

EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

Final Report to the European Commission
DG Justice, Freedom and Security

EPEC

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Contact name and address for this study:

GHK Consulting Ltd

Petra van Nierop

Avenue d'Auderghem 22-28

1040 Brussels – Belgium

E-mail: petra.van.nierop@ghkeurope.com

European Policy Evaluation Consortium (EPEC)

Brussels contact address:

22-28 Avenue d'Auderghem

B-1040 Brussels

Tel: +32 2 740 2729 Fax: +32 2 238 1078

E-mail: contact@epec.info URL: www.epec.info

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the final report of the Evaluation of the activities of the European Migration Network (EMN), contracted to EPEC by DG JLS. The purposes of this final report are to present the results of the full evaluation, thus including the assessment of the pilot and preparatory action and the development of options for the form and structure of the EMN; to draw conclusions on all evaluation components and to make recommendations with regard to the future of the EMN.

Based on the literature review, observations made by actors interviewed in the context of this study, and other evaluative evidence, an updated list of problems and needs has been compiled identifying seven key problems and needs:

- **Need to inform future EU policy developments with regard to asylum and migration**
- **Insufficient information management and coordination**
- **Lack of information on policy and legislation, including analysis and evaluation**
- **Problems of statistical data and information**
- **Information on the New Member States**
- **Need for information on specific and pertinent topics**
- **Need to take advantage of ICT developments.**

When assessing the relevance and suitability of the overall purpose and objectives set for the EMN, its status and structure, the functions and tasks attributed to the network and its capacity, it becomes evident that:

- Overall, the terms of reference, objectives and institutional arrangements developed for the EMN *were relevant and suitable at the time of the network's setup*. However, policy and other contextual developments, as well as the network's experiences so far, call for a renewed policy architecture and design.
- In general, the network would, however, have benefited from *more clarity*, especially with regard to its mandate and functions. The lack of such clarity influenced the extent to which the EMN was capable of addressing the problems and needs identified.
- The structure, and to a less extent, the status chosen for the EMN were suitable for a pilot preparatory action but some aspects may have influenced the network's independency and ability to produce reliable and objective data.
- The EMN is strongly embedded in asylum and migration policy (key policy documents refer to its potential use) within the EU and hence is relevant. The future network should maximise its potential to contribute to work in the area of

statistics, monitoring and analysing the various dimensions of migration and asylum and to policy making in general.

The future EMN should further reinforce its integration in asylum and migration policy within the EU. This will strongly depend on the extent to which it can meet the information needs of the Community and its ability to deliver reliable, up-to-date, more importantly, comparable data and information. The future EMN should have a clear mandate, objectives, functions and outputs from the very start. These should be elaborated into a work programme with a realistic timetable and clearly specified products. Commitment from the Member States to the above will need to be ensured to enable the successful performance of the network.

The EMN should have a clear organisational structure, preferably including a body to steer the work and an executive body (e.g. a coordination unit) to implement activities. The latter should have a direct contractual relation with the national structures. The network of NCPs should be expanded to cover all 25 Member States. Strong emphasis should be placed on ensuring that the NCPs comply with rigid criteria in relation to their technical and professional capacity to avoid uneven performance as occurred during the pilot preparatory phase. The network should include contingency resources to cover activities for which very specific expertise is required.

NCPs should be independent and objective. It is, therefore, not advisable that the future EMN includes national structures in government ministries. Ideally, the network should work with independent national correspondents who have the commitment and support of national authorities.

Financial procedures and processes should be optimised, so that they do not inhibit progress of implementation. There is little scope for continuing to fund the network through a budget line, nor through co-financing. This approach entails a high workload in terms of management and administration for the Commission, and lacks the possibility to make inputs to the network mandatory. Other funding options, such as outsourcing should therefore be pursued. The future EMN should have clear internal and external communication procedures. With regard to the latter, the network would benefit from a proper marketing strategy to raise awareness and promote its products.

Four options have been developed through the course of this assignment for the future shape of EMN:

- **OPTION 1 Observatory of migration and asylum flows and national (i.e. Member State) factors affecting flows including Member State policies and legislation.** This is the most “minimalist” option, in which the EMN’s role is restricted to the collection of information and the monitoring of developments on asylum and migration flows and factors affecting these. It would perform an information collection and management function only, thus gathering statistics and information on Member State policy, legislation and research in the field of asylum and migration. Reporting would be restricted to reflecting and analysing the national situations and enabling EU level comparisons and synthesis.
- **OPTION 2 Observatory of migration and asylum flows and effects and national factors affecting flows including Member State policies and legislation.** This Option should be considered an “Option 1 Plus”. In this option the EMN will do all the activities in Option 1 but the network would also collect

information and monitor developments linked to asylum and migration, such as the employment, social integration, housing and discrimination experienced by third country nationals and asylum seekers/refugees. This option could include some forecasting work.

- **OPTION 3 Research ‘Centre’ on EU migration and asylum flows and effects and national factors affecting flows including Member State policies and legislation.** This Option should be considered as an “Option 2 Plus”. The coverage of the EMN under this option would be the same as described under Option 2 above, but the ‘Centre’ would be empowered to launch thematic ‘new’ research and studies on its own initiative or on the request of the Commission or other EU institutions.
- **OPTION 4 EU Asylum & Migration ‘Agency’ for monitoring, research and assessments of EU migration and asylum flows and effects and national factors affecting flows including Member State policies and legislation.** This Option should be considered an “Option 3 Plus”. The coverage and scope of the EMN under this option would be the same as under option 3 above, but the Agency would also issue informed opinions, views and recommendations both regarding EU and national policy developments. The Agency would need to have a high level of independence and the right to be consulted on policy making. It would also need to deliver high quality outputs in order for its views to be taken into consideration by EU and national policy-makers (i.e. achieve some level of “authority”).

The figure below presents an overall assessment of strengths and weaknesses of each policy option.

Preliminary overall assessment of strengths and weaknesses of policy options

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focused scope with clear tasks and outputs ▪ Homogeneous structure ▪ Managed by the Commission ▪ Links to national policy through parallel network of government officials ▪ Contractual responsibility for national level contributions with organisation contracted for coordination (leading also to less administration) ▪ Resources available for analysis and cross-national comparisons ▪ Good level of objectivity and reliability ▪ Cost-effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited scope ▪ Low visibility ▪ No “solid” legal basis ▪ Lack of direct influence of Member States on the network’s work programme may lead to decreased commitment ▪ Current information system only partly used
Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focused scope with clear tasks and outputs, but taking into account themes and developments related to asylum and migration. ▪ Homogeneous structure ▪ Managed by the Commission ▪ Links to national policy through parallel network of government officials ▪ Scientific Committee monitoring quality of work and consulted on priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relatively limited scope (no research) ▪ Low visibility ▪ No “solid” legal basis ▪ Lack of direct influence of Member States on the network’s work programme may lead to decreased commitment ▪ Current information system only partly used

	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contractual responsibility for national level contributions with organisation contracted for coordination (leading also to less administration) ▪ Resources available for analysis and cross-national comparisons ▪ Good level of objectivity and reliability ▪ Relatively cost-effective 	
Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wide scope ▪ Well placed to inform policy debate and developments at EU level ▪ Agency (Structure 1) provides legal basis and independence ▪ Agency (Structure 1) has direct contractual responsibility for national level contributions ▪ Strong focus on quality criteria / conditions for national level inputs in Co-financed network (Structure 2) ▪ Decision making involves Commission and Member States ▪ Working groups / committees steering content and method of work ▪ Current information system used and further developed ▪ Specific focus on enhancing data comparability / harmonisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independence from the Commission means reduced control over work programme (Structure 1) ▪ Agency may be premature as still politically sensitive (Structure 1) ▪ Resource intensive ▪ Risk of bureaucracy ▪ Potential coordination and national capacity / issues especially during the start-up phase ▪ Risk of poor quality research and information collection if methodological processes are insufficiently developed and agreed ▪ In case of national co-financing, potential issues in relation to objectivity and independence ▪ Co-financed network (structure 2) leads to high administrative burden for Commission and potential delays to contracting
Option 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very wide scope and level of independency ▪ Increased “authority” (provided good quality work is delivered) ▪ Direct voice in policy debate and developments at EU level ▪ Enabling other actors to also voice their views ▪ Agency provides legal basis ▪ Agency has direct responsibility for national outposts ▪ Decision making involves Commission and Member States ▪ Working groups / committees steering content and method of work ▪ Current information system used and further developed ▪ Specific focus on enhancing data comparability / harmonisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independence from the Commission means reduced control over work programme and views ▪ Agency may be premature as still politically sensitive ▪ An Agency issuing views may not receive Member State support ▪ Very resource intensive ▪ Risk of bureaucracy ▪ Potential coordination and national capacity issues especially during start-up phase ▪ Risk of poor quality research and information collection if methodological processes are insufficiently developed and agreed

EPEC considers that the best suitable option would, in practice, be a combination of the proposed options 2 and 3. Below is an overview of the functions, scope and remit of the preferred option.

Summary overview of the EMN preferred option

“Observatory for monitoring and analysis of EU asylum and migration flows and effects”

The future ENM would be managed by the EC DGJLS within a framework of an interservice Steering group and with inputs from an Advisory Committee and network of Member State officials drawn from the ministries with

responsibility for migration asylum and integration policies. The EC management would take the lead in the coordination with other international organisations and the selection and management of the framework contractor.

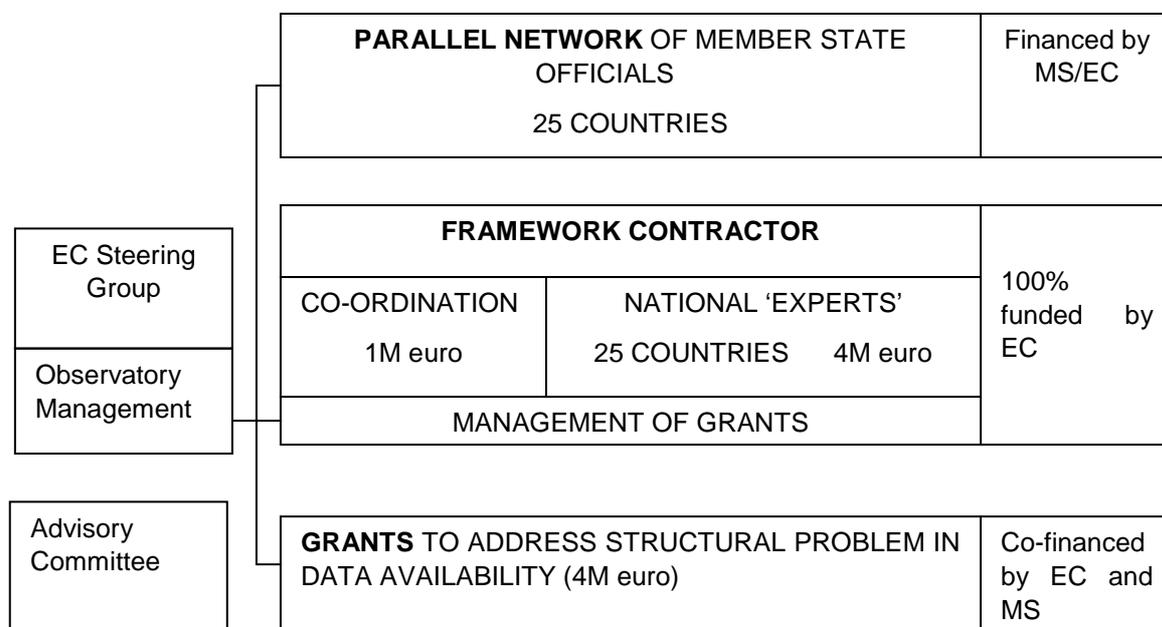
The main products of the future ENM would be provided by a framework contractor selected after an open call for tenders. In response to the call, tenderers would be invited to nominate ‘experts’ from each Member State. The final selection of national experts would be subject to agreement with the EC and the Member State concerned. Different tenderers would be able to nominate the same experts and the selection of experts would not be a criterion in the award of the framework contract. The call for tenders would also indicate the basis for resource allocations between Member States for the inputs of national experts. The framework contractor would engage the agreed national experts as sub contractors. The total annual gross value of the framework contract would be 5 million euro of which 1 million would be for EU level coordination and related activities. 4 million euro would be allocated to the national experts.

Resources would also be available to Member State public authorities to address specific structural problems in data availability. These resources would be allocated following an open call for proposals and co-financing would be available at up to 90%. The framework contractor could be invited to manage these grants on behalf of the EC.

The main **objectives** for the Observatory for monitoring and analysis of EU asylum and migration flows and effect would be as follows:

- To meet the information needs on migration and asylum of Community Institutions, Member States and the general public;
- To provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on asylum and migration and related themes, with a view to supporting policy within the EU in these areas.

The suggested **structure** for the Observatory could be described as follows.



At EU level, the main user of the information produced by the EMN would be DG JLS. Certainly other Directorates General would be interested. Eurostat would be another key user and provider for the EMN.

The added value of Community involvement for the EMN would be as follows.

- Firstly, the network responds to a real demand. The EMN is also highly relevant to wider policy developments related to asylum and migration as part of the Hague programme and the larger policy area of Justice, Freedom and Security. It also presents clear links to other policy areas such as employment, social affairs, discrimination and regional development.
- The EMN is an information tool tailored to the needs of the Community. Contrary to many other information collection activity, its purpose is to specifically meet the information needs of policy makers. Other existing activity may have similar themes, functions and coverage, but none of these are specifically geared towards supporting policy development. It is however essential that the EMN takes account of existing activity to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance synergies.
- When looking at coverage in particular, the EMN is the only network which will cover the full EU25 territory and which will have national structures in each of its Member States. This is particularly relevant for drawing comparisons between countries and for presenting credible EU overviews.
- The EMN will provide some unique features such as the rapid response service, trend analyses and the identification of information needs and gaps. These items will be presented in a format suitable for policy makers (i.e. with a high focus on the clarity, conciseness and relevance of the information presented).
- The EMN is likely to encourage Member States, due to their involvement in the network, to undertake common action and to increase cooperation between countries. This will benefit the implementation of EU policies at national level.
- The achievements to be realised by the EMN are based on clear terms of reference and the development of a realistic work programme, implemented through strong management and coordination bodies. In this sense, the network's achievements are unlikely to be heavily influenced by contextual circumstances outside the control / scope of the Commission. However, as anticipated in the description of the preferred option, the EMN will have to deal with varying national contexts in terms of the quality and availability of data and information. For the latter, action has been proposed through grants to finance structural improvements.
- At present, it is unlikely that problems would arise should the current EMN not be continued. The network as it stands is not sufficiently used to assume that its absence would cause substantial problems to EU policy making. But, as already highlighted, there is an increasing need for an instrument that will support policy development in the future by providing up-to-date, reliable and comparable information to allow for better informed policy decisions.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report is the third deliverable of the Evaluation of the activities of the European Migration Network (EMN), contracted to EPEC by DG JLS. The purposes of this final report are to:

- Present the results of the full evaluation, thus including the assessment of the pilot and preparatory action and the development of options for the form and structure of the EMN.
- To draw conclusions on all evaluation components
- To make recommendations with regard to the future of the EMN.

