



Internal evaluation of the EUAA-Germany operational plan 2024-2027

Interim evaluation report

Prepared by the EUAA's Management Systems and Evaluation Sector

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Acronyms and definitions

Term	Definition
AST	Asylum support team
BAMF	Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees)
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
EU	European Union
EU+	EU Member States and the Schengen associated countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland)
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
MSE	Member State expert
REE	Remunerated external expert



Executive summary

Under the operational plan (OP) 2024-2027, the European Union Agency for Asylum's (EUAA) has provided operational support to Germany's processing of outgoing cases. This interim evaluation covers the first plan implemented jointly by the EUAA and the Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF), the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. The measure aimed to strengthen Germany's capacity to handle outgoing take-back and information requests during a period of high caseload pressure.

The measure demonstrated significant but also evolving **relevance**, aligned with Germany's need to reduce the substantial number of pending Dublin cases. The EUAA's flexibility, such as by expanding tasks and enabling remote support, ensured responsiveness to evolving operational conditions.

In terms of **effectiveness**, the country operation delivered approximately 88 % of its intended outputs, with EUAA experts processing over 23 000 requests. While the target for information requests was exceeded, lower-than-expected volumes of take-back requests and delays in expert deployment constrained overall performance. Nonetheless, the EUAA made a meaningful contribution to reducing pending cases during peak demand periods.

With regard to **efficiency**, strong preparatory measures by the BAMF, such as English-language workflows, a sponsorship scheme, and dedicated workstations, enabled smooth integration of the EUAA's experts and facilitated productive cooperation. However, the short duration of Member State expert (MSE) deployments, challenges in recruiting remunerated external experts, and comparatively high coordination overhead hampered full efficiency gains.

The evaluation found very strong **coherence**. Collaboration between the EUAA, BAMF, and participating Member States was consistently smooth and solution oriented. Contributions from MSEs representing eight EU Member States and Schengen associated countries (EU+ countries) fostered cross-border learning and operational solidarity in relation to Dublin implementation. Within the EUAA, cooperation across operational, training, and monitoring functions supported coordinated delivery.

In terms of **EU added value**, the Agency provided measurable operational support and strengthened EU-level practical exchanges on Dublin-related matters. Although operational support was limited in scope and volume, it initiated a new form of EUAA partnership with Germany, traditionally a major provider rather than a beneficiary of support.

The implementation of the OP generated lessons learnt that can inform future support to be provided by the Agency under the Pact on Migration and Asylum, as well as broader **horizontal considerations** for the EUAA. The latter include the need to strengthen expert readiness and security clearances, tailor and simplify operational processes, plan strategically for future MSE deployments, ensure proportionality in small operations, and integrate a wider set of results into performance reporting.



More specifically, the following **recommendations** are proposed:

1. **Proactively** ensure the achievement of realistic goals for **deployment** of experts in Germany. Examples include:
 - Exploring the possibility of negotiating exceptions and accelerated practices, such as early security clearance at the stage when experts are engaged;
 - Ensuring close follow-up and fast-track processes to achieve timely procurement outcomes;
 - Considering deployment opportunities with EU+ countries having German-speaking Member State experts;
 - Ensuring that deployment-related lessons learnt from the Dublin measure are communicated to the contracted national temporary worker agency.
2. Further develop a **collaborative** project management approach in partnership with the BAMF to monitor results and find synergies for **meaningful data collection** (e.g., by combining the use of BAMF and operational data for progress measurement).
3. Strengthen collaboration to enhance **knowledge sharing and produce added value deliverables**. Examples include:
 - Pursuing collaborative initiatives aimed to advance knowledge and enhancing overall system effectiveness (e.g. through the development of knowledge or learning products);
 - Based on the Agency's expertise, rolling out a quality support and assurance mechanism for the work of asylum support teams.



1. Introduction: purpose and scope

This interim evaluation assessed the results of the operational plan (OP) agreed between the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) and the Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF), the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. The evaluation reviewed the Agency's support for the processing of Dublin cases during the period from June 2024 to December 2025. This report presents the findings of the internal evaluation carried out by the Management Systems and Evaluation Sector between November 2025 and February 2026.

Germany, having received the highest number of asylum applications in the European Union (EU) since 2016, faced significant pressure on its asylum and reception system, further exacerbated by the influx of temporary protection beneficiaries from Ukraine. In this context, Germany requested the EUAA's support in the area of Dublin procedures, with the aim of reducing the number of pending cases. In particular, the EUAA's support focused on the processing of outgoing take-back and information requests addressed to other EU Member States' and Schengen associated countries' (EU+ countries) Dublin units.

In August 2025, the OP was amended and extended until the end of 2027. New result outputs were introduced, including support related to project and change management in asylum procedures, *inter alia*, in relation to digital applications, workflows and coordination mechanisms. The amended OP also foresaw support to facilitate access to the asylum procedure to eliminate the backlog of applications submitted until the entry into force of the Pact on Migration and Asylum ('Pact') in mid-2026¹. These additional outputs fell outside the scope of this interim evaluation and will be assessed through an *ex post* evaluation to be conducted by the foreseen end of the OP in 2027.

In line with the European Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines and the EUAA's evaluation framework, this evaluation focused on assessing, in a proportionate manner, the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and EU added value of the support provided for Dublin procedures (see Annex 3: Evaluation matrix).

The evaluation methodology combined evidence from existing secondary data including contextual internal monitoring information with primary data collected through key stakeholder interviews with national authorities and EUAA personnel (see Annex 1: Methodology and analytical models used). The findings were presented and discussed for sense-making, validation, and quality assurance with key stakeholders, including the Quality Review Task Force, with representation from across the EUAA's centres. Recommendations stemming from evidence were prioritised and co-shaped, to the extent possible, within the EUAA to ensure ownership and support their uptake.

