Service on training and coaching, including through the facilitation of participation by personnel of national authorities in EUAA train-the-trainer sessions, support and facilitation of national training and coaching sessions, translation of EUAA modules

Support in strengthening the Appeals Authority through professional development activities targeting judges and staff (rapporteurs, statisticians and operational staff), as well as country of origin information country briefings

Institutional and operational support to the Appeals Committees, including data management

Support in enhancing the MoMA, as well as Asylum Service at central level on data management, analysis and reporting capabilities, including through support to the Directorate-General Information Technology of MoMA

Support in registering applicants for international protection, as well as in providing information and facilitating administrative procedures

Support in conducting interviews and drafting opinions (face-to-face and remote)

Support in setting up asylum processing centres that will host EUAA/GAS joint operations

Support in the coordination and harmonisation of relocation activities, including the design of tools, workflows and templates

Delivery of relevant, including tailor-made, training and guidance

Support in conducting relocation interviews and drafting assessments

Provision of interpretation services

Conducting quality reviews of relocation interviews

Matching of relocation requests with Member State pledges



Support to Member State missions, including conducting additional interviews and providing interpretation, if requested

Other support, in accordance with SOPs agreed with Greek authorities

Support in processing outgoing requests

Support in processing information requests

Support to the MoMA and RIS on strategic planning and coordination, including through:

- the development and implementation of a national reception strategy and contingency plan
- joint coordination mechanisms between central level and field on thematic areas of EUAA support (technical working groups)
- the development and implementation of tools for enhanced coordination, planning and monitoring of funding and procurement

Support to MoMA on the implementation of a national pre-integration strategy, including coordination of projects and communication activities related to early community engagement, skills development and access to health care of applicants residing in reception centres

Support at central level on procedures and training, including through:

- development and roll-out of SOPs, guidance and operational tools
- facilitation of the participation by personnel of national authorities in EUAA train-the-trainer sessions; supporting and facilitating national training; strengthening the training roster; supporting training development; translating EUAA modules.

Support at central level on reception centre/site management, including:

- development and roll-out of a self-assessment tool for reception (ARC tool), including training and capacity-building
- consolidation and roll-out of a comprehensive Information Management (IM) mechanism regarding the population of residents in reception centres
- development and roll-out of operational framework on communication and information provision to residents in reception centres development and roll-out of site management tools, including for shelter allocation and logistics
- support to referrals, transfers, accommodation and cash assistance schemes

Support in strengthening the capacity of RIS on case management, including through:

- development of the operational framework for case management in reception centres and coordination in the roll-out of the scheme

Support to EKKA in delivering training on trafficking in human beings

Support in site management

Support the implementation of a comprehensive Information Management (IM) system for the population of residents in reception centres

Support in communication and information provision

Support in case management, including vulnerability identification, assessment and referrals, including in child protection and UAM administrative procedures and reception

Support in the registration of applicants

Support for the identification, referral and follow-up of Dublin cases



Support for continuous coordination with the SSPUAM regarding UAM in reception facilities, including rapid referral of cases requiring urgent action

Support in external coordination and cooperation with key authorities, including the establishment of coordination networks

Enhancement of data collection and data management mechanisms on UAM and UAM accommodation facilities and modalities

Support in the development of, and communication on, the guardianship scheme, including SOPs for professional guardians, and in the implementation of the interim scheme of authorised representation for unaccompanied children

Support in the development and mainstreaming of an operational framework for best interest assessment and best interest determination

Establishment of a framework for the prevention of violence, exploitation and abuse of unaccompanied minors, as well as referral and response mechanisms for minors who are victims of violence, exploitation and abuse

Support in planning and funding, including the development of planning and needs tracking tools and mechanisms

Support in the management of a referral and placement system for UAM accommodation

Support in the implementation of family tracing procedures and guidelines

Support in the coordination of relocation schemes for UAM

Support in the coordination of the national emergency response mechanism, including support for the operation of a tracing and referral mechanism for emergency specialised accommodation

Support in the implementation and expansion of the mentorship Programme

Support in the development and implementation for specialised assessment/ monitoring tools for reception and accommodation conditions for UAM

Support in the operational framework and implementation of the supported independent living scheme.

Support to professional development through the development of training plans, the creation of a trainers' roster, capacity building, the facilitation of participation by personnel of national authorities in EUAA train-the-trainer sessions, the support and facilitation of national training and coaching sessions, the design of delivery of training, coaching and joint thematic workshops, including with other authorities, the organisation of exchange visits with other Member States, the translation of EUAA modules

Support in the design of and framework for pre-integration activities for UAM

Support in registering beneficiaries of temporary protection, including vulnerable persons, as well as in providing information and facilitating administrative procedures

Support in communication and information provision

Support in identification of needs, referral and follow up for beneficiaries of temporary protection, in particular vulnerable persons

Support for continuous coordination with the SSPUAM regarding UAM, including rapid referral of cases requiring urgent action



### Inputs

*Human resources* – various, including plan coordinator, measure coordinators, field support officers, operations assistants, finance assistants, quality officers, statistics assistant, planning officers, ICT assistants, case workers, team leaders, registration/administration/information provision assistants, Dublin experts, reception officers and assistants, legal officers/rapporteurs, funding experts, procurement assistants, construction engineers, UAM mentors, etc

