



COMMISSIONE
EUROPEA

Bruxelles, 15.3.2022
COM(2022) 124 final

2022/0087 (NLE)

Proposta di

DECISIONE DEL CONSIGLIO

**relativa alla conclusione dell'accordo tra l'Unione europea e la Repubblica di Moldova
relativo alle attività operative svolte dall'Agenzia europea della guardia di frontiera e
costiera nella Repubblica di Moldova**

{SWD(2022) 70 final}

RELAZIONE

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

• Reasons for and objectives of the proposal

One of the tasks of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency is to cooperate with third countries in relation to the areas covered by the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2019/1896) (the 'Regulation') 'including through the possible operational deployment of border management teams in third countries.'¹ Specifically, the Agency, as part of the European Border and Coast Guard, is to ensure European integrated border management², one component of which is cooperation with third countries in the areas covered by the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation 'focusing in particular on neighbouring third countries and on [...] countries of origin or transit for illegal immigration.'³ The Agency may cooperate with the authorities of third countries competent in matters covered by the Regulation to the extent required for the fulfilment of its tasks⁴ and may carry out actions related to European integrated border management on the territory of a third country subject to the agreement of that third country.

Pursuant to Article 73(3) of the Regulation, in circumstances requiring the deployment of border management teams from the European Border and Coast Guard standing corps to a third country where the members of the teams will exercise executive powers, a status agreement shall be concluded by the Union with the third country concerned. Such a status agreement should be based on the model that the Commission has drawn up as provided for in Article 76(1) of the same regulation. The Commission adopted this model on 21 December 2021⁵.

As of 11 March 2022, over 310 000 refugees had entered the Republic of Moldova ('Moldova') from Ukraine following the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. In just the first two weeks of the war, more than two million refugees – around 4% of Ukraine's population – mainly fled westward from the encroaching Russian forces⁶.

Moldovan border management authorities are thus now facing the twin challenges of regulating the influx and subsequent outflow of potentially hundreds of thousands of refugees, including monitoring the smuggling of weapons. Furthermore, some 12% of the territory of the country is not under the control of Moldovan authorities, including a large portion of Moldova's border with Ukraine. With a status agreement in place, Moldovan authorities supported by border management teams of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency will be in a much better position to quickly respond to the current challenges.

On 14 March 2022, the Commission received the Council authorisation to open negotiations with the Republic of Moldova on a status agreement with the Republic of Moldova.

¹ Article 10(1)(u) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard, OJ L 295, 14.11.2019, p. 1-131.

² Article 71(1) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896.

³ Article 3(1)(g) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896.

⁴ Article 73(1) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896.

⁵ Communication COM(2021) 829 - Model status agreement as referred to in Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1052/2013 and (EU) 2016/1624.

⁶ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

The European Commission, on behalf of the European Union, and Moldova held negotiations on the status agreement on 14 March 2022. The status agreement was initialled by the heads of the negotiating teams.

In view of ensuring the possibility for an urgent deployment of the European Border and Coast Guard standing corps on the territory of Moldova, in light of the influx of refugees into Moldova from Ukraine following the Russian Federation's invasion of that country, the agreement should be applied provisionally upon its signature, pending the completion of the procedures necessary for its entry into force.

The attached proposal for a Council Decision constitutes the legal instrument for concluding the status agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova.

Situation of the Schengen associated countries

The present proposal builds upon the Schengen *acquis* in the field of external borders. The Union has nevertheless no power to conclude a status agreement with Moldova in a manner that binds Norway, Iceland, Switzerland or Liechtenstein. To ensure that border guards and other relevant staff sent by those countries to Moldova benefit from the same status as provided for in the status agreement, joint declarations attached to the status agreement should state the desirability that similar agreements be concluded between Moldova and each of those associated countries.

This Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* in which Ireland does not take part, in accordance with Council Decision 2002/192/EC; Ireland is therefore not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it nor subject to its application.

In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of Protocol No 22 on the position of Denmark, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Denmark is not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it nor subject to its application.

- **Consistency with existing policy provisions in the policy area**

A working arrangement on establishing operational cooperation between the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the Border Guard Service of the Republic of Moldova has been in place since 2008. It was concluded under the previous EBCG Regulation, Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 on the European Border and Coast Guard⁷. It includes general commitments on the development of information exchange and risk analyses, training and exchange of best practices as well as coordination of certain joint operational measures and pilot projects in the area of border management.