This evaluation aims to support institutional learning and serve as a knowledge repository for the final (*ex post*) OP evaluation. It highlights good practices, lessons learnt, and incorporates stakeholder feedback to guide future support initiatives.

¹ Except Regulation (EU) 2024/1350 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 establishing a Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1147, (OJ L, 22.5.2024, p.18), which entered into application as of 11 June 2024.



2. Intended results of the action

2.1. Description of the action and its intended results

The OP for the period 2024-2025 focused on supporting the processing of Dublin cases and prioritised the clearance of pending cases. The OP consisted of a single measure, entitled ‘Support to Asylum’. Its result outcome was ‘Increased capacity to process Dublin cases in line with the Common European Asylum System (CEAS)’, with a single output ‘Outgoing take-back and information requests processed in support of the Dublin centres’ (output 1.1).

The OP foresaw that the EUAA would provide support to the BAMF in the form of an asylum support team (AST) comprising up to 15 EUAA experts to be gradually deployed to the Dublin centres located in Berlin, Bochum, and Bayreuth. The AST was tasked with processing outgoing take-back and information requests, in close coordination with the national authorities and the concerned Member States (see Annex 2: Intervention logic). Outgoing information requests to other EU+ Dublin units would be processed in order to obtain personal, administrative, or procedural information necessary to determine which unit was responsible for examining the asylum application of a given applicant or to support its examination. Outgoing take-back requests would be submitted to another EU+ Dublin unit to request it to take back an applicant for whom it is responsible for examining or has already examined the asylum application².

The AST’s support was designed to enhance the overall volume of processed requests, thereby allowing the German authorities to focus on decision-making, improve productivity, and, over time, facilitate a higher number of transfers. In turn, this would contribute to the better functioning of the Dublin system, thus alleviating pressure on the national asylum system in the long run.

The OP outlined a series of operational preconditions necessary for the effective implementation of support activities. These covered coordination and logistical arrangements, security clearance for the AST, provision of guidance and training, data-sharing protocols, and identification of the required AST profiles.

The main national counterpart was the BAMF of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community. Within the BAMF, the EUAA worked with Division 91B of the Directorate-General 9 - International tasks, migration policy, administration of EU Funds, responsible for overall plan coordination with the EUAA, and Group 32 of the Directorate-General 3 - Business processes of asylum, Statistics, Dublin procedures, responsible for Dublin procedures and referred to as the ‘Dublin Unit’. The unit consists

² Articles 18 and 34 of [Regulation \(EU\) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person \(recast\)](#), (OJ L 180, 29.6.2013, p. 31). Also, commonly referred to as Dublin III Regulation.



of six divisions, including three Dublin centres supported by EUAA experts (Division 32D in Berlin, Division 32E in Bochum, and Division 32F in Bayreuth)³.

2.2. Points of comparison

This section describes the German context prior to the OP, allowing for a comparison with the data provided in section 3.

In the period 2020-2023, the number of first-time asylum applicants in Germany more than tripled, rising from a total of 102 525 persons in 2020 to 329 035 in 2023. The figure recorded in 2023 was the highest since the peak of 2016 (722 270 applicants), making Germany the top receiving EU country in 2023 with 31.3 % (329 035 persons) of the total number of applications⁴. In light of additional challenges associated with the influx of temporary protection beneficiaries fleeing Ukraine, the asylum system was reportedly operating beyond regular capacities. Due to the surge in asylum applications, the BAMF's workload also increased in areas related to the Dublin procedure, including outgoing requests. In 2023, Germany remained the top EU country in terms of outgoing Dublin requests, decisions, and implemented transfers. Compared with 2022, it experienced an increase in Dublin-related workload with 74 622 yearly outgoing requests (+8 %), 55 728 accepted decisions (+35 %) and 5 053 transfers (+28 %). The number of outgoing requests was the highest recorded since 2015⁵.

Statistics relating to outgoing Dublin requests highlighted the need for support. In 2023, 74 622 requests were sent to Member States, representing only a portion of the total potential cases. In 2023, decisions were issued for only 58 % of outgoing requests (with a 75 % acceptance rate) due to staff shortages. Additional personnel were needed to increase Dublin transfers and meet roadmap objectives.

In early 2024, the Dublin Unit employed approximately 375 staff members, including about 110 case officers across the three Dublin centres. Despite Germany's implementation of various measures, the efficient management of Dublin-related tasks remained constrained by ongoing staff shortages. As a result, there was a growing demand for additional staff to manage the increased workload. Against this backdrop, in March 2024, the German authorities requested the Agency's operational support.

³ The BAMF is responsible for processing asylum applications and ensuring refugee protection and is also a driving force behind the nationwide promotion of integration. The authority's remit also includes research on migration. The Dublin Unit is responsible for analysing Dublin interviews to issue transfer decisions, issuing transfer decisions, sending and responding to take-charge and take-back requests to/from other Member States, and sending and responding to information requests to/from other Member States.

⁴ Source: [Asylum applications - annual statistics](#)

⁵ Source: BAMF, [Das Bundesamt in Zahlen 2024](#), p.49.



3. Implementation of the action: current state of play

This section describes how the situation in Germany evolved over the duration of the OP and gives an overview of the main results achieved.

The evolving context in Germany

In 2024, Germany received 237 314 asylum applications⁶, a 29 % decrease from 2023. Despite this decline, it still ranked first in total applications accounting for 23.4 % of all applications in the EU+. The main countries of origin were Syria (31 %), Afghanistan (14 %), and Türkiye (13 %). Asylum applications in Germany further decreased by 43 % in the first half of 2025⁷. This decline was driven largely by reduced irregular arrivals in the EU, with crossings along the central Mediterranean and Balkan routes falling sharply compared to the previous year. A broader EU-wide decline in applications from key countries of origin reinforced this overall reduction.