The final report elaborates the preliminary findings with regard to the assessment of the pilot and preparatory action of the EMN, integrating additional work undertaken with regard to stakeholder interviews, reviewing literature, accessing Commission documents, visits to NCPs, etc. The sections relating to the development of future options for the EMN are informed by the assessment and have been extensively discussed at a brainstorming workshop, in which the Commission, the Scientific Coordinator and EPEC participated.

1.1 Aims and objectives of the evaluation

The assignment had the following main objectives:

1. To evaluate the implementation of the pilot and preparatory action for establishing the EMN, looking at the suitability of its present functions and forms and the way the network works, as well as assessing its results and achievements to identify weaknesses, success factors and lessons learnt.
2. To carry out an ex-ante evaluation, informed by the assessment of the implementation of the EMN to date, as an input to support the preparation of a Green Paper and a proposal for a legal basis for the future of the EMN, focusing on whether and what role there is for the network and what form and functions the EMN should assume in order to carry out this role.

In particular, the evaluation was aimed at:

- Re-assessing the information needs to be addressed in the context of a gradually developing EU immigration and asylum policy, especially in terms of their evolution since the Feasibility Study carried out in 1996.
- Setting up a systematic inventory of existing data and information collection and supply at EU and international level, in order to ensure that the EMN does not duplicate activities or other organisations, entities and / or interventions.

- Addressing the implementation of the EMN project to date in terms of relevance, progress in achieving its objectives, suitability, capacity, good value for money, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Identifying lessons from the pilot and preparatory action of the EMN and making recommendations on the best way forward from the point of view of its form, structure and functions, including the development of a Logical Framework and proposals for indicators for monitoring and evaluation.
- Determining the added value of the EMN project.

The results to be achieved included:

- A problems and needs assessment analysing the context of the EMN operation.
- An assessment of implementation to date of the EMN project and lessons learnt, to also inform the remaining phases of the pilot preparatory action.
- Identification of potential objectives to be achieved by the future EMN, as well as its remit and form.
- A description of alternative delivery mechanisms and risk assessment, including proposals with regard to human and financial resources to be allocated to the network.
- Identification of the added value of a network on European migration as against other information collection activity.
- Proposals for monitoring and evaluation.

1.2 Method of approach

The method of approach consisted of nine key tasks, which were based on the study's Terms of Reference. Each key task was subdivided into evaluation activities. The table below presents the overall approach to the EMN study.

Table 1.1 – Evaluation matrix

Key tasks (based on specific tasks as outlined in the Terms of Reference)	Evaluation Activities
1. Inception period	Preparation of methodological instruments and detailed work programme
2. Problem and needs assessment – analysing the context of the EMN operation	2.1 Describing the political and institutional context 2.2 Providing an inventory of information gathering activities / institutions within and outside the Commission 2.3 Reviewing technological / IT developments 2.4 Describing the type of information needs to be covered by the EMN and their evolution since the 1996 Feasibility Study
3. Assessment of progress of the EMN	3.1 Examining the relevance and quality of the activities and outputs 3.2 Assessing the progress of the EMN in relation to its objectives 3.3 Analysing the capacity and suitability of the present form / structure of the network and its individual components 3.4 Assessing value for money of the EMN's outputs 3.5 Appraising the efficiency and effectiveness of the network in terms of management and administration 3.6 Assessing overall awareness of the EMN 3.7 Identifying lessons from implementation
4. Interim reporting	Preparation of interim report presenting a first outcomes of analysis and assessment indicated under tasks 2 and 3, the work programme for remainder of study and issues / obstacles encountered.
5. Development of a Logical Framework including objectives and indicators	5.1 Addressing future funding rationale and needs 5.2 Addressing issues relevant to the common immigration and asylum policy 5.3 Setting concrete objectives and corresponding indicators
6. Description of alternative delivery mechanisms	6.1 Proposing and analysing possible alternatives for the EMN's future form/structure and function
7. Elaboration of the preferred mechanism	7.1 Detailed elaboration of the preferred option 7.2 Planning future monitoring and evaluation 7.3 Preliminary cost-effectiveness analysis, looking at cost implications and financial and human resources
8. Examining the added value of Community involvement	8.1 Addressing the added value of the project at EU level 8.2 Assessing the extent to which the project is complementary to and coherent with other information gathering activities within and outside the Commission
9. Final reporting	Preparation of draft final and final report

The methodological instruments used for undertaking the Key tasks and evaluation activities listed above included:

- Several meetings with the client to discuss progress of work and receive feedback on reporting
- Consultation with a wide variety of actors involved in the EMN and relevant actors outside the EMN (see Annexes A.1 and A.2 for a full list of interviewees and the interview questionnaire)
- A literature review including Commission communications and other documents, as well as existing research (see Annex B for a list of documents accessed)
- An extensive mapping of existing information collection activity (see section 2.2 for explanations on the approach to the mapping exercise and its outcomes)
- A project documentation review, including EMN contractual agreements, reporting, correspondence, etc (see Annex C for a list of documents accessed for the purpose of this study)
- Missions to a total of 12 NCPs and questionnaires to all other NCPs (see interview questionnaire and list attached as Annexes D.1 and D.2 to this report)
- An online survey of national researchers, contributors to the EMN and other relevant actors and stakeholders (see Annex E for the survey questionnaire)
- Development of scenarios for alternative options for the EMN and assessment tools (see Annex F)
- A brainstorming workshop with the Commission and the Scientific Coordinator to discuss the alternative options developed for the EMN (see Annexes G.1 and G.2 for workshop agenda and presentation)
- A grouping of Member States for costing the EMN national inputs (see Annex H)

In line with the DG Budget evaluation guides, the table below shows how the different key tasks and evaluation activities informed the generic evaluation issues of, for example, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. In the table, the 'XX' indicates a strong influence on informing the evaluation issue, whilst the 'X' refers to some level of input. It should further be noted that not all tasks/subtasks have been included as they concern reporting or overall analyses and assessments of the information gathered by the study.

Table 1.2 – Links between evaluation tasks and generic evaluation issues

Key evaluation issues Tasks / information inputs	Relevance	Coherence	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Utility	Sustainability	Updated problems /needs	Future EMN
Task 2 - Problem and needs assessment								
6.1 and 6.2 Key actor consultation (internal and external)	XX	XX			X	X	XX	XX
6.3 Literature review	XX	XX					XX	X
6.4 Mapping and categorising existing activity	XX	XX					XX	X
Task 3 Assessment of EMN progress								
7.1 Document review, mapping and analysis	XX		XX	XX	XX			
7.2 Review of information system	X		XX	XX		X	X	X
7.3 Visits to NCPs			XX	XX	X	X	X	XX
7.4 Questionnaire survey	X		XX	XX			X	X
Task 5 – Logical Framework development								
9.1 Development of the Logical Framework	X	X				XX	XX	XX
9.2 Brainstorming workshop	X	X				XX	XX	XX
Task 6 – Alternative delivery mechanisms								
10.3 Proposals for delivery mechanisms	X	X					XX	XX
10.4 Brainstorming workshop	X	X					XX	XX
Task 7 – elaboration of preferred delivery mechanism	X	X					XX	XX
Task 8 - Examining the Community added value	XX	XX				XX		XX

1.3 Obstacles encountered

The evaluation encountered some obstacles which affected the timing of some of the tasks and the extent to which these tasks could be carried out. None of these, however, seriously inhibited the overall remit of the study and the achievement of its objectives – all planned tasks were launched and successfully completed, albeit some required higher staff inputs or could be less extensively covered than anticipated. A time extension of one month had been requested to fully complete the study and to allow sufficient time for the client to comment and provide feedback on final reporting.

Obstacles in relation to the evaluation process

- The timing of the evaluation, six months, was very short for undertaking all the required work, especially when taking into consideration that 4 key deliverables were to be produced within this period (inception report, interim report, draft final report and final version of the latter). Also, a number of activities, such as, for example, the organisation of interviews and missions, took substantial time to arrange.
- The time between the submission of reports (inception and interim) and the receipt of comments from the client was rather long, and inhibited, in a few cases, progress on the study. Several resubmissions of the inception report were required before it was accepted by the Commission, which influenced the extent to which the study could be launched on time.
- In accordance with the Commission's request, the evaluation team had agreed to adapt its work programme to undertake the assessment of the implementation of the pilot preparatory action simultaneously with the development of the alternative options for the future EMN (initially this was meant to be sequential). This put a very high workload on the first three months of the study.
- One of the evaluation's specific tasks relating to the organisation of a "brainstorming workshop" to discuss the alternative options proposed by EPEC for the future EMN was substantially delayed due to the Commission having difficulties in scheduling a date convenient for all those involved. This further delayed the preparation of the final report.

Availability of information and of actors

- As already briefly introduced above, it proved to be difficult and time consuming to contact some of the stakeholders and to agree on a date for an interview. Some cancelled appointments more than once and some, only after several reminders, responded that they were not interested in discussing their views.
- EPEC visited the Commission's premises several times to copy all documentation related to the EMN project (applications, Grant Agreements, interim and final reporting, internal notes and correspondence, etc). Given that overall the budget line is experiencing some delays, the availability of information on "physical" and financial progress is limited. Information on final expenditure of NCPs is for example only complete for budget year 2002

(implementation year 2003). Information was available for only three NCPs on their final expenditure with regard to budget year 2003 (implementation year 2004).

1.4 Organisation of report

The remainder of the report is organised as follows:

- Section 2: Describes the context of the EMN operation, looking at policy, institutional and networking developments and mapping other relevant information collection activity. It analyses the problems and needs to be covered by the EMN, comparing these with the 1996 Feasibility Study, laying the basis for the development of the alternative options for the future network.
- Section 3: This section discusses the lessons emerging from implementation of the pilot preparatory action of the EMN to date, assessing its relevance and suitability with respect to its objectives and policy architecture, organisational efficiency, achievement of objectives, effectiveness and value for money. The lessons and success factors identified following this assessment are key to the development of alternative options for the future EMN.
- Section 4: Introduces the approach to the development of the alternative options for the future EMN, the different options proposed and elaborates the preferred option on the basis of discussions at the brainstorming workshop with the Commission and the Scientific Coordinator.
- Section 5: This section drafts the Logical Framework for the preferred option introduced in section 4, including suggestions for indicators to monitor and evaluate the future EMN.
- Section 6: Discusses the added value of the EMN project.
- Section 7: Conclusions and recommendations.

2 THE CONTEXT OF THE EMN OPERATION – PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

This section describes the overall context in which the EMN is being implemented, in terms of the policy and institutional context, networking developments and the evolution of these since the 1996 Feasibility Study. It also reviews the context in terms of other existing data and information collection activity with similar themes, mandates or structures as the EMN. The final aim of this section is to analyse and come forward with problems and needs which the future EMN should address.

2.1 Political and institutional context

Migration and asylum is a relatively new field in the EU policy arena. Inter-governmental cooperation in the field of migration and asylum policy has only been taking place for the past twenty years. It was in 1986 that Member States decided to cooperate for the first time on the entry of third country nationals into the EU and their rights of movement and residence. Such policies were previously agreed on between Member States outside of the EU law-making structure on an *ad hoc* basis. The European Commission had set up a small task force for justice and home affairs in 1992 following the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. It is only since 1999 that a Commission Directorate-General responsible for such issues is in existence.

2.1.1 *EU policy developments relevant to the development of the EMN*

1993 Maastricht Treaty

The 1993 Maastricht Treaty was a milestone for EU migration and asylum policy as it recognised the importance of justice and home affairs as a common policy concern and introduced a third pillar for inter-governmental cooperation in this area. The Treaty introduced common rules on immigration policy and the crossing of external borders. It was during this period that the idea for a European Migration Observatory was first put forward by the European Commission in its Communication on Immigration and Asylum Policies (February 1994). The Communication drew attention to the lack of objective and reliable information on the migration phenomenon and the need to enhance knowledge in this field. Work began soon after on a Feasibility Study to provide an inventory of information gathering activities in the field of international migration in Europe, identify gaps and potential overlaps of existing research activities and make a preliminary assessment of the potential role of a European Migration Observatory. The study was commissioned by the European Commission and published in May 1996. It concluded that the establishment of such an observatory was deemed necessary and beneficial. It recommended a network-based observatory with clearly defined analytical tasks, which would make existing information more accessible. In the period that followed, the idea for an Observatory did not seem to take off, probably due to the lack of political interest at the time.

1999 Amsterdam Treaty and Tampere European Council

The development of a common EU asylum and migration policy was given a new impetus in 1999, with the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty which allowed for closer cooperation on justice and home affairs policies relating to the free movement of persons (asylum, visas, immigration). The Tampere European Council, which took

place in October 1999, was another important milestone. The Conclusions stated that the Council was determined to develop the EU as an area of freedom, security and justice by sending out a strong political message to reaffirm the importance of this objective. In this way, the Tampere Council provided the impetus for a common approach to EU migration and asylum policy and put it at the top of the political agenda. The Tampere Conclusions also set out a five-year programme of policy guidelines and practical objectives to be reached in four policy areas, including the establishment of a common EU asylum and migration policy.

In the midst of this new political climate, the Commission re-launched the idea for an information-sharing observatory or network in its November 2000 Communication on a Community Immigration Policy. The Communication highlighted the need for information on migration flows and patterns into and out of the EU as well as the reinforcement of existing research and data networks. It suggested that a European network could co-ordinate activities in different Member States and promote new research. The idea was backed up by the European Parliament in its September 2001 report on the Communication. It called on the Commission and Council to promote the establishment of a European Migration Network in order to "support social, statistical, economic, geographical, legal and political research" in the area of immigration, as well as "reliable and detailed data on migration"¹. The Commission Scoreboard of October 2001 also made a reference to the setting up of a 'virtual' European Migration Observatory in order to improve knowledge of the migration phenomenon.

Laeken European Council

The first step to the creation of the Network was taken following the Laeken European Council of December 2001, which invited the Commission to establish a system for exchanging information on asylum, migration and countries of origin. Under the 2002 budget, a new 'European Migration Monitoring Centre' budget line was created for preparatory action to establish a three-year pilot project from 2003-2005. The aims of the pilot action were to establish and develop a European Migration Network and improve statistics in the field of immigration and asylum. The budget-line allocated €400,000 for an action plan on the joint analysis and improvement of asylum and immigration statistics, and €1,000,000 for the establishment of a virtual migration monitoring centre. This was to be achieved through the setting up of a network of national contact points linked to each other and to a central unit.

On the basis of a working document drafted by the Commission (in March 2002), a first exchange of views took place with Member State representatives on the establishment of the national contact points and their terms of reference. This was followed by the creation of a network of contact points nominated by the Member States. At the end of 2002, contact points had been designated in ten Member States: Austria, Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

Action Plan for the collection and analysis of migration statistics

With increased importance given to asylum and migration matters under the Amsterdam Treaty and the requirement to complete the Tampere programme for policy initiatives in this area, the need to improve statistics in this area was addressed by the

¹ European Parliament Report on the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a Community immigration policy. Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs. Rapporteur: Hubert Pirker. 14 September 2001

Commission's April 2003 Action Plan for the collection and analysis of community statistics in the field of migration. The Action Plan addressed the potential role to be played by the EMN in this process. Specifically, it suggested that the EMN could serve as a testing ground for new practices and methods aimed at improving co-operation, exchange, availability and the comparability of information in the field of migration and asylum, and identified actions that would be closely linked to its development. Such actions included: the adoption of new practices; common statistical methods and new forms of cooperation, which would lay the ground for future work under a legal basis; activities to enhance information exchange and promote decision-making, including annual meetings and seminars bringing together Member States, as well as other relevant actors and potential new providers; and changes in the current data collection or database which would include the extension of data collection to include additional information².

