



MIGRANT AND REFUGEE FUND (MRF) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the MRF?

The Migrant and Refugee Fund ("MRF" or "Fund") is a fund set up by the Council of Europe Development Bank ("CEB" or "Bank") to help its member states deal with migrant and refugee flows.

The Fund aims at supporting CEB member states' efforts to ensure that migrants and refugees who arrive on their territory enjoy basic human rights, such as shelter, food and medical aid, as well as personal security. The Fund may also be used to help CEB member states integrate these populations and enable them to rebuild their lives in dignified conditions.

2. How is the MRF funded?

The MRF is endowed with contributions from CEB member states, the European Investment Bank and the CEB. As at end-March 2016, EUR 18 million have been raised.

3. What type of projects does the MRF support?

The Fund supports projects benefitting migrants and refugees. As an immediate response to the inflow of migrants and refugees, the Fund will help set up or improve, as well as operate reception and transit centres. Other types of projects which facilitate the integration of migrant and refugees are also eligible. All projects must comply with the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter.

4. How does the MRF support projects?

The Fund may support projects in four ways:

- a. grants to finance investment or operating costs, of up to € 2.5 million per project ("Grants")
- b. technical assistance grants related to the preparation and implementation of projects, of up to € 0.5 million per project ("TA Grants")
- c. where the project is financed by a CEB loan, interest subsidies, of up to € 0.5 million for every € 10 million loan amount ("Interest Subsidies")

- d. where the project is financed by a CEB loan, loan guarantees, of up to € 2.5 million per project ("Loan Guarantees").

5. In which countries can MRF support projects?

The MRF supports projects located in CEB member states. The 41 member states of the CEB are the following: Albania, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Turkey.

6. Which costs are supported by the MRF?

Costs eligible for funding by Grants are investment costs, such as expenses related to the construction and upgrading of buildings and related technical infrastructure, as well as current expenditures, emergency aid and cost of dedicated staff. Costs eligible to funding by TA Grants include advisory and support services related to the preparation and implementation of projects.

7. Can contributions to the MRF be counted as ODA (Official Development Assistance)?

Yes, if they fund projects in the nine CEB member countries that are ODA-eligible (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Turkey).

Contributions may also be counted as ODA if they fund temporary assistance in non-ODA CEB member countries. Temporary assistance includes current expenditures benefitting migrants and refugees during their first twelve months of stay in Donor countries.

Donors may report their contributions to the MRF as ODA by earmarking them for funding of ODA-eligible expenditures.

8. Who can request support from the MRF?

Requests for Grants and TA Grants may be submitted for approval to the CEB by the national authorities of member states or with their endorsement if submitted by the CEB member states' regional or local authorities or international institutions, or non-governmental organisations approved jointly by the CEB and the relevant member state.

Interest Subsidies and Loan Guarantees are approved by the Bank upon review of a CEB loan request for a project in favour of migrants and refugees.

9. How is the MRF support provided?

Grants and TA Grants are disbursed to, and may be implemented by, national, regional or local authorities of CEB member states, or international institutions, or non-governmental organisations approved jointly by the CEB and the relevant member state.

10. Is there a minimum or maximum amount for projects supported by the MRF?

There is no minimum or maximum amount. However, the amount of support requested from the MRF must be commensurate with the amount of the project.

11. How advanced must a project be to benefit from MRF support?

The purpose of MRF is to support the development of projects that have already been identified. Project implementation should start rapidly and, in any case, within 6 months following the signing of the financing agreement (see § 16).

12. Is there a link between CEB loans and MRF support?

Grants and TA Grants may be provided on a stand-alone basis or in conjunction with a CEB loan. Interest Subsidies and Loan Guarantees are provided only in conjunction with a CEB loan.

13. Who should I contact regarding MRF support?

Any request for information related to the MRF should be addressed to the following email: mrf@coebank.org.

14. Is there a deadline for submitting requests for MRF support?

There is no deadline. Requests for MRF support may be submitted as long as resources are available in the Fund to finance support.

15. How are requests for MRF support approved?

The CEB appraises each request for support. It assesses the applicant, the project and the support requested. If this appraisal is positive, the CEB approves the MRF support.

16. If a request for support is approved by the CEB, what happens next?

The beneficiary and the CEB enter into a financing agreement, which covers the MRF support and, where applicable, the CEB loan. The agreement provides, *inter alia*, the terms of the support, as well as reporting requirements.

17. Can MRF support be combined with other funding?

To leverage the support provided by the MRF, applicants are invited to combine it with complementary funding, in the form of other grants, loans, including from the CEB, and own funds.

18. What is the disbursement schedule for MRF support?

Disbursement depends on the type of MRF support provided and the schedule of the project. The disbursement schedule is agreed between the CEB and the beneficiary during the negotiation phase of the agreement.