During the period under review, asylum processing trends also evolved⁶. In 2024, first-instance decisions rose by 15 % to 250 255⁸, and the overall recognition rate stood at 45 %. Negative decisions totalled 116 550, primarily relating to applicants from Türkiye, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The downward trend in asylum applications persisted throughout 2025, reducing pressure on Germany's asylum system and the Dublin centres. At the start of the OP in June 2024, the number of cases pending a first-instance decision stood at 222 387⁹. By December 2025, the number significantly reduced to 89 396¹⁰.

Regarding outgoing Dublin requests, 2024 recorded 74 583 outgoing requests, 44 431 accepted decisions and 5 827 outgoing transfers¹¹. By the end of 2025, outgoing requests dropped to 35 942 (- 52 %), accepted decisions to 23 912 (- 46 %) and outgoing transfers to 5 377 (- 8 %)¹².

Germany also took measures to adapt the implementation of Dublin transfers. Germany's 2024 'security package' granted BAMF biometric identification powers, ended social benefits for applicants in the Dublin procedure once another Member State had accepted responsibility, and allowed the withdrawal of international protection if beneficiaries returned to their country of origin (except for morally essential travel)¹³.

⁶ Source: [EUAA 2025 State of Asylum Report](#)

⁷ Source: [EUAA to support Germany in processing asylum applications](#)

⁸ Source: [First instance decisions on asylum applications by type of decision - annual aggregated data](#)

⁹ Source: [Antrags-, Entscheidungs- und Bestandsstatistik Berichtszeitraum: 01.06.2024 - 30.06.2024 \(HKL Kontinent monatlich\)](#)

¹⁰ Source: [Antrags-, Entscheidungs- und Bestandsstatistik Berichtszeitraum: 01.01.2025 - 31.12.2025 \(HKL Konti...](#)

¹¹ See footnote 5.

¹² Source: BAMF, [Aktuelle Zahlen \(Dezember 2025\)](#), p. 10.

¹³ See footnote 6.



Implementation of the operational plan

In August 2024, the EUAA’s support began with the deployment of the measure coordinator and the first two experts to the Berlin Dublin centre. As of March 2025, EUAA experts also started providing remote support from Berlin for the Dublin centres in Bochum and Bayreuth.

Internal results monitoring for the period 2024-2025 included outcome and output targets, set quarterly and annually, and tracked throughout the period. Table 1 below presents these targets (achieved vs targets). At the result outcome level, the EUAA processed 29 % of asylum applicants for whom take-back or information requests were sent at the national level by the BAMF (target: 30 %) ¹⁴. At the result outputs level, the EUAA processed outgoing take-back and information requests from 23 276 applicants (target: 26 455), representing an overall 88 % achievement rate. The individual outputs show that the AST surpassed internal targets for outgoing information requests (112 %) but fell short on outgoing take-back requests (37 %).

Table 1: Quantitative result achievements (actual versus targets)

Indicator	Actual 2024	Target 2024	Actual 2025	Target 2025	Total actual 2024-2025	Total target 2024-2025
Outcome: Percentage of asylum applicants for whom requests were processed with EUAA’s support at national level	23 % (5 357 out of 22 912)	19 %	31 % (17 919 out of 57 747)	33 %	29 % (23 276 out of 80 659)	30 % (weighted average)
Total output: Number of asylum applicants for whom information and take-back requests were processed with EUAA’s support	5 357 (87 %)	6 135	17 919 (88 %)	20 320	23 276 (88 %)	26 455
Output: Number of asylum applicants for whom outgoing take-back requests were processed with EUAA’s support	2 096 (47 %)	4 435	1 835 (30 %)	6 120	3 931 (37 %)	10 555
Output: Number of asylum applicants for whom outgoing information requests were processed with EUAA’s support	3 261 (192 %)	1 700	16 084 (113 %)	14 200	19 345 (122 %)	15 900

¹⁴ In a [press release](#), the BAMF reported that the EUAA helped reduce the backlog of pending take-back requests by 60 %.



In addition to the above deliverables, the AST accomplished additional tasks, including:

- support undertaken during the inception phase in August and September 2024, which led to the processing of take-back and information requests from 1 004 and 73 applicants, respectively;
- sending and processing Member States' responses to take-back and information requests concerning a total of 7 709 applicants (1 938 in 2024 and 5 771 in 2025).

In terms of **human resources**, the EUAA deployed a total of 17 experts, comprising four remunerated external experts (REEs) and 13 Member State experts (MSEs) from the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, and Sweden. The number of AST experts peaked at eight in April (six MSEs and two REEs) and dropped to five by the end of June (two MSEs and three REEs), in line with the agreed phase-out of Dublin-related activities. At a steering committee meeting in April 2025, it was decided to extend the three REEs until the end of 2025. By July 2025, the BAMF recruited additional staff to support the three Dublin Centres, including with take-back requests.

As part of onboarding, all 17 AST experts completed self-paced modules covering a range of subjects, including fundamental rights, communication, and ethical as well as professional standards. These were supplemented by instructor-led, remote webinars that provided detailed insights into the operations in Germany. The experts participated in a total of 43 sessions with a 100 % completion rate and an average satisfaction rate of 90 % – ranging from 86 % to 95 %.

In January 2025, Germany requested additional support from the Agency in new areas. In August 2025, both parties signed an amendment extending the OP until December 2027. In December 2025, a Dublin support closure meeting took place, taking stock of good practices and lessons learnt.

4. Evaluation findings

This section presents the key findings, encompassing the five evaluation criteria described in the methodology.

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

In terms of **effectiveness**, there is evidence that the Agency contributed to increasing Germany's capacity to process Dublin cases in line with the CEAS. AST experts supported workflows relating to outgoing take-back and information requests processed in the Dublin centres.