Thessaloniki European Council

The June 2003 Thessaloniki European Council was another milestone for the development and recognition of the EMN. The Conclusions recognised the "importance of monitoring and analysing the multidimensional migration phenomenon" and welcomed the establishment of the EMN. It also proposed examining the possibility of the setting up of a more permanent structure in the future. The fact that the EMN was mentioned in the Thessaloniki Council Conclusions may have influenced Finland, Germany and France to join the network during the second half of 2003, bringing the total number of network members at this time to 13.

2.1.2 *Recent and forthcoming policy developments relevant to the future development of EMN*

The Hague Programme

Following the end of the five-year Tampere programme in May 2004, a new multi-annual programme in the area of freedom, security and justice was endorsed at the European Council of November 2004. At this time, the Commission was asked to prepare and present an Action Plan which would translate the aims and priorities of the Hague Programme into concrete actions and outline a timetable for their adoption and implementation. The Action Plan (of May 2005) has identified 10 key areas for priority action for the next five years. These include a new approach to migration management, an integrated management of external borders, developing the second phase of the Common European Asylum System, and maximising the positive impact of migration through better policies on integration.

The continued relevance and importance of the EMN in this second five-year phase of policy development is reflected in the list of measures included in the timetable. Measures planned to reinforce the collection, provision, exchange and efficient use of up-to-date information and data on migratory phenomena in the next five years include: annual reports on migration and asylum statistics (EMN members have already contributed to the 2002 report), the adoption of the EU Framework Regulation on the collection of migration and asylum statistics in 2005 (see below), the production of a Green Paper on the future of the EMN in 2005, and a proposal establishing a

² Examples cited include: data on legal entry and stay; second instance asylum decisions and data on the implementation of procedures, criteria and mechanisms for deciding which Member State is responsible for the examination of asylum applications.

European Migration Monitoring Centre in 2006. The relevance and added-value of the EMN in this next phase of policy development is confirmed by plans to consider its future form and propose a legal basis for a more permanent structure.

New Financial Perspective (2007-2013)

Discussions are currently taking place on the Commission's proposals for the new financial perspective, which will set the objectives and budgetary resources for the EU for the period from 2007-2013. This includes proposals for three framework programmes promoting justice, freedom and security which closely follow the priorities of the Hague Programme, thus supporting their implementation. The budget proposed in the area of justice, freedom and security is €8.3 billion. This would represent an increase of 228% between 2006 and 2013. 25% of these funds have been earmarked for the management of information systems (€900 million), the external borders agency (€285.1 million) and the 'European Migration Observatory' (€62.3 million). This represents a (preliminary) financial commitment to the successor of the current EMN, which should allow for its further development and a more permanent structure.

Commission proposal for a Regulation on Community statistics on migration and asylum

The Commission is currently drafting a proposal for a Regulation on Community statistics on international migration and asylum. This is in response to repeated calls for the improvement of migration and asylum statistics in order to ensure their accuracy and comparability, and improve their collection and reliability. As the draft proposal points out, harmonised data is essential for the purposes of monitoring the development and implementation of EU legislation and policy. Once the Regulation is in force, it should result in a substantial improvement in the definitions, scope and comparability of statistical data on migration and asylum collected across the EU. Improved and comparable statistics will be extremely valuable and beneficial for policy makers and researchers working in the migration and asylum field, including the EMN, who would be best placed to provide a comparative and analytical function of the data collected.

Forthcoming Commission Green Paper on the future of the EMN

In preparation for the development of the future structure of the EMN, the Commission is currently preparing a Green Paper which will launch a consultation on the future of the network and set out ideas for its future development. Discussions will be held with all EMN stakeholders, including designated contact points, members of the Immigration and Asylum Committee, the EMN scientific co-ordinator and European and international organisations active in the migration field. This will also include a public consultation to generate feedback on the orientations for the objectives, role, form, structure and tasks of the future network. This will be followed by a proposal for a legal basis for the formal establishment of the EMN.

2.1.3 *Overview of institutional developments in relation to networking*

With regard to the networks at EU level, there have been substantial developments in the past few years. Increasingly, the Commission has contributed and is planning the set up of networks to address its information needs, to experiment with new or transnational approaches and to provide services to its full territory. These can be roughly subdivided in the following categories of services such networks are providing (although some networks combine the different characteristics listed below):

Networks collecting information

These networks have as their main objective the monitoring, collection and analysis of information to inform policy development or other action at EU level, such as the EMN. Most of the networks also have a dissemination function, but the extent to which they are open to a wider public varies greatly.

- The European Employment Observatory
- The European Environment Agency

Networks facilitating implementation

Implementation networks are set up, often for a limited time-period, to implement Community policy and/or to test out methods and approaches considered to be of Community concern. They are involved in or responsible for managing the implementation of projects or other activity sponsored by the Commission.

- TENT-T, the Trans-European Transport Network
- The Urban Pilot Programme (closed), implementing innovative pilot projects in the field of urban regeneration, monitoring and comparing results and outcomes at EU level.

Networks providing specific services to EU citizens and companies

The service-oriented networks are focusing on providing services to citizens or organisations in a wide range of areas. An important additional aspect of these networks also relates to raising awareness on the EU and providing information. Examples of such networks include:

- The Carrefour network, aimed at bringing information about the EU to the very heart of rural communities (now being changed to EuropeDirect Information Network)
- The European Consumer Centre (Euroguichets) network
- The OHIM network for trademark registration

Networks providing high-level discussion fora (e.g. of authorities or other high-profile representatives)

These networks concern exchange platforms for (national) policy and decision-makers, as well as other high-level actors, to share information and jointly undertake strategic planning with regard to EU policy. Examples of such networks are:

- Network of competent authorities for Health Information and Knowledge
- European Energy and Transport Forum

Networks providing practical exchange platforms

These networks provide exchange platforms for practitioners and other actors concerned with, for example, addressing issues caused by the different national contexts in the EU or the operational implementation of EU policy. Examples of such networks include:

- European Judicial Network

There is great variety in the way these networks are financed or otherwise supported. However, when looking at networks undertaking similar functions of the EMN, it seems that there is a trend to either finance networking activity through outsourcing (e.g. the European Employment Observatory), thus externalising management and coordination, as well as the contracting national partners, or through the establishment of a Community regulatory agency.

The development of Community agencies started in the late 1970s. There are at present 15 agencies active in the EU, with at least 3 more being currently planned (e.g. the DG JLS Agency on External Borders). The Community agencies have been set up in successive waves in order to meet specific needs on a case-by-case basis. They are typified by their diversity, and this has caused some “friction” in the past in relation to their independence, management, quality and effectiveness.

Recently the Commission has proposed an Inter-institutional Agreement on the operating framework for the European regulatory agencies, in order to establish common rules and methods for setting up new structures, ensuring transparency, coherency, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. This is particularly relevant given the current interest of the Member States to host Agencies, which seems to be considered a “political” strength and/or a way to ensure a Community presence in their country.

However, concerns have been expressed by DG Budget as well as other actors. DG Budget called for a rationalisation of the Agencies, as they are relatively expensive structures with a permanent duration. Prior to setting up an Agency, there should be sufficient justification for its need and for its potential continuity. One should also assess whether the same mandate and tasks could not be undertaken through a more cost-effective method, such as outsourcing. Finally, Agencies have a high level of independence, and despite the increased role of the Commission in their management, as proposed in the draft framework agreement, they would still have the autonomy to develop their own work programme.

An academic study³ on national and EU agencies, undertaken as part of the Jean Monnet programme, criticised the proposed Agency Framework for lacking clarity and simplicity, and paying insufficient attention to the principles of good governance. It also called for a clear classification of agencies (compared to what is proposed in the Framework), into 1) Executive agencies including those responsible for managerial tasks, having observatory roles and missions of cooperation; 2) Decision-making agencies comprising all structures with the power to enact legal instruments; and 3)

³ The Development of Agencies at EU and National Levels: Conceptual Analysis and Proposals for Reform, Damien Geradin and Nicolas Petit, 2004

Regulatory agencies which are those that have the power to translate broad legislation guidelines into concrete instruments.

2.2 Existing information gathering activity

This section presents characteristics of existing information gathering activity in the area of asylum and migration in comparison to the EMN. A mapping exercise has been undertaken to highlight potential overlaps and duplication, which should be avoided, and to find out which complementary activities exist. Furthermore, the mapping included a number of EU initiatives in other policy areas that could provide potential lessons on how to structure networks, budgets etc. even though the theme and the information provided may not be relevant to that of the EMN.

So as to enable an easy analysis and comparison, the characteristics of the EMN (current and a possible new structure and functions) and other organisations have been categorised on the basis of a typology and coding as outlined in the Inception Report. Table 2.1 outlines this typology:

Table 2.1 – Outline of matrix for mapping and categorising existing activity	
1.	Summary of activity (max 50 words)
2.	Contact details
3.	Leading organisation (A. International organisation, B. UN, C. EU, D. NGO, E. Independent research, F. private sector, G. programme, H. documentation centre)
4.	Target audience (A. public, B. research community, C. public authorities, D. NGOs, E. practitioners, F. private sector, G. intergovernmental bodies)
5.	Users (A. open to all, B. research community, C. public authorities, D. NGOs, E. practitioners, F. private sector, G. partly open to all)
6.	Accessibility (A. online direct access, B. online access to references and ordering of publications, C. “physical” library / premises), D. Not able to access any website
7.	Hardware and software used (A. Internet, B. online database, C. information request by email, D. online forum)
8.	Coverage (A. international, including the EU B. international, including part of the EU, C. international only D. EU, E. national, F. group of EU countries)
9.	Funding (A. EU (co-)financed, B. private funding, C. public funding, D. self-sufficient e.g. from revenue)
10.	Budget available (A. < 1 million euro, B. 1 – 5 million euro, C. 6 – 10 million euro, D. > 10 million euro)
11.	Status (A. independent legal status, B. semi-dependent, C. fully dependent from other organisation(s))
12.	Structure (A. fully centralised, B. centralised with contracted local inputs, C. centralised with other inputs, D. decentralised)
13.	Central staffing (A. more than 10, B. between 7-10, C. between 3-6, D. between 1-3)
14.	Local inputs (A. per country, B. per group of countries, C. per theme, D. per function)
15.	Functions (A. collecting information, B. analysis and research, C. preparing views / opinions, D. preparing / disseminating publications and news, E. discussion forum, F. practical support, G. policy evaluation and shaping, H. monitoring)
16.	Theme (A. asylum, B. migration, C. relevant to asylum and migration (e.g. integration, demand, impacts, root causes, D. other)
For each point: NA=Not Available, O=Other	

The categorisation has been undertaken mainly on the basis of information accessible on the websites of 37 identified organisations⁴. The mapping also includes three JLS information exchange initiatives for which websites could not be accessed (CIREFI, ICONET and EURASIL), and THESIM, a project financed by DG RESEARCH under the 6th framework programme⁵. In these cases, the activities have been categorised based on interviews and other existing documentation, e.g. financial regulations. Most information concerning functions, themes etc. could be accessed either of these ways, whereas information on budgets, figures on central staffing and local inputs are scarce.

The key findings of this subsection can be summarised as follows:

- Whilst many information gathering activities show similarities when looking (separately) at their theme, functions and coverage, when looking at the combination of these, there are only a few that are still comparable to the EMN.
- Those EU-funded information gathering activities that have functions similar to the EMN are different in terms of scope. Those activities that are very similar, but not led or funded by the EU, make it difficult to obtain information that meets specific (policy) demands or to obtain relevant information fast and in the right “shape”. In addition, they are different in terms of structure and status, which also influences the extent to which they could deliver the same type of information.
- There are only very few organisations which can “compete” with the EMN in terms of accessibility, hardware and software used and potential users.
- There is no organisation that has exactly the same functions and scope as the future EMN.

There are some potential overlaps with other EU funded initiatives to be addressed, e.g. with the ICONET and CIREFI, albeit none of the initiatives have the same scope. There are also some important synergies to ensure. For instance, the THESIM network is undertaking complementary activities to the EMN in that the aim of the network is the harmonisation of international migration statistical data.

Tables 2.2-2.4 below present key characteristics for current activities that have been compared to EMN with regard to:

- Geographical coverage
- Theme
- Leading organisation

⁴ During the mapping it was evident that two of the organisations were not relevant to include as they only provide daily news on asylum and migration issues. They have therefore not been considered in the analysis.

⁵ After the submission of the interim report, the Commission requested information to be included on other JLS information collection activities, which are not necessarily organised around any website / web based tools.

- Functions
- Accessibility to material, hardware and software used

Theme

Table 2.2 provides an overview of identified organisations by geographical coverage and activity theme, i.e. “asylum and migration”, “asylum only”, “migration only”, “relevant to asylum and migration” and “other” (i.e. EU agencies that provide insights on the structuring of networks).

With regard to geographical coverage, it is of great importance to differentiate between activity that fully covers the EU, partly covers the EU and that which does not cover the EU, since the added value of the EMN to a high extent relates to the provision of comparable data across all EU Member States. In addition, the typology allows to discern such activity that fully covers the EU but extends to countries outside the EU, i.e. “International including EU”. Activity that has been categorised as the latter consistently addresses the entire EU in reports and statistical data provision, whereas “International including part of the EU” is more limited in scope and only sometimes includes one or a few EU countries.

Table 2.2 – Existing activity by geographical coverage and theme			
EU	International incl. EU	International incl. part of EU	International only
Asylum and Migration			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMN current • EMN possible • Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on the Crossing of Frontiers and Immigration (CIREFI) • Eurostat • Information and Co-ordination Network (ICONET) • The EuroFor network (European Research Forum on Migration and Ethnic Relations) • The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) • The Migration Policy Group (MPG) • The Odysseus Network • THESIM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eurasyllum • HJT Country Database (formerly known as ICCID - The Immigration Consortium Country Information Database) • IOM • Migration News • The Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM) • The Global IDP Project • The IMISCOE Network of Excellence • The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) • The United Nations Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIGRINTER • SOPEMI • The Association Génériques • The CIEMI Documentation Centre • The Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) • The International Metropolis Project • The International Migration Branch (MIGRANT) • The Population Activities Unit (PAU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Center for Immigration Studies
Asylum only			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Union Network for Asylum Practitioners (EURASIL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 		

Table 2.2 – Existing activity by geographical coverage and theme			
EU	International incl. EU	International incl. part of EU	International only
Migration only			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The United Nations Statistics Division 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediterranean Migration Observatory (MMO) 	
Relevant for asylum and migration			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Other			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) The European Environment Agency (EEA) The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) The European Observatory on the Social Situation, Demography and Family 			

Leading organisation (responsibility)

The EMN is an information collection activity led by the European Commission. The following existing activity included in the mapping is also led or sponsored/supported by the Commission:

Table 2.3 – Existing activity by theme
Asylum and Migration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EMN current Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on the Crossing of Frontiers and Immigration (CIREFI) Information and Co-ordination Network (ICONET) The EuroFor network (European Research Forum on Migration and Ethnic Relations) The Odysseus Network on asylum and migration THESIM
Asylum only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> European Union Network for Asylum Practitioners (EURASIL)
Relevant to asylum and migration
NA

Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) • The European Environment Agency (EEA) • The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions • The Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM) • The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) • The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) • The European Observatory on the Social Situation, Demography and Family • Eurostat

To distinguish overlaps between existing activity sponsored by the Commission and the EMN, it is of interest to look at table 2.2 and table 2.3 in combination. In the area of asylum and migration, the Commission is currently (co-)funding five activities in addition to the EMN. In order to establish in what cases there is a risk for overlap, one must, however, also look at what functions are provided by these initiatives. This is elaborated below.