*Material resources* – e.g. equipment, services, communication/promotional materials, infrastructure items, IT equipment, office supplies and printing

*Financial resources invested from the EUAA's budget*

### External factors

Specific circumstances on the ground; national and international rules/laws; availability of financial and human resources; other actions by authorities, IOM, UNHCR, other IOs, CSOs; humanitarian crises



## Annex 3: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation criterion	Operationalised questions	Interviews	Desk research
<b>Effectiveness:</b> To what extent have the expected outcomes of the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024 been achieved? Where expectations have not been met, what factors have hindered their achievement?	<p>To what extent was the intervention implemented as envisaged? Which activities were and were not implemented and why?</p> <p>Were there any problems related to the implementation and application of the OP? If so, which ones and why?</p> <p><b>Priority question 1:</b> <i>Within the duration of the multi-annual OP, the migration reality in Greece has changed and the needs of the Greek asylum authorities have changed accordingly in a fluctuating manner. How effective has the EUAA been in adapting its support to the needs of the asylum authorities in the context of these fluctuating circumstances?</i></p> <p><b>Priority question 2:</b> <i>How effective was the support provided to the Special Secretariat for the protection of Unaccompanied Minors (now General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection)? What worked well and what worked less well? What are the lessons learnt?</i></p> <p><b>Priority question 3:</b> <i>To what extent was the EUAA able to appropriately respond to the invasion of Ukraine launched by Russian armed forces?</i></p> <p>To what extent were the expected outputs achieved? If there were shortcomings, what (internal and external) factors caused these?</p> <p>To what extent were the expected outcomes achieved? If there were shortcomings, what (internal and external) factors caused these?</p> <p>To what extent has progress towards the overall aim (intended impact) of the intervention been made? To what extent can this progress be linked to the OP?</p> <p>Can any (unintended) social or environmental impacts be observed that are linked to the EUAA's intervention?</p>	✓	✓



Evaluation criterion	Operationalised questions	Interviews	Desk research
<b>Efficiency:</b> Have the outcomes of the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024 been achieved at the best relationship between resource inputs (costs, human resources, time) and outputs?	<p>What inputs (costs, full time equivalents (FTEs), time investments) were associated with the implementation of the OP? How did these inputs compare to what was planned?</p> <p>Were these inputs sufficient to achieve the intended outputs/outcomes? Why or why not?</p> <p>To what extent has the governance structure of the Agency supported its ability to perform its tasks, having regard to its size, composition, organisation, and work processes?</p> <p>Have there been any challenges to the efficient implementation of the intervention? If so, which (internal or external) factors affected its efficient implementation and how did the EUAA mitigate them?</p> <p>Have any inefficiencies been identified? If so, how could these be addressed to increase the efficiency of the intervention / of future interventions?</p> <p>How timely and efficient was the intervention's administrative process (e.g., for reporting and monitoring)? Were there any inefficiencies associated with these processes?</p>	✓	✓
<b>Coherence:</b> To what extent was the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024 coherent with the EUAA's actions more generally and with other interventions which have similar objectives? To what extent has the OP proved complementary to others in the field?	<p>What other interventions, implemented by the EU, national authorities, international organisations, or civil society organisations existed in Greece that had similar objectives to the OP?</p> <p>To what extent was the intervention coherent with other EU interventions, including the EUAA that had similar intended results? Were synergies actively sought to promote the 'Team Europe' approach and were possible overlaps avoided?</p> <p>To what extent was the intervention coherent with other national interventions that had similar intended results? Were synergies actively sought and possible overlaps avoided? Why or why not?</p> <p>To what extent was the intervention coherent with other interventions implemented by</p>	✓	✓



Evaluation criterion	Operationalised questions	Interviews	Desk research
	international organisations or civil society organisations that had similar intended results? Were synergies actively sought and possible overlaps avoided? Why or why not?		
<b>Relevance:</b> To what extent was the EUAA-Greece OP 2022-2024 significant to the needs of the Greek authorities?	<p>To what extent was the intervention in Greece relevant to meet the needs of the partner organisations? How well has the EUAA been able to respond to the partner organisations' needs?</p> <p>To what extent did the scope and intended results of the intervention in Greece remain relevant over the implementation period? If the needs changed over time, was the intervention adapted accordingly?</p> <p>To what extent do the needs/problems addressed by the intervention in Greece continue to require action by the EUAA? Will the intervention continue to be relevant in the foreseeable future?</p>	✓	✓
<b>EU added value:</b> What is the additional EU added value resulting from the EUAA activities in Greece, compared to what could be achieved by the authorities alone?	<p>What has been the EU added value of the EUAA's intervention compared to those of other actors?</p> <p>Could the intended results of the intervention have been achieved sufficiently by Greek authorities acting alone?</p> <p>Were the intended results met more efficiently by the EUAA than they would have been met by Greek authorities (e.g., larger benefits per unit cost stemming from economies of scale)?</p> <p>It is still valid to assume that the intended results of the intervention can best be met by action by the EUAA? What would be the most likely consequences of stopping or withdrawing the EUAA's intervention?</p>	✓	✓