In total, the OP achieved about 88 %¹⁵ of its intended results). AST experts processed 3 931 outgoing take-back and 19 345 information requests, representing 37 % and 122 % of the total targets, respectively. While targets for information requests were exceeded, support for the outgoing take-back requests was lower than expected. The latter targets were not met due to difficulties in engaging experts, fewer requests assigned to the AST by the BAMF, and increased BAMF capacity from July 2025.

¹⁵ Calculated as follows: 23 276 total achieved/26 455 total target = 88 %. Depending on the weighting mechanism, this figure can be reduced by up to 68.5 %, which corresponds to capping the value of the output indicator at 100 %, i.e. $(100 + 37)/2 = 68.5$ %.



Different stakeholders indicated that the **quality** of the work delivered by the AST was overall high, and that the AST required little time for onboarding. In addition, the deployment of MSEs contributed to the exchange of practices and a sense of EU team building. An unintended positive outcome was the identification and correction of a procedural element in the German Dublin workflow, ensuring full alignment with the CEAS.

A weakness in terms of effectiveness was the timing of the support. The BAMF was mainly under pressure in 2024 before the Agency was able to mobilise many experts. With the deployment of additional experts in early 2025, BAMF's workload was gradually reduced, as a supplementary contingent of BAMF personnel was recruited and assigned responsibility for most take-back requests. In addition, a decline in the number of new applications also contributed to easing the overall workload for the BAMF.

The **efficiency** of the intervention should be considered within the specific context of the OP, which constituted the first operational collaboration between the EUAA and Germany and was very targeted in scope.

The Agency benefited from BAMF's careful preparations, which included setting up a workflow, and creating a sponsorship programme. The sponsorship programme consisted of assigning English-speaking BAMF personnel on a rotating basis to AST experts to facilitate integration, coordination, and on-the-job support with the tasks. Most interviewees agreed that the BAMF was highly prepared to welcome and onboard AST experts, offering operational guidance in English, on-site English-speaking contacts, workstations, training, and access to necessary equipment and platforms. These measures facilitated the efficient and productive commencement of work.

The main challenge was deploying a stable team of AST experts, particularly **REEs**. The goal to deploy 15 experts was not met due to difficulties in finding REEs with Dublin Regulation expertise who also met the national security and residency requirements. A [social media video](#) posted in March 2025 aimed to showcase EUAA's operational support to Germany and attract experts, particularly REEs. However, this initiative was implemented late given engagement needs, especially since Dublin support was scheduled to be reduced and phased out by year-end. Once the REEs were deployed, uncertainties and legal questions arose regarding their freelance consultancy status under German law.

MSE deployments largely lasted less than three consecutive months due to security restrictions and the approved duration set by the releasing Member State. The average duration of the nine MSE deployments was 68.7 days (ranging from 26 to 95 days) out of a maximum of 90 days (i.e., 76 % utilisation). By comparison, the four REEs were on average deployed for 254 days. In April 2025, the German authorities allowed longer MSE deployments if the national authority confirmed in writing that there were no security issues. However, in the same month, the steering committee decided to phase out Dublin support, end all MSE deployments by July 2025, and maintain only the three REEs until the end of 2025.

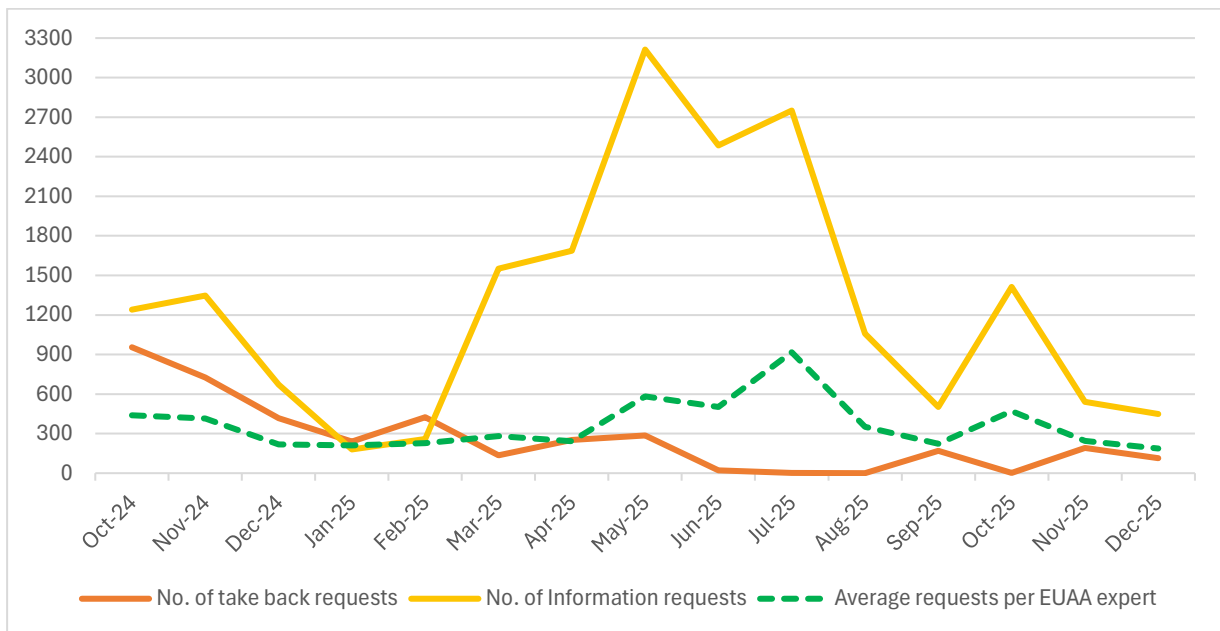
In addition to the above deployment limitations, the EUAA faced several **efficiency challenges**.