Functions

Currently the EMN is providing the following functions:

- Collecting information
- Analysis and research
- Preparing / disseminating publications and news
- Monitoring

A possible direction for a future EMN would be to expand its activities to cover the following tasks (categorisation according to indicator 15 of the typology in table 2.1):

- A. Collecting information
- B. Analysis and research
- D. Preparing / disseminating publications and news
- E. Discussion forum
- F. Practical support
- G. Policy evaluation and shaping
- H. Monitoring

Table 2.4 provides an overview of different combinations of activities as they are currently undertaken by organisations dealing with information collection (the letter combinations follow the same coding as provided above. For instance, the code ABDEFGH refers to the functions to be provided by a possible future EMN). The organisations are listed by theme. The table also shows the geographical coverage of the activities undertaken by the organisations. Only existing combinations have been included.

Table 2.4– Combinations of functions (information collection mandatory)																		
Theme	Geographical coverage			Functions														
	Agency	EU	Internat incl. the EU	Internat incl. part of EU	ABDG	ABCDFG	ABCDFGH	ABCEFG	ABD	ABDEFG	ABDEFGH	ABDF	ABDFG	ABDFGH	ABDFGI	ABDFH	ABDH	ADEF
Asylum and migration																		
EMN current	X																X	
EMN possible	X										X							
Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on the Crossing of Frontiers and Immigration (CIREFI)	X						X											
Eurostat	X							X										
Information and Co-ordination Network (ICONET)	X									X								
THESIM	X											X						
IOM		X												X				
The Global IDP Project		X				X												
The United Nations Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs		X			X													
SOPEMI (Système d'Observation Permanent des Migrations)			X						X									
The Association Génériques			X												X			
The International Migration Branch (MIGRANT)			X										X					
The Population Activities Unit (PAU)			X										X					
Asylum only																		

Table 2.4– Combinations of functions (information collection mandatory)																		
Theme	Geographical coverage			Functions														
	Agency	EU	Internat incl. the EU	Internat incl. part of EU	ABDG	ABCDFG	ABCDFGH	ABCEFG	ABD	ABDEFG	ABDEFGH	ABDF	ABDFG	ABDFGH	ABDFGI	ABDFH	ABDH	ADEF
The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)		X											X					
Migration only																		
The United Nations Statistics Division		X										X						
Relevant to asylum and migration																		
The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights		X				X												
Other																		
The European Environment Agency (EEA)	X													X				
The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions	X												X					
The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)	X															X		
The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC)	X									X								
The European Observatory on the Social Situation, Demography and Family	X												X					

The table shows that two other activities, the ICONET and the EUMC, are the only activities that provide the same functions as the future EMN. However, since these activities are also Commission initiatives, it is of particular importance to look more in detail at which activities are undertaken to avoid overlaps. Firstly, as presented in table 2.2, the EUMC is not related to the EMN in terms of scope. Secondly, the more precise aim of the ICONET is to provide “a web-based intranet site to be used to establish secure and rapid information exchange between Member States on irregular or illegal migratory flows and phenomena”⁶, i.e. the ICONET is much more limited in scope with its specific focus on illegal migration. Furthermore, the ICONET web-based intra-net is limited to authorised users.

Activities that are operating in the area of asylum and migration are most important to look closer at with regard to their current functions. One activity which is undertaking almost the same functions as the future EMN, is the SOPEMI initiative, which, if looking at the functions, has the exact same functions as the future EMN except monitoring. However, SOPEMI, which is an OECD initiative, does not cover the entire EU geographically.

It should be emphasised that other activities that are similar to the EMN with regard to functions, are not led / funded by the EU, which makes it difficult to obtain information that meets specific (policy) demands or to obtain relevant information fast, and in the right “shape”. They are also different in terms of structure and status, which influences the extent to which they could deliver the same type of information. It is evident that there is a gap in relation to a structure taking on all the tasks listed above, since currently no organisation is providing all these tasks on EU or international level.

Accessibility to material, hardware and software used

The typology also makes it possible to extract information about the accessibility to material and hardware and software used. Except for the JLS initiatives mentioned above (for which no website could be accessed), all but one of the organisations in the field of asylum and migration have online access to material (19) and most have online databases (14), but often in combination with references and ordering of publications (15). Only a very small number have a physical library (5). Furthermore, with regard to the sophistication of the hardware used (databases etc.) it should be noted that the degree of sophistication varies greatly between the organisations.

2.3 The 1996 Feasibility Study

The 1996 Feasibility Study for a European Migration Observatory⁷ was commissioned by the European Commission in order to determine whether the setting up of such an observatory could be beneficial, and if so, what role it could play. The study undertook a detailed analysis of theoretical developments in the field of European migration, as well as an inventory of data collection and information-gathering activities and existing observatories. The study also explained the role that could be played by information technology in data collection and made concrete proposals and recommendations regarding the possible structure of such an observatory.

⁶ COM(2003) 727 final of 25.11.2003: Proposal for a Council Decision Establishing a secure web-based Information and Co-ordination Network for Member States' Migration Management Services

The study concluded that there was a plethora of institutions and organisations producing research and data on migration in the EU. However, the fact that there was an abundance and diversity of information available on migration did not mean that it was necessarily accessible to policy makers and other ‘users’ of this information. Often they were unaware of valuable resources and information simply because it was inaccessible or unknown to them.

The Feasibility Study identified six main imbalances and gaps in migration information and existing research at the time relating to:

- **Access to and co-ordination of information:** The study identified an overall lack of easy access to existing information as well as the need for a suitable interface between existing information sources and potential users. It suggested that the setting up of a single reference point for the filtering and synthesising of information could address this.
- **Information on policy and legislation:** The lack of comprehensive and up-to-date information on national legal systems and policy developments, as well as enacted and proposed legislation was highlighted in the study. The establishment of a comprehensive on-line database of this information was recommended.
- **Policy analysis:** The lack of an independent body or institution to evaluate the effects of policies on migration and analyse policy interlinkages was identified, as well as the need for research on the effects of migration policies and policy linkages.
- **Current statistics:** The study acknowledged the lack of accurate, up-to-date and comparable statistical information on asylum and migration and drew attention to the need for comparative analyses presenting statistical information in an accessible form, and setting out major trends and patterns.
- **Country of origin information:** Another information gap identified was the lack of information on countries of origin and the possibility of developing an early warning system.
- **Research on specific topics:** The need for information on specific topics such as the links between trade flows and migration, and integration thresholds was also highlighted in the study, as well as the lack of a register of current and forthcoming research.

Since the Feasibility Study was carried out in 1996, nine years have passed. In the meantime there have been significant developments in EU migration and asylum policy, as well as information technology and data collection methods. The information gaps and needs identified in the 1996 Feasibility Study have also developed and changed somewhat, but are still for the most part relevant today, especially with regard to insufficient information management and coordination, the lack of information on policy and legislation, including analysis and evaluation, problems of statistical data and information and the need for information on specific and pertinent topics.

⁷ Feasibility Study for a European Migration Observatory. Final Report, European Communities, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1998.

The views of stakeholders interviewed in the context of this study tend to agree that there has been some improvement with regard to the imbalances and gaps in migration information and research identified in the 1996 Feasibility Study but that this could be improved further. Discussions have revealed:

- There is universal agreement that progress on the development of statistical data in the migration field has been insufficient, and that such data still needs to be improved to ensure accuracy and comparability. Demand for such information has certainly increased as a result of EU policy developments in this field. The fact that the number of officials working in the asylum and migration statistics section of Eurostat has increased from one to four full-time positions is proof of this. The Commission is currently drafting a Regulation on Community statistics on international migration and asylum which will address this gap and result in an improvement of statistical data collected across the EU in this area.
- The dissemination of information and access to statistical sources has greatly improved and developed thanks to the development of the Internet. More information and data is readily available and the Internet has become the primary source for quick information.
- Although access to information has improved, there is still a need for a type of interface to link to existing databases and act as a reference point to filter and synthesise information. It would also be useful for policy makers and researchers to have a register or inventory of current and forthcoming research.
- With regard to country of origin information, there has been increased research in this area, and several databases already exist, but their quality may be questionable.

2.4 Problems and needs to be covered by the future EMN

As mentioned earlier, since the Feasibility Study was published in 1996, asylum and migration have become topics of Community policy and the European Union has gained considerable responsibility in this field. There has also been a steady development of organisations and institutions conducting research in this area. These developments have increased the demand for reliable information and statistical data in this area. Progress made in information and communication technology, and in particular the development of the Internet as a research tool, has made information and data more readily accessible. Another significant change has been the accession of ten new Member States to the EU in May 2004, adding a new geographical and political dimension.

During discussions with actors currently involved in the EMN, as well as stakeholders working in the field of migration, interviewees were asked to comment on the most relevant problems and needs which could be addressed by the future EMN. A large majority of respondents highlighted the pertinent need for information on national legal developments and a comparative analysis of these. Such information is highly valuable not only for researchers but also for policy makers at EU and national levels. The second most cited need relates to the analysis of statistical data provided by Eurostat. EMN could provide an in-depth comparative analysis of migratory trends in the EU similar to that currently provided by the annual SOPEMI report, but covering the 25 EU Member States. One respondent pointed out that the EMN could also advise Eurostat

on the areas where statistical data is particularly needed. With regard to specific topics where information is lacking, interviewees identified the following possible topics: links between migration and asylum, information on the types of migratory flows, economic migration, the EU dimension of migration, the effects of the Schengen Agreement on the circulation of third country nationals, the identification of future deficits in EU labour supply, the impact of EU policy on the Member State level, and links between migration and development.

Based on the literature review, observations made by actors interviewed in the context of this study, and other evaluative evidence, an updated list of problems and needs has been compiled identifying seven key factors which are further divided into sets of more specific problems and needs. Those marked with *New* are new needs identified through the consultation process and literature review. Items marked *Updated* were already mentioned in the Feasibility Study, and have been confirmed to be still relevant. The latter have been slightly reformulated and readjusted to make them more specific and more up-to-date.

1. Need to inform future EU policy developments with regard to asylum and migration

The EU's increased competence in the field of asylum and migration since the 1999 Amsterdam Treaty and Tampere programme has resulted in a significant increase in demand for information and data in this field. This has been emphasised in several Commission policy documents, including the 2003 Action Plan for the collection and analysis of community statistics in the field of migration, the 2003 Communication on immigration, integration and employment, the 2004 Communication on the links between legal and illegal migration as well as the Draft Regulation on Community statistics.

Problems and needs of the future EMN:

- To address the Commission's information needs for the implementation of policy and legislative measures under the 10 key areas for priority action identified in the May 2005 Action Plan for the next five years. *New*.
- To provide monitoring and independent assessments of the achievements and effects of the EU's increased competence in the field of asylum and migration, in particular in relation to the implementation of the Action Plan. *New*.
- To obtain a comprehensive overview and up-to-date information on national legal systems and policy developments in the EU25 which may affect or be a result of policy formulation at EU level, as well as inter-policy linkages. *Updated*.
- To obtain a comprehensive overview (i.e. covering the EU25) of issues (e.g. based on existing or new research) linked to asylum and migration (e.g. effects on employment, demographic structure, housing, etc), which are highly relevant given the increased focus on the Lisbon strategy. *Updated*.
- To be able to compare EU policy developments to those happening in other parts of the world with similar contexts in terms of asylum and migration. *New*.
- To provide comparative information on the Member State implementation of EU legislation relating to asylum and immigration. *New*.

2. Insufficient information management and coordination

EMN actors and stakeholders who have been interviewed in the context of this evaluation agree that while information on asylum and migration has increased significantly in the past ten years, it is often poorly organised and scattered, with gaps in terms of coverage on specific topics. The development of the Internet and other information technologies has made information easily accessible on-line, but it can be a challenge to locate the information that is needed. Also, it is difficult to know what information is available and where to find it. Access to some databases may also be restricted. Several actors have suggested that the use of some type of directory or the development of a single reference point for information on migration and asylum could be beneficial to help manage information available.

Problems and needs of the future EMN:

- To provide fast and well-targeted access to existing relevant and comprehensive information. *Updated.*
- To identify gaps and overlaps in information, such as research, and to propose new information gathering activities. *Updated.*
- To coordinate and link existing sources of information, including inventories of relevant actors, research, information services and other activity, in a suitable interface bringing together existing information sources and potential users. *Updated.*
- To address the lack of a single reference point to information on asylum and migration in the EU, filtering and synthesising information so it is readily available and accessible, e.g. in the shape of a database. *Updated.*

3. Lack of information on policy and legislation, including analysis and evaluation

Comprehensive information on policy and legislation in place in the EU25, including the analysis and evaluation of its potential effects and inter-linkages at national as well as EU level is currently lacking. Such information would be highly valuable not only for national and EU-level policy makers but also for researchers. This information would furthermore be particularly beneficial in developing the second five-year phase of policy development under the Hague Programme. It would also be useful for national administrations when transposing and implementing the measures agreed on under the Tampere Programme and for researchers evaluating the state of transposition and implementation.

Problems and needs of the future EMN:

- To provide easy access to (synthesis) information on the EU25 national legal systems and policy developments. *Updated.*
- For independent analysis, evaluation and comparisons of national policy agendas and legislation on asylum and migration, as well as policy-interlinkages, addressing causes, effects and consequences. *New.*

4. Problems of statistical data and information

Substantial efforts are being made to increase the accuracy, objectivity and comparability of statistical information, and to make data more up-to-date. The draft Regulation on Community statistics on international migration and asylum, once agreed, will provide major improvements in terms of definitions and the range of data being collected. There will be a need for the comparative analysis of such information. The EMN would be best placed to provide this comparative and analytical function. Moreover, the network could also add value by bringing together other official and non-statistical data which are not covered by the Regulation and to support the experimentation with new practices and methods.

Problems and needs of the future EMN:

- Lack of up-to-date, objective and accurate data for all EU Member States. *Updated.*
- Lack of harmonised statistical information and data collection methods. *Updated.*
- Insufficient information on additional variables in relation to migrants and asylum seekers, such as their profession, educational background and qualifications. *New.*
- Need for comparative analyses presenting statistical information in an accessible form for the EU25. *Updated.*
- Need for the identification of major trends and patterns on the basis of data analyses, providing an overview of the full EU territory. *Updated.*
- Lack of use of reliable and accurate data as evidence for other analytical activity, such as studying policy and legislative effects. *New.*

5. Information on the New Member States

In addition to the general need for comprehensive information on the EU25, particular attention needs to be paid to the new Member States and Accession States. In a few cases, information collection systems are underdeveloped, or have only been set up fairly recently. Also, existing information systems need to be integrated into the current EMN information system. As asylum and migration are relatively new policy areas for most of the new Member States, statistical data may be lacking or difficult to come by. Where such information exists, the definitions, criteria and indicators used do not often correspond to those used at EU level. Another challenge identified by many EMN contact persons in the new Member States (as well as some existing NCPs) is the fact that English translations of data and legislation are not available.