- **Consistency with other Union policies**

Strengthening controls along the borders of Moldova will positively impact the Union's external borders, in particular those of Romania, as well as the borders of the Republic of Moldova itself. Support to border controls by European Union Border Assistance Mission to Ukraine and Moldova will add to, and complement, the assistance provided by the border management teams. Also, the conclusion of a status agreement would tie into the wider objectives and priorities for cooperation and the work towards achieving the objectives of political association and economic integration as set out in the Association Agreement

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2016 on the European Border and Coast Guard and amending, OJ L 251, 16.09.2016, p. 1.

between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, and the Republic of Moldova. Strengthened cooperation in border management would also be complementary to the long-term Eastern Partnership policy objectives beyond 2020, as detailed in the Joint Communication of March 2020 and the Joint Staff Working Document of July 2021, and endorsed at the 6th Eastern Partnership Summit in 2021.

The conclusion of a status agreement could also support the wider efforts and commitments of the European Union to further develop capabilities in order to contribute to crisis response management and promoting convergence on foreign and security matters between the Union and the Republic of Moldova.

2. LEGAL BASIS, SUBSIDIARITY AND PROPORTIONALITY

• Legal basis

The legal basis for this proposal for a Council Decision is Article 77(2)(b) and (d) and Article 79(2)(c) TFEU in conjunction with is Article 218(6)(a) TFEU.

The competence of the European Union to conclude a status agreement is explicitly provided for in Article 73(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, which states '[i]n circumstances requiring the deployment of border management teams from the standing corps to a third country where the members of the teams will exercise executive powers, a status agreement [...] shall be concluded by the Union with the third country concerned'.

Pursuant to Article 3(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Union shall have exclusive competence for the conclusion of an international agreement when its conclusion is provided for in a legislative act of the Union. Article 73(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 provides for a status agreement to be 'concluded by the Union with the third country concerned'. Consequently, the attached agreement with the Republic of Moldova falls within the exclusive power of the European Union. In accordance with Article 73(3) of the Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, the proposed status agreement largely follows the model agreement adopted by the Commission on 21 December 2021.

The consent of the European Parliament is required for the conclusion of this agreement pursuant to Article 218(6)(a)(v) TFEU.

• Subsidiarity and proportionality

The need for a common approach

A status agreement will allow for the deployment to the Republic of Moldova of border management teams by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, using all the possibilities offered by Regulation (EU) 2019/1896. Without such a tool, only bilateral deployments by Member States could be used to develop and implement European integrated border management and support Moldova in managing the dramatic increase in refugees seeking to enter its territory. Such a bilateral approach would be neither efficient nor appropriate.

A common approach is needed to better manage Moldova's borders and as a concerted Union-effort in response to the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine.

3. RESULTS OF EX-POST EVALUATIONS, STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

As this will be a new agreement, no evaluation or fitness checks of existing instruments could be carried out. No impact assessment is required for the negotiation of a status agreement.

- **Ex-post evaluations/fitness checks of existing legislation**

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- **Fundamental rights**

In line with Recital (88) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, the Commission assessed the fundamental rights situation relevant to the areas covered by the status agreement in the Republic of Moldova and informed the European Parliament thereof.

The agreement contains practical measures related to the respect of fundamental rights and shall ensure that fundamental rights are fully respected during activities organised on the basis of the agreement. The agreement provides for an independent and effective complaints mechanism in accordance with the relevant provisions of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 to monitor and ensure respect for fundamental rights in all the activities organised on the basis of the agreement.

Areas of main concern as regards the rule of law and the respect of fundamental rights in the Republic of Moldova include respect for universal human rights, ensuring the functioning of democratic institutions and the need for legislative reforms relating to the justice and law enforcement agencies, including anticorruption⁸. These will need to be taken into account appropriately during the preparation of any joint operation or deployment action.

- **Data protection**

The provisions of the status agreement related to the transfer of data do not differ substantially from the model status agreement. Therefore, the European Data Protection Supervisor does not have to be consulted.

4. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The status agreement in itself does not entail any financial implications. The actual deployment of border guard teams on the basis of an operational plan will entail costs borne by the budget of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. Future operations under the status agreement will be financed through the European Border and Coast Guard Agency's own resources.

The European Union contribution for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency already forms part of the Union's budget as based on the Legislative Financial Statement accompanying the implementation of the 2019 Regulation establishing the European Border and Coast Guard. For the period of 2021-2027, a total Union contribution of EUR 6 320 million is provided in accordance with the Multiannual Financial Framework agreement. These amounts will be complemented by the corresponding contribution of the Schengen associated countries.