- **Timeliness of the support:** Different steps such as the needs assessment, the drafting and signature of the OP, the preparation (inception) phase, and mobilisation of experts slowed down the assistance needed at an early stage.
- **Proportionality of overhead work:** Despite the small size of the intervention, both parties invested much time in preparatory work, formalisation processes, on-the-job training, and coordination efforts. This inefficiency was further exacerbated by the short duration of MSE deployments.
- **Induction training:** The efficiency of instructor-led induction training was limited. Although online learning platforms were introduced to improve efficiency, most AST experts commenced at varying times, resulting primarily in individualised sessions¹⁶. Several AST experts made limited use of the Country Operations Platform, citing low relevance or lack of access.
- **Expert contribution:** The limited working proficiency in German of the AST experts hindered their capacity to contribute to more complex tasks, as they were unable to undertake the necessary research in databases in German. In addition, expert productivity was occasionally influenced by variations in workload and instructions.

It is difficult to measure cost-effectiveness, as planned vs actual inputs and outputs were adjusted during implementation to better reflect evolving needs on the ground. In total, the EUAA spent EUR 438 990, equivalent to 78 % of the revised budget of EUR 561 700 (and 54 % compared with the initial budget of EUR 818 100). With an overall achievement rate ranging from 68 % to 88 %, the activities indicate a reasonable degree of cost-effectiveness.

Figure 1: Asylum support team deliverables by month



¹⁶ According to EUAA’s training data, out of 13 instructor-led operational induction sessions delivered by the Agency, eight sessions had one participant each, while five sessions were each attended by two participants.



One measure of efficiency, in terms of output, is the monthly average of total requests (both information and take-back) processed per expert, which stood at 367 (with a median of 281). As shown in Figure 1 above, the workload fluctuated over time. The workload peaked in July 2025 with 917 cases per expert and dipped in December 2025 with 187 cases per expert¹⁷.

The EUAA's response showed strong **coherence** both internally and externally. **Externally**, the cooperation between the BAMF and the EUAA was very smooth, with the BAMF enhancing cooperation through ensuring office space, preparing access to databases, and assigning internal support focal points (initially sponsors and later a team leader) to the EUAA operation. At times, new arrangements needed to be made (e.g. when online support was provided to the Dublin centres in Bochum and Bayreuth), but these were addressed adequately. There could have been a stronger integration of the EUAA's support if the experts had longer deployments and working proficiency in the German language. Regular meetings between the EUAA and BAMF at the level of Dublin centres addressed ongoing issues and maintained open communication within the team. Steering committee meetings comprised of the EUAA and key national counterparts ensured internal oversight and general direction. Smooth communication with the EUAA and among Member State national country focal points was instrumental for the deployment of MSEs.

Internally, horizontal cooperation within the Agency was evident in areas such as onboarding and contracting of experts, provision of guidance and procedures, and operations management. This also included internal monitoring and coordination between the Germany country team, its project management cluster, and the EUAA's headquarters. Frequent internal OP coordination meetings supported information sharing.

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

The OP was limited in size and scope. As it was the first cooperation of this nature between the EUAA and BAMF, EU added value should be considered from different perspectives.

At **operational level**, the EUAA provided significant and practical support, as evidenced by the large number of requests the experts processed that was publicly acknowledged by the BAMF¹⁸. The EUAA helped the BAMF reduce the pending Dublin requests, particularly in the first months of the OP, freeing up BAMF staff to perform more complex tasks.

The **scope** of the support however, remained very limited both in terms of number of AST experts and the nature of the tasks. In terms of volume, considering that the BAMF employed about 110 case officers to cover Dublin procedures, the four EUAA experts deployed on average per month represented a 3.6 % increase in capacity¹⁹.

The tasks were intentionally limited and specific to accommodate non-German speakers and short-term personnel. This hindered the possibility of performing more complex tasks.

¹⁷ For more performance details, see Annex 4.

¹⁸ See footnote 14.

¹⁹ The median was five in 2024 and three in 2025.



Due to its targeted nature, the OP did not extensively incorporate use of the **EUAA's flagship products** such as the training curriculum or practical guides. Germany did not request training support and participated only in EUAA training outside the OP framework. The EUAA's knowledge tools were not utilised.

A highlight was the pooling of expertise between the Dublin MSEs and BAMF staff. The MSEs from the **Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia and Sweden** brought Dublin-specific expertise and generated **EU added value** through interpersonal exchanges on good practices and Dublin-specific work approaches.

From a **bird's-eye perspective**, the action was relatively exceptional. Historically, since the Agency's first OP in 2011, Germany has been a major contributor of MSEs to operations in EU+ countries. Under this OP however, Germany, for the first time, requested and was the beneficiary of the EUAA's operational support. The OP served as a pilot and laid the foundations for longer-term and expanded cooperation with Germany, EU's largest Member State.

4.3. Is the action relevant?

The OP took place in a context where Germany was at risk of migratory pressure²⁰. In absolute numbers, over the period under review, Germany received the highest number of applications for international protection in the EU.

In 2023 and 2024, Germany was confronted with a very high number of outgoing requests to be submitted to Member States, reaching almost 75 000 cases²¹. The EUAA's action was relevant as it addressed BAMF's priority to reduce the pending Dublin cases, particularly by accelerating the processing of outgoing information requests. This is also **relevant** from the perspective of the national implementation of the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation²², a key component of the Pact, replacing the Dublin Regulation.

The Agency's support was **flexible** and adapted in close coordination with the BAMF to remain effective under deployment constraints. For example, the EUAA expanded its role to process responses and send reminders for information requests, which had not been initially planned. The decision to provide remote support to the Dublin centres in Bochum and Bayreuth from that in Berlin starting in March 2025 also showed adaptability.