Problems and needs of the future EMN:

- To place extra efforts on the collection of data and information in the new Member States, possibly in the shape of guidance or direct support. *New.*
- To help build the capacity of organisations participating in the EMN. *New.*
- To integrate information on new Member States into existing information structures. *New.*
- To deal with potential issues in relation to their capacity, competences and experiences. *New.*
- To address possible lack of existing information on asylum and migration. *New.*

6. Need for information on specific and pertinent topics

EU asylum and migration policy needs to be able to respond to new developments and trends in this field which are ever-changing, often very quickly. In order to be able to provide quick responses, views or clarifications on specific issues in relation to asylum and migration, research needs to be able to analyse such developments as they happen. In some cases “early warning systems” could facilitate the functioning of EU legislation, for example, in the case of the application of the Directive on temporary protection in the case of mass influx. Also, a number of themes linked to asylum and migration are still relatively “under-researched”, whilst being very relevant to policy development. Interviews with relevant actors and stakeholders have revealed several topics where such research is currently lacking (see above).

Problems and needs of the future EMN:

- Gaps in information on certain topics relevant to EU policy development. *Updated.*
- Lack of a “quick response service” which can address queries from EU and MS officials. *New.*
- Lack of a comprehensive and updated overview of trends, patterns and country of origin information to enable proactive reactions and responses through a central system / mechanism. *Updated.*
- To identify gaps in information on certain topics (e.g. links with legal and illegal immigration) and to proactively propose new research on pertinent themes. *Updated.*

7. Need to take advantage of ICT developments

New ICT developments have drastically increased the possibilities and use of the Internet in general as well as online tools and specialised databases. Such technologies continue to improve and develop, replacing information tools with new ones once they become out-dated. It is important that such developments be monitored to allow for cost-effective choices for the further elaboration and building of any information system.

Problems and needs of the future EMN:

- To ensure the selection of the most cost-effective option for information systems and databases. *New.*
- To enable the continuous updating of these systems (in terms of integrating new technologies if and when relevant). *Updated.*
- To make sure that the system operation is user-friendly both for users and those inputting to the system. *Updated.*
- Continuous ICT innovation makes it difficult to choose the most effective platforms for information systems. *New.*
- Other (general) search engines are serious competitors. *New.*
- Technically complicated systems are difficult to operate when several actors are responsible for inputting information. *New.*

A summary list of these seven problems and needs is included in section 4, where it is used for further analysis and discussions on alternative options for the future structure of the EMN.

3 LESSONS EMERGING FROM THE EMN PILOT AND PREPARATORY ACTIONS

This section examines the relevance and suitability of the EMN, its organisational efficiency, the achievement of objectives and effectiveness, and the value for money of the pilot and preparatory phase of the EMN. After an examination of the above factors, conclusions are drawn regarding the success factors and lessons learnt from the pilot phase.

3.1 Relevance and suitability of the EMN

This section looks at the suitability and relevance of the network, assessing the extent to which:

- Its terms of reference and objectives were relevant and suitable to address the underlying problems and needs.
- The institutional arrangements and processes developed for running the EMN were suitable for addressing the underlying problems and needs.

The section considers the relevance and suitability of the overall purpose and objectives set for the network, its status and structure, the functions and tasks attributed to the network and its capacity. Each of these is discussed separately below. From these subsequent assessments it becomes evident that:

- Overall, the terms of reference, objectives and institutional arrangements developed for the EMN *were relevant and suitable at the time of the network's setup*. However, policy and other contextual developments, as well as the network's experiences so far, call for a renewed policy architecture and design.
- In general, the network would, however, have benefited from *more clarity*, especially with regard to its mandate and functions. The lack of such clarity influenced the extent to which the EMN was capable of addressing the problems and needs identified.
- The structure, and to a less extent, the status chosen for the EMN were suitable for a pilot preparatory action but some aspects may have influenced the network's independency and ability to produce reliable and objective data.
- The EMN is strongly embedded in asylum and migration policy (key policy documents refer to its potential use) within the EU and hence is relevant. The future network should maximise its potential to contribute to work in the area of statistics, monitoring and analysing the various dimensions of migration and asylum and to policy making in general.

3.1.1 **Purpose and Objectives**

The initial purpose and overall objectives of the EMN are presented in the box below.

Purpose

The European Migration Network (EMN) will build up a systematic basis for monitoring and analysing the multidimensional phenomenon of migration and asylum by covering a variety of its dimensions - political, legal, demographic, economic, social, and identifying its root causes. The information made available or processed is intended to help provide the Community and its Member States with an overall view of the migration and asylum situation when, in their respective areas of competence, they develop policies, take decisions or decide an action.

Overall objectives

- To meet the information needs on migration and asylum of Community Institutions, Member States and, in the longer term, of the general public.
- To provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information.

The purpose and objectives set for the network reflected the increasing information needs of the EU in an area where it had only recently gained competence. They also adequately addressed the problems and needs identified in the 1996 Feasibility Study.

While the purpose states that the EMN “will build up a systematic basis for monitoring and analysing the multidimensional phenomenon of migration and asylum by covering a variety of its dimensions”, it does not define how it will go about its work. This approach makes clear that the focus of its work was not yet clearly defined and that the subject to be tackled by the network was a rather complex one, given its multi-dimensional nature. This is not too surprising, considering that the EMN was planned as a preparatory action, implying that its scope and role would need to be further clarified in the context of a quickly developing policy field. The fact that the exact mandate, purpose and objectives of the network were not clearly defined at the set up of the network, in keeping with the preparatory nature of the action, did cause some practical problems with its implementation which are examined under Section 3.2.

The terms of reference identifying and establishing the national contact points of the European Migration Network (of 29 July 2002) recognised that the task of setting up such a network is “both demanding and difficult for both Member States and the Commission”. To meet this challenge, a “step by step approach” was proposed for the three-year preparatory phase. The terms of reference also state that the Commission and Member States will decide on the future of the network and draft a corresponding legal basis following the final assessment of the three-year implementation phase.

This approach of phased development for the EMN did not bind the network to a preset framework, but rather took a bottom-up approach to the setting up of the network. This is a “classic” approach for developing pilot actions. Following the three-year implementation phase, the future of the network would be considered by examining the experiences of this first phase. Indeed, in its (draft) Communication on a Framework for Preparatory action in 2002 – Budget line “European Migration Monitoring Centre”, Commissioner Vitorino informed the Commission that “once the experience and ongoing assessment of the preparatory action has shown a clear way forward, the Commission will prepare a legal basis”.

Developments which have taken place since the establishment of the network have confirmed the continued relevance of its purpose and objectives, but call for a much clearer definition of the future EMN. The conclusion of the Tampere Programme and launch of the subsequent Hague Programme, as well as continued developments in the collection of data and statistics point to the need and added value of such a network. Indeed, the forthcoming Green Paper on the future of the EMN and subsequent consultation planned by DG JLS comes at the right time: there is sufficient evidence from the pilot phase to inform the new design of the EMN. There is also adequate clarity on the future of asylum and migration policy to adapt this design to new needs and circumstances.

3.1.2 Status

It was decided to establish the EMN as a pilot preparatory action as defined in the Inter-institutional Agreement of 6 May 1999 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and improvement of the budgetary procedure. Article 37 states that “preparatory actions may be implemented without a basic act as long as the actions which they are intended to finance fall within the competence of the Community. The preparatory actions are to follow a coherent approach and may take various forms. The relevant commitment appropriations may be entered in the budget for only three financial years at most.”

The adoption of budget line B5-814 and its inclusion by the European Parliament in the 2002 Community budget, provided the financing and constituted a preliminary legal status for the EMN. Given that it was marked as a preparatory action, no basic (legal) act was required as long as the actions financed fell within the competence of the Community. The status chosen for the first phase of the EMN was a relevant and sensible decision: the preparatory nature of a status such as the adoption of a budget line allowed for an “experimental” start-up of the network over a three-year period which was an adequate length of time to develop a sound foundation for the network and draw conclusions from its first experiences.

3.1.3 Structure

The original terms of reference for the establishment of the EMN (July 2002) proposed a management structure to be set up which would respond to the needs of the three-year preparatory action. A two-tier management structure was proposed, consisting of:

- A Steering Committee made up of European Commission and Member State representatives and chaired by the Commission which would be responsible for strategic and policy issues, the establishment of an action plan for the three-year preparatory phase, the setting up of the annual work programme and thematic priorities and the issuing of appropriate guidelines for activity;
- And a network of national contact points representatives which would meet on a regular basis to ensure day-to-day management on the basis of the action plan established by the Steering Committee and the annual work programme.

Under this proposed structure, the Commission would be responsible for the overall coordination and monitoring, financial management and the assessment of the three-year preparatory action.

However, the setting up of a Steering Committee proposed in this two-tier management structure was not accepted by the legal service of the European Commission because of the lack of a legal basis. As a result, it was decided to identify and contract a coordinating team through a call for tender to assume the tasks which were intended for the proposed Steering Committee. These tasks include assisting the Commission in the management and monitoring of the network's activities, the facilitation of meetings, the organisation of research and the development of an information system. The EMN meetings of national contact point representatives are used to address management and administrative issues.

This present structure has been criticised by several NCP representatives who feel that it does not allow for sufficient account to be taken of their various interests and does not give them a say in the decision-making process. Also, the proposed Steering Committee was to be partly made up of Member State representatives, which would have given them a more active role in the work of the network and allowed them to exert some influence on its activities. The present management structure does not involve Member State representatives and as a result, requires only a low level of commitment from them.

The Commission's decision to outsource some of the management tasks to a coordinating body was necessary to ensure the proper implementation of the network during the preparatory phase. However, the lack of a contractual relationship between the coordinating body and the NCPs limited its ability or authority to require a minimum level of involvement and performance.

While the structure chosen for the preparatory phase was relevant and suitable for addressing the problems and needs identified when starting up the network, some additional focus could however have been placed on contractual details to ensure a minimum level of performance, quality and commitment. The network could have also benefited from clearer (possibly written) agreements from the relevant departments of national administrations agreeing that they would collaborate with and support NCPs. What the structure was lacking was an arena to allow NCPs and Member State representatives the chance to have a voice in decision-making.

3.1.4 Functions / tasks

The initial functions and tasks of the EMN are presented in the box below.

- Make available the output of existing sources of information on migration and asylum through building a comprehensive network of links to these sources of information.
- To provide access to this information in accordance with procedures to be established.
- To facilitate and enhance the exchange of information amongst sources of information and the users of that information.
- To keep under review and analyse relevant information.
- To respond to or anticipate new information needs related to European priorities of current interest or relevance to be determined by the network's competent management instruments.

- The network will not engage in basic data collection but will bring together information that already exists in Member States, as well as utilise this information for analysis at European level.

These initial functions and tasks were further elaborated into annual work programmes which set out the activities and expected outputs for each budget year. Several NCP representatives interviewed during this study felt that the initial tasks lacked clarity and focus, and were overall too vague. At the beginning of the start-up of the network, several NCPs had difficulties in understanding what was expected of them. External actors expressed the opinion that the tasks seemed to be too “non-committal” to be meaningful. Whilst this lack of focus was understandable given the network’s pilot character – meaning that it would further elaborate its activities as capacity and resources grew – it would possibly have been more beneficial to initially present fewer tasks and functions or at least in clearer or more explicit terms. Several NCPs explained that the contracting of the Scientific Coordinator greatly helped the further specification and clarification of tasks, both through the development of the annual work programmes and the elaboration of the terms of reference for certain activities.

Whilst it was the Commission’s intention to explore different possibilities in relation to functions and tasks on a “trial and error” basis, to allow for a “natural selection” of the network’s most appropriate profile and tasks, the overall approach to setting up the different tasks and activities of the EMN, seemed to be *ad hoc* and unsuitable for an experimental network in its start-up phase. There may have been benefit in a more “phased” approach, instead of starting many different actions and activities within a relatively short period of time, requiring very different sets of skills (i.e. ranging from research to IT skills) and a level of capacity which not all NCPs possessed. This inhibited, to some extent, the EMN’s capacity to fully address the problems and needs identified.

3.1.5 **Capacity**

Whilst the decision to set up a co-financed network was a suitable one, the institutional arrangements and architecture chosen required a high level of input from the Commission, which lacked the internal human resources to actively lead the implementation process. In addition, the financing arrangements of a co-financed network also proved to be resource-intensive, requiring high inputs for its administration. The appointment of a Scientific Coordinator greatly improved the overall situation, but did not take away all capacity problems mentioned. The central management and coordination could have benefited from a clear mandate and role division, relevant to the problems and needs to be addressed by the EMN.

3.2 **Organisational efficiency**

This part of the study provides an in-depth analysis and efficiency assessment of how the EMN is organised in terms of processes and procedures with regard to decision-making, management, coordination, administration, communication and dissemination. Where possible, a distinction has been made between central (i.e. Commission and Scientific Coordinator) and national (i.e. NCP) levels.

Overall, evidence suggests that:

- The network start-up suffered delays due to Member State reservations and the “trial and error” approach chosen for implementing the pilot and preparatory action. Also, given that the network is funded through grants, the financial management poses a heavy burden on the Commission. It is, however, noted that such problems are common to most networking setup phases.
- Good progress has been made with regard to the organisation and development of the NCPs: 24 Member States are currently participating in the EMN. 14 have nominated a national contact point, of which 9 receive co-funding. The network’s implementation is, however, somewhat hindered by the heterogeneity of the NCPs in terms of their status and capacity.
- The management “triangle” between the Commission, the Scientific Coordinator and the NCPs has led to some confusion and lack of clarity with regard to roles, responsibility and the enforceability of contractually agreed activities. Again, this has inhibited the extent to which its objectives are being achieved.
- Insufficient organisational efforts have been placed on making the EMN more visible, and to some extent, on dissemination. Whilst it can be argued that in its first years, products were lacking to truly promote the network, it has also led to questions from external actors as to what the EMN is exactly doing with its funding. Also, there was decreased commitment from, for example, national network actors, who were reluctant to contribute to the network without receiving any information in return.
- The EMN is increasingly becoming a “true” network. The NCPs are developing bilateral and multilateral contacts through visits and other forms of communication, and are jointly building their capacity. More recent members are learning from older ones. Together the partners have developed a preliminary form of a “rapid response” system. Networking should be further encouraged through, for example, making available additional financial resources and providing more networking opportunities (e.g. meetings).

3.2.1 Set-up of the network

Selection of National Contact Points

The start up of the EMN suffered some significant delays due to difficulties encountered in the early stages of the implementation of the preparatory phase. This was mainly due to Member State reservations and complications due to the pilot character of the preparatory action, which was meant to be implemented on a trial and error basis and serve as a testing ground for the future development of the network.