⁸ Association Agenda recommendation, Annex to COM(2022) 69 final, p. 10.

5. OTHER ELEMENTS

- **Implementation plans and monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements**

The Commission will ensure proper monitoring of the implementation of the status agreement.

The Republic of Moldova and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency shall jointly evaluate each joint operation or rapid border intervention.

In particular, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Moldova and the Member States participating to a specific action shall draw up a report at the end of each action on the application of provisions of the agreement including on the processing of personal data.

Proposta di

DECISIONE DEL CONSIGLIO

relativa alla conclusione dell'accordo tra l'Unione europea e la Repubblica di Moldova relativo alle attività operative svolte dall'Agenzia europea della guardia di frontiera e costiera nella Repubblica di Moldova

IL CONSIGLIO DELL'UNIONE EUROPEA,

visto il trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, in particolare l'articolo 77, paragrafo 2, lettere b) e d), e l'articolo 79, paragrafo 2, lettera c), in combinato disposto con l'articolo 218, paragrafo 6, lettera a),

vista la proposta della Commissione europea,

vista l'approvazione del Parlamento europeo⁹,

considerando quanto segue:

- (1) Conformemente alla decisione 2022/XXX del Consiglio, del [...], l'accordo tra l'Unione europea e la Repubblica di Moldova relativo alle attività operative svolte dall'Agenzia europea della guardia di frontiera e costiera nella Repubblica di Moldova è stato firmato da [...] il [...], con riserva della sua conclusione in una data successiva.
- (2) In circostanze che richiedono l'invio di squadre per la gestione delle frontiere attinte dal corpo permanente della guardia di frontiera e costiera europea in un paese terzo in cui i membri delle squadre eserciteranno poteri esecutivi, l'articolo 73, paragrafo 3, del regolamento (UE) 2019/1896¹⁰ prevede che l'Unione concluda un accordo sullo status con il paese terzo interessato sulla base dell'articolo 218 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea.
- (3) La presente decisione costituisce uno sviluppo delle disposizioni dell'*acquis* di Schengen a cui l'Irlanda non partecipa, a norma della decisione 2002/192/CE del Consiglio¹¹; l'Irlanda non partecipa pertanto alla sua adozione, non è da essa vincolata né è soggetta alla sua applicazione.
- (4) A norma degli articoli 1 e 2 del protocollo n. 22 sulla posizione della Danimarca¹², allegato al trattato sull'Unione europea e al trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, la Danimarca non partecipa all'adozione della presente decisione, non è da essa vincolata né è soggetta alla sua applicazione. Dato che la presente decisione si basa sull'*acquis* di Schengen, la Danimarca decide, ai sensi dell'articolo 4 di tale

⁹ GU C del , pag. .

¹⁰ Regolamento (UE) 2019/1896 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 13 novembre 2019, relativo alla guardia di frontiera e costiera europea e che abroga i regolamenti (UE) n. 1052/2013 e (UE) 2016/1624 (GU L 295 del 14.11.2019, pag. 1).

¹¹ Decisione 2002/192/CE del Consiglio, del 28 febbraio 2002, riguardante la richiesta dell'Irlanda di partecipare ad alcune disposizioni dell'*acquis* di Schengen (GU L 64 del 7.3.2002, pag. 20).

¹² Protocollo n. 22 sulla posizione della Danimarca (GU C 326 del 26.10.2012, pag. 299).

protocollo, entro un periodo di sei mesi dalla decisione del Consiglio sulla presente decisione, se intende recepirla nel proprio diritto interno.

(5) È pertanto opportuno approvare l'accordo sullo status a nome dell'Unione europea,
HA ADOTTATO LA PRESENTE DECISIONE:

Articolo 1

L'accordo sullo status tra l'Unione europea e la Repubblica di Moldova relativo alle attività operative svolte dall'Agenzia europea della guardia di frontiera e costiera nella Repubblica di Moldova ("accordo") è approvato a nome dell'Unione.

Il testo dell'accordo è accluso alla presente decisione.

Articolo 2

La Commissione procede, a nome dell'Unione, alla notifica prevista all'articolo XX dell'accordo, per esprimere il consenso dell'Unione europea ad essere vincolata dall'accordo.

Articolo 3

La presente decisione entra in vigore il giorno successivo alla pubblicazione nella *Gazzetta ufficiale dell'Unione europea*.

Fatto a Bruxelles, il

Per il Consiglio
Il presidente