The EUAA contributed to reducing the number of pending Dublin cases, but the support was limited in nature and scope. The German authorities explicitly indicated that there was no need for operational training support in the area of Dublin procedures. It is likely that the Agency could have enhanced its support in terms of knowledge and expertise if it had been able to deploy a (larger) cohort of German-speaking experts. This would have enabled the Agency to leverage more practical synergies with its

²⁰ Source: [First Annual Migration Management Cycle - Migration and Home Affairs](#)

²¹ Source: BAMF, [Das Bundesamt in Zahlen 2024](#), p.49.

²² [Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1351 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on asylum and migration management, amending Regulations \(EU\) 2021/1147 and \(EU\) 2021/1060 and repealing Regulation \(EU\) No 604/2013](#), (OJ L, 22.5.2024, p. 1).



extensive portfolio of training and knowledge products. Additionally, the OP did not address other issues related to the Dublin system in Germany.

Progressively, as of the first quarter of 2025, needs shifted as there were fewer new asylum applications and the BAMF had increased its capacity through new recruitments. The EUAA's support for Dublin cases was therefore phased out by December 2025, reflecting an exit driven by restored national capacity and reduced pressure from pending Dublin cases.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

The **relevance of the** EUAA's support was initially justified by Germany's pressing need to reduce pending Dublin cases (peaking at about 75 000 cases in 2023 and in 2024). As of April 2025, there was a reduced need for EUAA's support to process outgoing take-back requests. Flexibility in expanding tasks (e.g., processing responses to information requests) and adaptability in delivery (e.g., remote support) maintained relevance to BAMF's evolving needs.

The OP demonstrated **effectiveness** in addressing BAMF's pending cases, achieving an estimated 88 % of the planned deliverables. Overall, the EUAA contributed to the processing of 3 931 take-back and 19 345 information requests. While support for take-back requests was below set targets, the Agency supported more information requests than planned. The timing of achievements was affected by delays in expert deployment throughout 2024 and early 2025, a period during which the BAMF faced peak workloads. Other factors included brief deployment periods, fewer take-back requests assigned by the BAMF to the AST than originally planned, and increased BAMF capacity by mid-2025.

Efficiency showed varied outcomes. BAMF's structured workflows and agile support enabled quick onboarding and a reasonable level of productivity, but national requirements created inefficiencies in the recruitment of experts. The OP achieved efficiency gains through remote support and training. Cost efficiency was however, adversely impacted by short deployment periods, disjointed training sessions, and disproportionately high overhead costs relative to the scale of the intervention. Nonetheless, the lower budget spent under the OP remained in line with the achieved deliverables.

The operation's **coherence** was strong, with smooth collaboration between the EUAA and BAMF and internal coordination, although fluency in German among AST experts could have increased the areas of support and facilitated higher integration in BAMF's workflows.

The **EU added value** emerged from the provision of operational support and cross-border knowledge exchanges among EU Member State practitioners. The OP also allowed the EUAA to pilot a new collaboration framework with Germany as a beneficiary rather than its traditional role as a contributor to EUAA's deployments. However, the operation's narrow scope (about 3.6 % staff capacity boost) and focus on low-complexity tasks limited deeper impact.



Table 2. Rating by evaluation criteria²³

	Measure: Asylum Support, Dublin procedure
Relevance	Good
Effectiveness	Good
Efficiency	Fair
Coherence	Very good
EU added value	Fair/Good

Overall, despite its limited scope, the EUAA’s Dublin support was effective, contributing to a tangible reduction in pending Dublin requests. The Agency showed flexibility in task expansion and ensured smooth operational collaboration, thus laying the foundations for deeper engagement. However, the Agency’s limitations were evident in terms of deployments, reliance on short-term experts, and language limitations, which restricted the possibility to engage in more complex tasks. The Agency can draw lessons from this specific OP measure to support future cooperation under the Pact and generate greater added value in future operations.

5.2. Good practices and lessons learnt

This evaluation has identified several **good practices** which can inform future operations.

- **EU solidarity through MSE deployments** has strengthened the team dynamics of the programme. Once it was evident that the OP faced challenges in mobilising REEs, the EUAA in collaboration with the BAMF took proactive steps to seek Member State support through various channels, such as dedicated correspondence, meeting agenda items, bilateral communication, and facilitating visits to the operation. These outreach efforts have contributed to several EU+ countries (the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, and Sweden) stepping up to support the programme with MSEs.
- **Host country preparation and support** have been instrumental in enabling a productive start for AST experts from the outset (i.e., work instructions and manuals, workstations and access to platforms, onboarding scheme).
- The integration of **remote support**, in close collaboration with the BAMF, has illustrated its potential for future operational interventions.
- The creation of a work environment conducive to **peer exchange and learning** between AST experts and host country staff has helped boost motivation and the acquisition of new knowledge.
- Continuous **communication and transparency** between the BAMF and EUAA coordinators have contributed to building trust.

²³ The five evaluation criteria were rated using a four-point scale (insufficient, fair, good, very good). These ratings are judgements based on the triangulation of different primary and secondary information sources.



- Host country support through a **sponsorship programme** has allowed a better understanding of on-the-job needs and productivity. Sponsors comprised a team of English-speaking BAMF case officers assigned to the AST on a weekly basis. By mid-2025, the transition from a rotating system of sponsors to a **dedicated team leader** improved efficiency and consistency in support.

The collaboration under the OP has generated the following **lessons learnt and horizontal considerations**.