In setting up the network, a phased bottom-up approach was taken which started with the selection of a National Contact Point in each Member State. In March 2002, on the basis of a working document drafted by the Commission outlining a framework for the implementation for preparatory action and a draft work programme, a first exchange of views took place among Member State representatives at the first meeting of the Committee on Immigration and Asylum. Several Member States were initially reluctant

to join the EMN. According to a Member State actor, this reluctance was due to reservations concerning its real-added value and the lack of a legal basis. Commission officials have cited other factors, such as the commitment and financial and human resources required to participate in such a network.

At their second meeting in June 2002, the Commission agreed to revise the selection procedure for the national contact points during the preparatory phase. The Commission's original intention was to nominate a contact point for each Member State from a selection of three possible organisations to be drawn up by the Member State authorities. The Member States, however, insisted on directly designating their national contact points. It was eventually agreed that each Member State would identify an existing agency or institution with experience of working in the field of migration and asylum to act as national contact point, provided that the requirements of the specific tasks outlined in the terms of reference could be met. A meeting with Member State experts was then convened in July 2002 to finalise the terms of reference for the establishment of the national contact points.

When the network was launched during the second half of 2002, contact points had been designated in ten Member States: Austria, Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Finland and Germany joined during the second half of 2003, followed by France at the end of 2003.

In September 2004, the new Member States were asked to declare what role they would take in the EMN. At this time, Lithuania, Latvia and Slovenia declared their intention to establish an NCP but by the end of the year, they indicated that they would postpone their membership. The Czech Republic is the only new Member State to have designated an NCP during the second half of 2004. However, the decision to join the EMN has not been formalised. A formal government decision on the NCP, which would allow for access to national financial resources, is unlikely to happen until the mandate, role and activities of the EMN are further defined as these do not appear to be sufficiently clear to commit a national structure and the allocation of national financial resources.

The nine other new Member States currently have observer status and contribute only to selected activities of the network. This is due to the fact that they face several obstacles to the establishment of an NCP, the most significant being the lack of the necessary human and financial resources. Feedback collected from the new Member State contact persons through questionnaires and on-site visits have revealed other reasons, including a level of uncertainty about the functions and aims of the EMN, little knowledge concerning the tasks expected of an NCP, as well as unfamiliarity (and reluctance to deal) with EU financial administrative procedures.

Estonia has indicated that it aims to designate a contact point by the beginning of October 2005. Poland and Hungary hope to identify a contact point by the end of 2005. Lithuania and Slovakia do not plan to select an NCP in the near future but will continue to attend meetings as an observer. Latvia has started some preparatory activities to launch the NCP by the end of the year. It is planned to establish the NCP within the Office of Migration and Citizenship Affairs, which is a supervisory body of the Ministry of the Interior responsible for the issue of identity and travel documents, the population register, state migration policy, and asylum and repatriation policy. A full-time official of the European Affairs and International Department of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs will carry out the work of the EMN contact point in 2006. Cyprus and

Slovenia have never attended any of the EMN meetings in Brussels. A representative from Malta has attended one meeting.

In summary, there are 24 Member States currently participating in the EMN. 14 have nominated a national contact point, of which 9 receive co-funding (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden). Those NCPs which do not currently receive funding are the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Spain and the UK⁸. 10 Member States who have not yet designated a contact point participate as observers, attending the network meetings. The network's aim is to include all EU Member States as members by 2006.

Nomination of the Scientific Coordinator

During the first EMN meeting held in February 2003, discussions took place on the draft specifications drawn up by the Commission for an open invitation to tender to contract the services of a scientific and administrative co-ordinating team to assist the Commission in setting up and operating the network. This coordinating team was expected to provide technical assistance to support the development of the network during the preparatory phase. Specifically, the Scientific Coordinator would assist in the management and monitoring of the network's activities, facilitate network meetings and contribute to enhancing the added-value of the network as a tool to compare and analyse information, and coordinate research. It was also expected to develop a computer-based information system to support the co-ordinating, analytical, and research functions of the network.

The Berlin Institute for Comparative Social Research (BIVS) and the Technical University of Berlin (TUB) were selected in November 2003 to act as Scientific Coordinator of the Network. The Computation and Information Structures Group (CIS) of the TUB, is responsible for the conceptualisation, design and development of the computer-based information system.

The timeline below provides a schematic overview of the EMN's key dates and milestones:

<i>EMN timeline</i>	
February 1994	The idea for a European Migration Observatory is first put forward by the European Commission in its Communication to the Council and the European Parliament on Immigration and Asylum Policies.
May 1996	Feasibility Study for a European Migration Observatory.
June 2000	Commission staff working document presented to Member State experts.
November 2000	The Commission Communication on a Community Immigration Policy highlighted the need for information on migration flows and patterns into and out of the EU and the reinforcement of existing research and data networks. Suggested that a European network could co-ordinate activities in different Member States and promote new research.
September 2001	The European Parliament's report on the Commission Communication on a Community Immigration policy called on the Commission and Council to promote the establishment of a European Migration Network in order to 'support social,

⁸ The Portuguese NCP has not applied for funding under the 2004 budget.

	statistical, economic, geographical, legal and political research' in the area of immigration, as well as 'reliable and detailed data on migration' ⁹ .
October 2001	The Commission Scoreboard highlighted the setting up of a 'virtual' European Migration Observatory in order to improve knowledge of the migration phenomenon as a required action.
December 2001	The Laeken European Council invited the Commission 'to establish a system for exchanging information on asylum, migration and countries of origin'.
January 2002	Under the 2002 budget, a new 'European Migration Monitoring Centre' budget line was created for preparatory action to establish a three-year pilot project from 2003-2005.
March 2002	An exchange of views on a Commission document describing the Observatory's structure and role and a proposed roadmap for its phased development took place with Member States during the first Immigration and Asylum Committee Meeting.
June 2002	At the second Immigration and Asylum Committee meeting, taking into account the written remarks submitted by some Member States, it was agreed to hold a meeting with Member State experts.
July 2002	Meeting held with Member State experts to determine the terms of reference for establishing the national contact points. Further to this meeting the specific terms of reference were revised incorporating the remarks made by Member States' delegates.
2nd ½ of 2002	The European Migration Network was launched. Contact Points were designated in ten Member States: Austria, Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK.
January 2003	The implementation of preparatory actions under the first phase (under the 2002 budget) began.
February 2003	First EMN meeting held in Brussels.
April 2003	Reference to the EMN was made in the Commission's Action Plan for the collection and analysis of community statistics in the field of migration. It suggested that the Network could serve as a testing ground for new practices and methods aimed at improving co-operation, exchange, availability and comparability of information in the field of migration and asylum and identified actions that would be closely linked to its development.
June 2003	The Thessaloniki European Council recognised the 'importance of monitoring and analysing the multidimensional migration phenomenon' and welcomed the establishment of the EMN. It also proposed examining the possibility of the setting up of a more permanent structure in the future.
October 2003	Finland and Germany joined the Network. The 10 new Member States are associated as observers.
November 2003	The Berlin Institute for Comparative Social Research (BIVS) was selected in November 2003 through an open invitation to tender to assist as scientific and administrative coordinator during the preparatory phase of the EMN.
December 2003	France joined the Network.
	The second phase of preparatory actions (under the 2003 budget) began.
2nd ½ of 2004	The Czech Republic designated an NCP.
5 December 2004	Start of third phase of preparatory actions (under 2004 budget)

⁹ European Parliament Report on the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a Community immigration policy. Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs. Rapporteur: Hubert Pirker. 14 September 2001

3.2.2 *Management at NCP level*

The fact that each Member State directly designated their own NCP resulted in the creation of a network made up of a heterogeneous collection of organisations, ranging from government ministries and statistical offices, to academic research institutes and, in one case, an intergovernmental organisation. Of the 14 established NCPs, the vast majority (10) are located in government ministries or offices such as the Ministry of the Interior (Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Portugal), Ministry of Justice (the Netherlands), statistical offices (Finland) or a combination of government offices in the case of Sweden (Statistics Sweden, Integration Board, Migration Board). Two NCPs are located in research institutes (Ireland, Greece). One is an intergovernmental organisation (IOM Austria). The case of the Italian NCP is unique as it is a collaborative effort between a government ministry (Department for Citizens' Freedoms and Immigration of the Ministry of Interior) and an NGO (Caritas). The French contact point also brings together a variety of collaborators including researchers, academics and six government ministries.

NCPs are differently staffed, ranging from less than the equivalent of one part-time employee, to three full-time employees. In some cases, there are several staff working intermittently on EMN projects but this does not add up to more than three full-time equivalents. Where more than one person is involved in the NCP, a person assuming a coordinating role usually dedicates part of his or her time to EMN, with one or two researchers providing research support. In some cases, NCPs may have a member of staff responsible for information support and IT systems.

Most NCPs do not have formal management structures and processes are mainly *ad hoc*, given the small scale of the NCPs. The Austrian NCP is the only one to have set up a national steering committee composed of high-level officials from the Austrian Ministry of the Interior, well-known migration researchers and high-ranking officials. The role of the steering committee is to provide the NCP with strategic impetus and visibility vis-à-vis the broad public.

NCPs located in government ministries face particular problems in relation to management and coordination. These NCPs are often subject to hierarchical decision-making procedures which can slow down the implementation of activities which require the agreement and consultation of higher authorities, who may not even be directly involved in NCP activities. This also compromises, to some extent, an NCP's independence. The bureaucracy inherent in government agencies also often results in delays with regard to the submission of grant applications and the release of funding.

Practical problems have also been encountered with the undertaking and completion of study projects. Some NCPs located in ministries did not have the research capacity to complete the pilot study, for example, and had to contract the work to external researchers (Sweden, Portugal). In the case of Belgium, some parts of the EMN work programme had to be realised by other ministries, for example, for any studies dealing with aspects on integration, this is the competence of the minister of social integration and the regional governments. In the case of some NCPs, re-structuring processes within ministries have resulted in a change of responsibilities for staff members and the sudden appointment of new contact persons, which does not ensure continuity (Spain, Portugal, France).

Organisation arrangements influencing independence, objectivity and reliability

The fact that many NCPs are located in government ministries has presented advantages as well as disadvantages with regard to issues related to independence, objectivity and reliability. The most obvious and important advantage for NCPs situated in government offices is the facilitated access they enjoy to official data and statistical sources which is vital to their task of information collection. Information has to be of a good quality in order to be useful. The fact that information comes from an official source ensures quality assurance and political acceptance, which may not be the case of information provided by an independent source. ‘Independent’ bodies may also lack the control processes which are necessary to check the quality of information, or present views which lack political back-up. However, government information can also be politically biased. Member State administrations can have difficulties to commit to the goals of an EU-wide network in such a sensitive policy area, especially in cases where national priorities predominate. The fact that NCP representatives working in ministries are not independent from their employers can present a conflict of interest.

When looking at data reliability and quality, as pointed out by a statistical expert interviewed for this study, in some cases ‘unofficial data’ can be considered to be better than official data. Other external actors interviewed have maintained that good and unbiased information can only come from independent sources. Indeed, it is difficult to determine the ‘best’ sources of information. This may even differ from one Member State to the next.

The NCPs located in government ministries have highlighted their eased access to official information to be a significant advantage. In the case of the Swedish NCP, the government status of Statistics Sweden allows facilitated access to data from all government administrations and public authorities. The French NCP also feels it is well placed because of its access to statisticians, researchers, policy officials and official data. The Italian NCP is an example of a successful collaborative effort between a governmental ministry and non-governmental organisations. The NCP is made up of a collaboration between the Department for Citizens’ Freedoms and Immigration of the Italian Ministry of Interior, the Italian section of Caritas and the “Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS” which has significant, consolidated experience in the field of migration statistics. With regard to the gathering of data, the NCP benefits from complete collaboration from the Ministry of the Interior for access to primary statistical sources. This greatly assists with research and the preparation of policy reports, as there are no problems with carrying out these activities in terms of processing and obtaining needed information.

3.2.3 *Management by the Commission*

The Commission is responsible for overall management and decision-making within the EMN. It has direct contractual relationships with the Scientific Coordinator (a service contract) and with every individual NCP (grant agreements). It undertakes the financial management and administration of the network and “clears” the products which are delivered directly (e.g. EU synthesis reports, the information system, etc) and indirectly (e.g. NCP products) by the Scientific Coordinator. It also chairs and organises the network’s meetings. For all other activities, the Commission strongly relies on the Scientific Coordinator for “operationalising” its decisions and coordinating the network.

This relational “triangle” between the Commission, the Scientific Coordinator and the NCPs has led to some confusion and lack of clarity with regard to roles, responsibility, communication and the enforceability of contractually agreed activities. The lack of a direct contractual link between the Scientific Coordinator and the NCPs make it difficult for the former to “demand” that certain deadlines or quality criteria are met. The NCPs tend to be more frequently in contact with the Commission, whilst the latter does not directly monitor or analyse their work.

Decision-making

As already mentioned in Section 3.1.3 on the structure of EMN, what seems to be lacking in the network structure is an arena to allow NCPs (as well as other actors, such as Member State representatives) the chance to have a voice in decision-making by the Commission. The present structure has been criticised by several NCPs who feel that it does not involve them in the decision-making process and does not allow them to take a more active role in the network or sufficient account to be taken of their views and interests. NCPs would also like to be more proactive participants in the setting of priorities and drawing up of the work programme, as well as the selection of research topics.

Financial management

The management and coordination of EMN is assisted by a full-time Commission official from Unit B/2 of DG JLS. EMN activities are supervised by a senior official and assisted by other Commission staff. Unit B/4 has been responsible for grant applications and payments and the general financial management of EMN since January 2004, when it took over these responsibilities from Unit B/2. Its task was to improve financial management and apply the 2003 financial regulation.

It is clear that Commission resources have been stretched when it comes to managing not only the administrative, but also the financial aspects of the EMN. Commission officials have highlighted the fact that it does not have sufficient human resources to manage the network, even with the contracting of the Scientific Coordinator. More human resources would also be needed to process NCP grant applications and payment requests which is quite a labour intensive exercise, especially considering the relatively limited size of the budget for preparatory action.

The fact that the EMN is a co-financed network has presented practical problems to funding for many NCPs. Due to Commission financial regulations, the co-financing of the salaries of civil servants was often problematic for NCPs located in public ministries. In these cases, tailored solutions had to be found where possible for those contact points that experienced difficulties with EU funding procedures. The UK NCP has not been receiving EU funding for this reason.

The financial procedures adopted by the European Commission have been described by some NCPs as “unnecessarily complicated”. Under this procedure, grants are only allocated once negotiations with each NCP have been concluded. This means that delays in negotiations with one NCP will subsequently delay all the others. Many NCPs did not have experience with applications for EU funding, which slowed down the application process as very often they were asked by the Commission to submit additional information to complete their applications. In the meantime, this delayed the release of funding for all NCPs. An NCP representative complained that after

submitting an application, it takes a long time to receive a reply and remarks are often unclear. Additional remarks are also often sent again after the re-submission of the application, further slowing down the process. Another NCP commented that there is a lack of information concerning the procedures to apply for grants, or guidelines on how to set up an annual budget.

Similar complications and delays occur with regard to the processing of payment requests. NCPs found it difficult to comply with the reporting and presentational requirements of their expenses, and were often requested more than once to revise their financial reporting, which substantially slowed down the payment of their request. A Commission official has suggested that practical training courses on such matters could provide a solution to these challenges.