- Deployment and readiness can be improved by establishing a **pre-cleared pool of experts** with diverse language skills and flexible, longer-term deployment options to ensure continuity and prompt response in future operations.
- There is scope to rethink **security clearance of experts** as part of the Agency's overall readiness for an EUAA asylum pool. As the Agency expands cooperation with different Member States, different security requirements (e.g. access of external experts to Eurodac or DubliNet) could be mapped out to ensure that it is fully prepared in case of sudden requests for support. Negotiations with Member States for accelerated security clearance and fit-for-purpose contractual frameworks would reduce delays and improve responsiveness. Lessons from the Dublin-related measure, such as early engagement, flexible task design, and hybrid support models, would inform the Agency's preparations for the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation. Anticipated tasks would require scalable systems, integration of the EUAA's training and quality tools, and proactive coordination with national authorities.
- The Agency's approach would best be tailored to each operation. Agile, simplified, remote, and flexible processes, tools, and templates could be used **for smaller or rapid response operations**. This would help increase response speed, efficiency and keep efforts **proportionate** when preparing, formalising, and implementing OPs and avoid unnecessary complexity and bureaucracy. Examples include:
 - Making the **needs assessment** process more proportionate to the size of the operation, including written consultations and engagements at the technical level;
 - Simplifying long and legally complex **OPs** (e.g., the data protection agreement) relative to the nature of the action;
 - Making the **overhead and coordination efforts** proportionate to the size of the operation.
- The future of **MSE deployments** could be rethought in light of the findings from the collaboration with Germany, the largest EU Member State and traditionally the most important provider of MSEs to the EUAA's operations. Since the start of the OP, Germany has limited the deployment of MSEs to other OP settings, requesting additional personnel to cope with migratory pressure. Given the increasing number of countries under OP support (12 at the time of the drafting of this evaluation report), the EUAA could progressively and indirectly reduce the pool of available MSEs. In consultation with the European Commission and the Member States, the EUAA should consider this matter **from a longer-term and strategic perspective**.
- **A wider set of results** could be accounted for, as appropriate. The EUAA has established an appropriate methodology to ensure that the inception phase enables the project team to



effectively prepare and plan for the procurement and delivery of OP results. There is potential to incorporate valuable deliverables achieved during the inception phase into results reporting. Additionally, the EUAA should systematically integrate impact-level results into the Agency's OP results framework, in line with internal guidance.

5.3. Recommendations

As an interim exercise, this evaluation proposes the following **recommendations**.

1. **Proactively** ensure the achievement of realistic goals for **deployment** of experts in Germany. Examples include:
 - Exploring the possibility of negotiating exceptions and accelerated practices, such as early security clearance at the stage when experts are engaged;
 - Ensuring close follow-up and fast-track processes to achieve timely procurement outcomes;
 - Considering deployment opportunities with EU+ countries with German-speaking Member State experts;
 - Ensuring that deployment-related lessons learnt from the Dublin measure are communicated to the national temporary worker agency.
2. Further develop a **collaborative** project management approach in partnership with the BAMF to monitor results and find synergies for **meaningful data collection** (e.g., by combining the use of BAMF and operational data for progress measurement).
3. Strengthen collaboration to enhance **knowledge sharing and produce added value deliverables**. Examples include:
 - Pursuing collaborative initiatives aimed to advance knowledge and enhancing overall system effectiveness (e.g. through the development of knowledge or learning products);
 - Based on the Agency's expertise, rolling out a quality support and assurance mechanism for the work of ASTs.



Annex 1: Methodology and analytical models used

The aim of the evaluation was to answer the following key evaluation questions, covering the European Commission’s Better Regulation standard criteria.

Criteria	Questions
Relevance	To what extent was the action in line with stakeholders’ needs and the Agency’s objectives?
Effectiveness	Did the OP achieve what was planned? Were there other (unexpected and unintended) factors and effects that influenced the results?
Efficiency	To what extent were the costs (including inputs and human resources) of the support justified given the results? How timely was the Agency’s response?
Coherence	To what extent was the operation coherent internally and externally? How was communication and coordination among key stakeholders?
EU added value	What was the added value resulting from the operation, compared to what could have been expected from Germany acting solely?

The evaluation adopted a mixed methods approach, combining the desk review of existing evidence with primary data collection, notably through semi-structured interviews conducted in-person or remotely.

The main sources for the desk review included the Agency’s monitoring data, results framework, the OP document itself, the needs assessment, and relevant statistics on the Dublin caseload.

In terms of primary data collection, the evaluation team conducted a total of 12 confidential interviews involving 15 interviewees. Consulted stakeholders included relevant personnel from the EUAA and German authorities.