The lengthy application and payment procedures caused significant delays to the start-up of the network. The late arrival of funds also resulted in the postponement of activities for NCPs located in structures which could not advance the necessary funding in the meantime. In some cases, this caused difficulties with the renewal of staff contracts (for example, in the case of the Austrian NCP). The fact that funding contracts run according to a one-year financing programme has also been cited as highly problematic for many NCPs, as this does not allow for a long-term financial perspective especially if funding is only received after several months of delays.

Management and coordination of network meetings

The European Commission, with assistance from the Scientific Coordinator, was responsible for the coordination of the EMN network meetings which take place 4-5 times a year. These meetings of national contact point representatives give members a chance to discuss work in progress as well forthcoming projects. They also provide an opportunity to address management and administrative issues.

NCP representatives have commented on the improvement of the coordination of these meetings with regard to planning and the distribution of documents prior to the meetings. While at the beginning, meeting documents were not sent out sufficiently ahead of the scheduled meeting to allow for ample preparation, this has improved: the agenda and meeting documents are provided in advance and are clear and concise.

However, many NCP members feel that the EMN meetings are too administrative in nature and that they leave little time for the exchange and discussion of matters which are important to them. Several NCPs have also suggested that it would be useful to hold meetings which would allow for the presentation of their research and findings and the communication of results, and not only the discussion of administrative matters. The plan to have an enlarged EMN meeting sometime in 2005 to present the research findings of the pilot study addresses this. One NCP representative proposed that meetings should have fewer agenda items so as to allow for the discussion of pertinent issues, perhaps in subgroups. Another commented that meetings and other activities need more efficient management in order to avoid the duplication of effort and wasted time. For example, instead of being involved in the same projects, NCPs could instead collaborate in smaller groups on shared interest projects and produce reports that are of interest to all.

Other comments made by NCPs with regard to the management of EMN activities convey frustration with the fact that strict deadlines are put on NCPs for the submission

of reports and studies (while the Commission and Scientific Coordinator have the opportunity to delay deadlines).

Communication

With regard to communication, NCPs have responded that contact with the Commission tends to be very positive, and responses to inquiries and requests are generally prompt and efficient. The fact that the Commission contact person has remained constant (until very recently) is a very positive factor, as it provided the NCPs with a single interlocutor who was very familiar with all network-related affairs.

Several NCPs have commented that most communication tends to take place directly between the NCPs and the Commission, and to a much lesser extent with the Scientific Coordinator. Some NCPs feel that the specific roles of the Commission and Scientific Coordinator need be further clarified, as these are not always apparent.

3.2.4 Management by the Scientific Coordinator

The Berlin Institute for Comparative Social Research (BIVS – Berliner Institut für Vergleichende Sozialforschung) began its work as Scientific Coordinator for the preparatory phase of the EMN in December 2003 following an open call for tender. The Scientific Coordinator was selected to assist the Commission in the management and monitoring of the network's activities, the facilitation of meetings, the organisation of research and the development of an information system.

Since it started its work at the end of 2003, the Scientific Coordinator has been responsible, in cooperation with the Commission, for the preparation, organisation and monitoring of all the EMN meetings held since the 5th EMN meeting in February 2004. It has also been responsible for the elaboration of the work programmes under the 2003 and 2004 budgets which outlined the activities to be carried out by the NCPs and the Scientific Coordinator during the course of 2004 and 2005 respectively.

The role of the Scientific Coordinator has been a difficult one. Firstly, they were faced with a rather "unorganised" structure and varying levels of commitment within the network. In order to gain a better understanding of the national partners' specific characteristics and potential challenges, a questionnaire was circulated to all NCPs, as well as a round of visits organised in 2004. Secondly, their exact role and position with respect to management and coordination were unclear. Contractually they are to provide "scientific and technical assistance" with the Commission being ultimately responsible for the "real" management of the network, but in reality they are, in a sense, made co-responsible for the delivery of NCP outputs, without having the contractual authority to require NCPs to comply with the network's work programme.

Finally, the initial terms of reference, as stated in their contract, did not correspond to the tasks they have been carrying out to date. The latter has caused some problems in relation to their reporting to the Commission and payment requests. Some adjustments have been made in their second contract year, introducing payments based on outcomes / performance and quarterly reporting on progress.

Discussions with NCP representatives have revealed that they consider the Scientific Coordinator to be a neutral actor located in the middle ground between the Commission and NCPs, and that it is in a good position to examine the EMN with regard to its objectives, methodology and expected outputs. However, for this reason

NCPs are also unclear as to the exact function and relationship vis-à-vis the Scientific Coordinator.

Communication between the Scientific Coordinator and NCPs

Apart from the visits by the Scientific Coordinator made to NCPs in 2004, NCP representatives (as well as the Scientific Coordinator) have the impression that communication between them is insufficient. NCPs have commented that communication tends to be infrequent with the Scientific Coordinator (and more frequent with the Commission) and is usually specific to participation in a specific activity, for example, regarding the specifications of a proposal for a study. Communication tends to be more regular with the Technical University of Berlin regarding technical issues relating to the information system.

The Scientific Coordinator is aware of this communication deficit and believes there is scope to enhance it. A second round of visits to NCPs is planned in 2005 to address the individual problems and questions of the NCPs. The coordinating team has also asked NCPs to direct specific problems by e-mail which can be responded to promptly. Recently, an on-line discussion forum has been launched in order to improve the communication flow between NCPs and the Scientific Coordinator.

3.2.5 Overall communication and dissemination

Communication within the network

Apart from the EMN meetings which were used to discuss administrative and technical issues and allow participants to provide updates on work progress, communication between partners took place regularly on an informal basis, mostly via e-mail, and when necessary by phone. While the on-line information system and EMN website were being developed, the CIRCA system was used to provide access to all relevant documents and information sources on-line, including minutes of meetings, and research outputs. Some NCPs made more of an effort than others to provide regular updates on the CIRCA system. As a result, information updates tended to be ad-hoc and incomplete.

Very recently, a discussion forum was developed and launched online by the Scientific Coordinator in order to improve communication within the network. Some NCPs have expressed a preference for informal information exchange on a bilateral basis via e-mail or phone, without the obligation to document the responses they receive to *ad hoc* information requests. It has been recognised that a balance has to be found between the informal information exchange methods and the use of the more structured web-based discussion forum.

Increasing visibility

An attempt was made to increase the visibility of the network through information material presenting the objectives and structure of EMN to potential partners as well as the general public. Such information material included:

- An information leaflet describing the work, aims and objectives of EMN;
- An information brochure outlining the implementation of EMN actions during the preparatory phase and a presentation of contact points;

- Proposals for the format, structure, use and access of a EMN website;
- The publication of a quarterly EMN newsletter to promote the objectives of the EMN to a wider public and enhance interaction between partners.

The EMN information leaflet, information brochure and newsletters have been printed by the Commission and distributed by the NCPs on the national level, and by the Commission and Scientific Coordinator on the EU level. There are also plans to publish and disseminate the 2004 Annual Activities Report Europe-wide. A mailing list has been compiled for this purpose containing the contact addresses organisations working at European and international levels.

However, discussions with various stakeholders and actors working in the field of asylum and migration have revealed that while most have heard of the existence of the EMN, they know very little about its activities and are unaware of its outputs. It seems that dissemination was not a high priority for the EMN team during the first two years of the preparatory phase, as emphasis was put on establishing and building up the network and developing the information system and working mechanisms to test the capacity of the network. The Scientific Coordinator, in collaboration with the Commission, made an effort to establish contact with other Commission activities and projects in the field of migration such as the Integration Network and the THESIM and CARIM projects. Whilst these organisations highly appreciated the initial contacts made, there seemed to have been an overall expectation that these initial contacts would have led to intensified collaboration, something which has not happened to date.

Organisations working in the field of information and data collection in related or similar areas feel that they should have been more closely involved in some of the activities of the network as they could have provided useful inputs and such cooperation could have constituted a learning opportunity for both. During the final year of the preparatory phase it is foreseen to increase the network's visibility via the EMN website, newsletters, seminars and conferences, as well as meetings with actors active in the field of migration and asylum, such as members of the European Parliament and other EU policy makers.

Dissemination of research outputs

The dissemination of research reports and studies produced by the network is also vital as a way of demonstrating the added-value of the network. Completed reports will be made available on the EMN website, once the latter will be launched publicly. At the national level, some NCPs have circulated their research outputs among national actors, mostly via e-mail or through mailings. Two NCPs (Austria and Italy) have already set up their own national EMN websites which should help with dissemination. Belgium is currently planning to launch its own website. Information on the German and Greek NCPs is provided via a link on their host organisations' website.

While there has been an effort by some NCPs to distribute information on EMN and the results of their studies to actors on the national level, the network is still practically non-existent to the outside world. This is an impression shared by many of the external actors and stakeholders interviewed in the context of this study who see the network as inward-looking. The EMN website has only recently become (partly) available on-line (during the first quarter of 2005) and the newsletter and brochure have yet to be distributed on a wider EU (and international) level. As indicated above, this is an

activity foreseen in the final year of the preparatory phase. However, as stated by a stakeholder in the migration field, seeing that the network is financed by public funds, there could have been more of an effort made to make its activities more visible to the public.

3.2.6 Networking

The discussions on communication and coordination above should allow for a further examination whether the EMN has really functioned as a network. Networking is conceptually understood as a process of transnational partnership and capacity building between a group of (in the case of the EMN) national organisations through collective meetings, bilateral contacts, joint work, feedback systems, communication and dissemination.

When looking at networking and partnership building within the EMN, it seems that bilateral cooperation, or cooperation between subgroups of NCPs, has been encouraged by the Commission but not structured. This is something which was developed on the initiative of the NCPs only, as the meetings held in Brussels seemed to provide little opportunity for informal networking or meetings between the NCPs themselves. There have been several visits and exchanges between NCPs to learn from each other's experiences and know-how. This has included exchanges between new members from the new Member States and "older" more established NCPs. (See subsection 3.3.1.2 on NCP results and outcomes). There have also been instances of NCPs jointly organising events and seminars. For example, the Austrian and Italian NCPs jointly organised a hearing on the Green Paper on economic migration and the Italian NCP organised a seminar with its counterpart in Poland to present the results of its pilot study. These are successful examples of networking and partnership-building.

Another recognisable sign of the development of the networking aspect is the use of the "rapid response tool", where one NCP asks all the others to supply information on a specific topic, often in response to a specific request from a ministry, for example. (This is described in further detail under subsection 3.3.1.2) Responses are generally received quite quickly, within a week. One NCP commented that the use of this mechanism is a clear sign that the network has become stronger.

NCPs representatives generally agree that contacts are intensifying as the network progresses, and that such contacts are extremely valuable in order to find out more about their network partners, exchange experiences, and enable international comparisons between different contexts. In this sense, the EMN is increasingly becoming a network in line with the above definition.

However, further networking should be promoted to expand joint learning and exchange working methods. Networks function best in a situation where all partners have good knowledge and understanding of each other's contexts and where they can use networking as an opportunity to learn from each other.

3.3 Achievement of objectives - effectiveness

This part of section 3 assesses the extent to which the EMN is progressing towards achieving its objectives. It looks at the network's outputs to date and the costs associated with their delivery, and uses this information to assess the extent to which the network has been effective and represents "good value for money".

Key findings resulting from the following subsections are:

- Good results have been achieved at EU level. Despite some delays in the delivery of outputs and a few items on the work programme not (yet) being addressed, the Scientific Coordinator is performing very well and has been implementing its tasks in line with initial expectations. The effectiveness of both the Commission and the Scientific Coordinator is relatively high, but affected by lengthy administrative and financial procedures and uneven performance of the NCPs. The information system has been developed effectively, but could have provided better value for money.
- Varying results have been achieved at national / NCP level. Only a minority of NCPs have undertaken all tasks and delivered all products required by the work programme. Their financial progress is also lagging behind. Obstacles listed include issues in relation to human and financial capacity, difficulties in accessing data and information and a lack of clarity regarding their terms of reference. A rating of NCP effectiveness shows that four NCPs are effective and provide value for money, another four are reasonably effective, whilst there is also a group which faces serious issues inhibiting their effectiveness. The rating also points out that some NCPs have problems in relation to their ability to be independent, objective and to produce reliable data.
- When looking at the EMN as a whole and comparing it with other network activity, evidence suggests that the EMN is relatively expensive when compared to a fully outsourced network with a more limited remit such as the European Employment Observatory. When comparing costs incurred for the EMN with those of an Agency with a wider remit such as the EUMC, the EMN results are relatively "cheap".

3.3.1 Results and outcomes of the network

This subsection reviews the outputs and results of the network at both EU and national levels, and compares achievements against the annual work programmes.

3.3.1.1 EU level results and outcomes

The Scientific Coordinator was selected in order to assist the Commission in the management and monitoring of the network's activities, the facilitation of meetings, the organisation of research and the development of an information system.

In order to become familiar with the capacities and capabilities of each NCP and to coordinate and standardise the network's expected outputs, the Scientific Coordinator started with familiarising itself with its national partners and subsequently produced a variety of guidance documents. It first circulated a questionnaire to all contact points. The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect information on the profile, data collection methods, national networking and technical capacity of each NCP. This was

followed by on-site visits to each NCP between February and April 2004 which provided an opportunity for the Scientific Coordinator and NCPs to get to know each other and learn about their views on and expectations of the network.

In order to ensure the production of commonly agreed and comparable outputs, the Scientific Coordinator produced guidelines for the submission of reports and other information. Where necessary, these were revised following consultation with NCPs and their requests for modifications. It also contributed to the development of homogeneous networking activities by drawing up guidelines aiming to help NCPs build their national networks.

Interviews with the Commission and NCP representatives have revealed a general satisfaction with the contributions made by the Scientific Coordinator and acknowledgement that it has played an important role in the development of the network, as well as the information system and database (in conjunction with the Technical University of Berlin). Several NCP representatives have recognised the important role played by the Scientific Coordinator in clarifying the terms of reference for NCPs, which were judged to be too vague and unspecific at the start up of the network. The Scientific Coordinator has also been successful in developing a methodology to collect information and conduct research.

NCPs appreciate the fact that the Scientific Coordinator involves them in the planning of projects at an early stage, is able to clarify issues in an efficient way, and is open to suggestions for improvement. However, some NCPs consider that the process of consultation could be further improved. One NCP feels that the rhythm of the Scientific Coordinator is out of step with that of NCPs and that it seems “to want too much and give too little”. Another believes that the Scientific Coordinator is too focused on the research aspect of the network.

The specific activities to be undertaken by the Scientific Coordinator in the first implementation year are organised around four key tasks. The table below summarises the planned activities in the left column and the achieved results and products delivered in the right one.