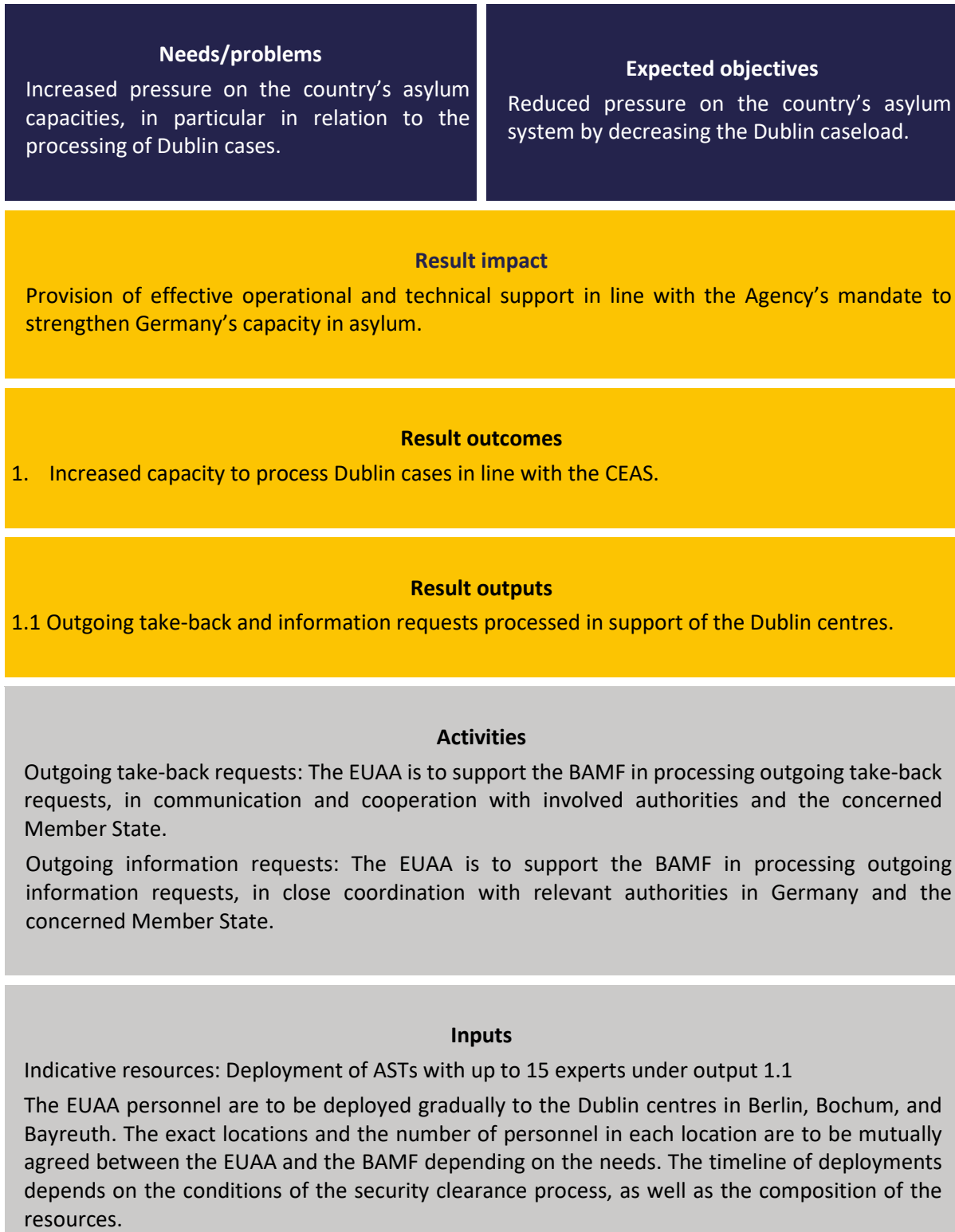
The evaluation team analysed the data and information collected, which were subsequently subject to triangulation and synthesis, with a view to deriving robust, evidence-based answers to the evaluation questions, formulating conclusions, identifying good practices, and drawing lessons learnt for the future.

The conclusions and lessons learnt, as well as the resulting recommendations, were validated with the Agency’s personnel following the submission of the draft report to ensure their usefulness.

The evaluation encountered some limitations due to its remote execution, which did not allow for direct observation of in-country activities. This limited the ability to build rapport with in-country personnel, and to gain a full understanding of the nature of the work, its evolution, and its limitations. In addition, the assessment was based on internal project monitoring records, which had their own limitations.



Annex 2: Intervention logic





Subject to EUAA's assessment and approval of requests, and budget availability for the present OP, support may include, *inter alia*, equipment, works, services, communication/promotional materials, costs for trainings/meetings/workshops, infrastructure costs, IT equipment, office supplies, and other material and operational support where required for the joint EUAA and national authorities' activities.

External factors

Migratory pressure; Russian aggression in Ukraine; national and international laws, policies and practices; availability of human resources; actions by national counterparts.



Annex 3: Evaluation matrix

Questions and sub-questions	Indicators/ descriptors	Norms/judgement criteria	Sources of evidence
Relevance: To what extent was the action in line with the stakeholders' needs and the Agency's objectives?			
What activities were most beneficial and why?	Priority areas identified by the needs assessment	Comparison of the needs assessment and OP priority areas with implemented areas	Needs assessment, OP, monitoring and reporting tools, interviews
Effectiveness: Did the OP achieve what was planned?			
Were the deliverables as expected in terms of quantity and quality? Were there other (unexpected and unintended) factors that influenced the results?	Results indicators	Comparison of planned targets vs achieved, evidence of unexpected and unintended factors	Results monitoring database, interviews
Efficiency: To what extent were the costs (including inputs and human resources) of the support justified given the results?			
How timely was the Agency's response?	Output and input indicator values	Relationship between achieved outputs vs inputs, qualitative challenges (processes and related indicators)	Qualitative and quantitative monitoring data, financial records, nature of underlying processes needed to achieve the planned results, interviews
Coherence: To what extent was the operation coherent internally and externally?			
How was communication and coordination among key stakeholders?	Nature of activities and coordination processes	Level of coordination and synergies with other national or internal Agency actors	Monitoring data, planning documents, interviews, mapping undertaken in the needs assessment
EU added value: What was the added value resulting from the operation?			
What was the added value of the operation compared to what could have been expected from Germany acting alone?	Evidence of elements of EUAA added value	Number and level of added value elements related to the financial, technical, and material support	Monitoring data, planning documents, interviews



Annex 4: Asylum support team deliverables by month

Month ²⁴	No. of EUAA experts ²⁵	No. of take-back requests	No. of information requests	No. of total requests	Average requests per EUAA expert
October 2024	5	955	1 241	2 196	439
November 2024	5	725	1 347	2 072	414
December 2024	5	416	673	1 089	218
January 2025	2	240	180	420	210
February 2025	3	424	259	683	228
March 2025	6	136	1 551	1 687	281
April 2025	8	252	1 687	1 939	242
May 2025	6	286	3 213	3 499	583
June 2025	5	21	2 485	2 506	501
July 2025	3	1	2 750	2 751	917
August 2025	3	0	1 057	1 057	352
September 2025	3	169	501	670	223
October 2025	3	1	1 413	1 414	471
November 2025	3	192	540	732	244
December 2025	3	113	448	561	187
Total	4 (monthly average)	3 931	19 345	23 276	367 (monthly average)

²⁴ August and September 2024 were part of the inception phase.

²⁵ The number of EUAA experts excludes coordinators.