Table 3.1 – Overview of planned activities against achieved outputs

Scientific Coordinator planned tasks – Dec 2003/ Dec 2004	Scientific Coordinator outputs Dec 2003/ 1 st Quarter 2005
<p>Task 1 - To develop a computer based information system to support the co-ordinating analytical, comparative and research functions of the network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To assess the type and volume of information to be stored - To identify appropriate hardware and software combinations to bring together information and link existing sources of information; co-ordinate, regularly update and maintain previous information; facilitate access and exchange of information; compare and analyse information; and identify research gaps - To develop database(s) and web-site(s) that incorporate different types and formats of information that make possible comparison, analysis and research (based on free text retrieval). - To develop user friendly outputs in a standardised form (English and possibly other languages for facilitating access by asylum seekers and migrants) - To incorporate outputs into the computerised system and provide assistance to NCPs on the use of the system. <p>Task 2 - To manage the network and facilitate the network's meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contributing to the annual work programmes of the network and developing guidelines for ensuring homogeneous networking activities. - Coordinating the work of the NCPs, ensuring that NCPs produce commonly agreed outputs. - Prepare, organise and monitor 5-7 meetings on an annual basis at the Commission's premises. <p>Task 3 - To contribute to enhancing the added value of the network- co-ordinating and making accessible information, making possible comparison, analysis and research through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assisting national contact points in putting order and bringing together existing information and in particular existing studies and research also, through links to sources of information to avoid duplication of effort - Contributing to organising and developing databases and web-sites in such a way as to facilitate comparison, analysis and research. To achieve this it is necessary to adapt the database content to ensure that it can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate statistical data, studies and research, legislation, 	<p>Task 1 - To develop a computer based information system to support the co-ordinating analytical, comparative and research functions of the network.</p> <p>Activities carried out include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposal for an Architecture of the Information Integration Service (March 2004) - EMN Metadata templates: draft description for addressees (June 2004) - Discussion paper on EMN Metadata Templates: First draft description for Legislation and Case Law, with draft recommendation for the description of legal documents, case laws and opinions/comments to be collected in 2004 by each National Contact Point mainly with regard to the policy report, the pilot study and the annual report of statistics. (July 2004) - 'Thesauri as an Improvement of Information and Document Retrieval' Technical University Berlin, CIS (July 2004) - The Intended Purpose of a Thesaurus for the European Migration Network (July 2004) - EMN Metadata templates: Draft description for Legislation and Case Law (September 2004) - EMN Metadata templates: Draft description for publications (November 2004) - EMN Metadata templates: Draft description for Information Sources (February 2005) - Final report 2004: Final proposal for a computer-based information application to support the operation of the network (February 2005) - Proposed contents of the EMN website (March 2005) - Second evaluation of the data records within the EMN database (March 2005) - TUB overview of work programme 2005 with special reference to NCPs IT options (March 2005) <p>Task 2 - To manage the network and facilitate the network's meetings:</p> <p>Activities carried out include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafting and distribution to all NCPs of a questionnaire on the profile, data collection, national network and the technical capacity of the national contact points (February 2004) - Drafting and distribution to all NCPs of a 'Note to editors submitting reports for the European Migration Network' (February 2004) - Draft Detailed Work Programme under the 2003 budget (April 2004) - Main findings of the on-the-spot visits to the national contact points (February-April 2004) (April 2004) - Discussion paper: Proposals of Priorities for action. Work Programme 2004 budget. (July 2004) - The Importance of Establishing a well-balanced National Network: Defining 'core partner' and a 'well-balanced network' (July 2004) - Detailed Draft Specifications for the Work Programme under the 2004 Budget. (October 2004) - Draft networking report grid (October 2004)

<p>parliament minutes/discussions, press articles and any other documents providing multi-faceted information on asylum and migration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - include both quantitative and qualitative information which reflects public opinion, the state of political debate, the findings/conclusions of relevant scientific studies and research. A particular effort should be made to include the opinion of human rights' organisations, NGOs expert in the field as well as the individual stories, experiences, perceptions, needs, aspirations and potential of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. - With respect of database organisation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - According to the collected information provide for appropriate uploading and transmission methods. - Enable comparisons between countries, harmonising definitions to the extent possible. - Ensure that information is continuously updated and previous information maintained. - Contribute to producing user friendly outputs also through co-ordinating the production of standard summary documents of important legislation, policy measures or developments in the field of migration and asylum - Enhancing the research effort through appropriate co-ordination, accessibility to research findings/conclusions and the identification of aspects of migration and asylum that would require further study and research. - Fostering horizontal development and exchange of expertise among national contact points. - Facilitating transmission of information and knowledge to the Commission by providing through the national contact points. <p>Task 4 - To produce an annual report on the activities of the European Migration Network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modified note to editors (style-sheet for contributors submitting reports for EMN) (October 2004) - Draft Programme for the Enlarged EMN meeting on the findings of the Pilot Research Study Project and short term perspectives of the EMN (March 2005) - Networking guidelines on the basis of the national networking reports (March 2005) <p>Task 3 - To contribute to enhancing the added value of the network- co-ordinating and making accessible information, making possible comparison, analysis and research:</p> <p>Activities carried out include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Specifications of the Pilot Research Study on 'The Impact of Immigration on Europe's Societies' (February 2004) - 'Draft Structure for an Information Brochure on EMN Outputs under the 2002 Budget' (February 2004) - Draft Structure for a European Migration Network (EMN) Newsletter (April 2004) - Publication of EMN information leaflet (April 2004) - Proposal for a policy analysis report, including specifications/template: EMN Policy Report on Migration and Asylum: with a Special Focus on Immigration and Integration (July 2004) - 1st Newsletter of the European Migration Network. Issue No. 01/04 (July 2004) - Publication of EMN information brochure (July 2004) - Grid of Analysis for Annual Report on Statistics on Migration, Asylum and Return (October 2004) - Draft specifications for the research project II "State approaches towards third country nationals residing illegally in the Member States: overview of national policies, public institutions and administrative practices" (October 2004) - Draft specifications for a small-scale study: Transit migrants in the Member States (October 2004) 2nd Newsletter of the European Migration Network. Issue No. 02/04 (October 2004) - National contact points' modification proposals for draft specifications for the Research Study Project II "State approaches towards third country nationals residing illegally in the Member States: overview of national policies, public institutions and administrative practices" (November 2004) - Suggestions to enhance future EMN policy reports (March 2005) <p>Task 4 - To produce an annual report on the activities of the European Migration Network</p> <p>Activities carried out include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EMN: First Interim report (July 2004), Second interim report (October 2004) and Final report (February 2005) - Draft first EMN activities report (March 2005)
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The following outputs were also expected by the end of April 2005:

- Final draft of the EMN European Synthesis Report on “The Impact of Immigration on Europe’s Societies”
- Synthesis report on the findings of the first NCPs’ policy reports
- Specifications for the NCPs’ work progress report
- Integration of a standard data management system into the CIIS to take over the CIRCA documents
- Specifications for the development of national EMN websites
- Third edition of the EMN quarterly newsletter

When comparing the outputs to the initially planned activities under the four main tasks, it becomes clear that overall, the Scientific Coordinator’s outputs match expectations. Some delays and challenges have occurred which were beyond the control of the coordination unit, which led to some activities being completed in the first half of 2005. An assessment per main task is provided below:

Task 1 - To develop a computer based information system to support the co-ordinating analytical, comparative and research functions of the network.

Activities required as part of Task 1 have all been undertaken. BIVS sub-contracted the Computation and Information Structures (CIS – Computergestützte Informationssysteme) of the Technical University of Berlin (TUB) for the concept, design and development of the information system. The information system has been completed and guidance for the delivery of standardised and comparable outputs has been produced. A specific Thesaurus as well as standardised templates for entering data and information have been developed. TUB is currently finalising the website for the EMN to go public.

Whilst awaiting the development of the information system, the Commission’s CIRCA (Communication Information Resource Centre Administrator) system was used to introduce and update documents so as to ensure the exchange of information. This included meeting documents, the outputs of the first and second phase and information about issues of common interest. The EMN information system will soon be ready to include all documents stored on CIRCA and to also act as a virtual communication platform for the network’s members.

The technical approach, quality and performance of the information system are assessed in detail under subsection 3.3.2 below.

Task 2 – To manage the network and facilitate the network’s meetings

Activities required as part of Task 2 have all been carried out. The Scientific Coordinator proposed and elaborated the annual work programmes and developed several methodological and guidance tools to ensure that the NCPs produced common outputs in a standard format. They also contributed to the preparation, organisation

and monitoring of EMN meetings. Fewer network meetings took place than envisaged, but this was beyond the control of the Scientific Coordinator.

Task 3 - To contribute to enhancing the added value of the network- coordinating and making accessible information, making possible comparison, analysis and research:

Outputs under Task 3 are less than envisaged, although the lack of progress cannot, in the majority of cases, be attributed to the Scientific Coordinator but rather to delays and obstacles occurring at NCP level and lengthy procedures within the Commission. The Scientific Coordinator has helped the NCPs to organise their study and research efforts and has encouraged their horizontal cooperation. They also organised the database in terms of transmission protocols, information presentation method, templates and the development of a Thesaurus. The fact that relatively little information appears on the system is due to the NCPs not delivering their national inputs. However, progress seems in particular to be lacking on the following:

- The delivery of an EU synthesis of the EMN's first research project, initially planned end 2004.
- The further development of the information system to also include statistical data, documents reflecting public opinion and political debates (with a particular emphasis the opinion of human rights' organisations, NGOs expert in the field as well as the individual stories, experiences, perceptions, needs, aspirations and potential of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers). It appears that at present such information is not being collected and that the system design does not allow for the presentation of this.
- General activities with regard to enabling comparisons between countries and harmonising definitions.
- Efforts to identify aspects of migration and asylum requiring further research. Whilst NCPs have been assisted to gather and use existing research activity, such information is not being gathered at EU level, nor are gaps or overlaps being identified.

Task 4 – To produce an annual report on the activities of the European Migration Network

The first activities report was published in April 2004.

3.3.1.2 NCP results and outcomes

Each NCP has its own capabilities, motivations and expectations according to the institutional framework in which it operates. This has affected each NCP's development, as well as their capacity to carry out tasks and meet the objectives of the network. The level of development and progress achieved against the agreed work programmes varies widely by NCP and only a minority (Austria, Germany, Ireland) has undertaken all (mandatory) activities envisaged. Progress overall is very uneven, which is mainly due to the vast differences between NCPs in terms of human and financial resources, their capacities, expertise and level of commitment, the length of time they have been participating in the network, and the structure in which they operate.

In the first year of the preparatory phase financed under the 2002 budget (which started at the beginning of 2003 and ran until October of that year), NCPs joining the network were required to set up the facilities, IT equipment and staff necessary for the functioning of the NCP. They were also expected to start the identification of sources of information at national level and establishing contact with data providers. Other preparatory work to be undertaken in this first phase included collecting relevant information on legislation, case law, policies, statistics and examining existing research.

The objective of the second phase which commenced in January and continued to December 2004 (implemented under the 2003 budget), was to promote the added value of the network through data and information coordination, monitoring, comparison and analysis. Under this phase, emphasis was placed on testing the analysis and research capacity of the network.

The third phase of action, financed under the 2004 budget and expected to start at the beginning of 2005, is aimed at consolidating the outputs of the previous two years of implementation in terms of networking, and further developing the network's added value with regard to monitoring, analysis and research. The main activities envisaged include the continued establishment and development of national networks and the integration of external sources of information, the widening of information collection and exchange, and the development of the research activities. The integration of the new Member States in the EMN is also an important objective.

The final year of the implementation of preparatory action, to take place during 2006, is aimed at building on the work accomplished in the previous stages, developing well-balanced and representative national networks, and addressing the EMN's further development in the longer term.

Completion of work programme

As discussed above, progress against the work programme varies greatly between the different NCPs. This has also influenced the extent to which the Scientific Coordinator could progress on some of its tasks. Table 3.2 below provides an overview of the results of the NCPs in terms of inputs made to the information system, research outputs and other outputs, as well as national networking, expected as part of the work programmes for the 2003 and 2004 implementation year. An indication of the main issues and obstacles encountered by NCP is included. The table also includes useful general information on their status, planned budgets and human resources (in FTE – Full-Time Equivalents).

Table 3.2 – Overview of NCP outputs, obstacles and characteristics

NCP	Status	Total budget (planned - 2004)	Total staff (FTE)	Inputs to information system	Research outputs	Other outputs	National networking	Main issues and obstacles
FUNDED NCPs								
Austria IOM Austria	International organisation	€249,181	3	Publications: 110 Contacts: 34 Case law: 3 Legislation: 0	2003 pilot study 2003 National network directory 2004 Policy analysis report Networking report	Website Seminar on Migration and Health Report on Asylum and Migration in Austria: Trends from 1997 to 2003 Organised with Italian NCP a hearing on the Green Paper on economic migration.	Well-established national network.	High turn-over at ministerial level makes it difficult to establish lasting contacts.
Belgium Immigration Service, Ministry of the Interior	Government ministry	€228,336	Currently 2 persons. (Started with 5.)	Publications: 5 Contacts: 115 Case law: 0 Legislation: 0	2003 National network directory Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics 2004 Policy analysis report Networking report	Website on intranet	Partners were identified and contacted via a questionnaire.	Could not participate in pilot study.
Germany Bundesamt für Migration and Flüchtlinge, Ministry of the Interior	Government ministry	€277,784	2.5	Publications: 304 Contacts: 0 Case law: 0 Legislation: 0	2003 pilot study Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics 2004 Policy analysis report Networking report		Identified national partners. Held a partner meeting.	
Greece Centre of Planning and Economic Research	Research institute	€149,885	2.5-3	Publications: 54 Contacts: 63 Case law: 0 Legislation: 13	2003 pilot study Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics Networking report	Essay on Greek asylum and migration policy (2003) Conducting study on labour market status of migrant workers.	Resources need to be devoted to this. Some difficulties to persuade potential partners to join.	Difficulties in finding relevant and reliable data.
Ireland Economic and Social Research Institute	Research institute	€150,633	1 and 1/3.	Publications: 3 Contacts: 35 Case law: 105 Legislation: 20	2003 pilot study 2003 National network directory Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics 2004 Policy analysis report Networking report	Summary of Irish Immigration and Asylum Case Law 1985-2004 Migration and Asylum in Ireland: Summary of Legislation, Case Law and Policy Measures Directory of Organisations, Researchers and Research 2004	Has identified and visited partners.	Limited human and financial resources.

NCP	Status	Total budget (planned - 2004)	Total staff (FTE)	Inputs information system	to Research outputs	Other outputs	National networking	Main issues and obstacles
Italy Centro Studi e Ricerche (IDOS)	Collaboration between a government ministry and an NGO	€121,662	2	Publications: 13 Contacts: 48 Case law: 0 Legislation: 0	2003 pilot study 2003 National network directory	Website Report on legislation and report on jurisdiction (2003) Organisation of seminar to present findings of pilot study in Poland Organised with the Austrian NCP a hearing on the Green Paper on economic migration. A meeting with Hungarian observer planned in the Autumn.	National network is continually growing.	Late approval of the initial budget meant that implementation was slow at the beginning. Delays sometimes caused by need for translation.
Netherlands Immigration and Naturalisation Service, Information and Analysis Centre (INDIAC), Immigration and Naturalisation Service, Ministry of Justice	Government ministry	€144,201	3	Publications: 9 Contacts: 7 Case law: 0 Legislation: 0	2003 pilot study Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics Networking report	Published its own information leaflet. National newsletter.	Developed a questionnaire and visited potential partners.	Understaffed. Change of staff delayed progress.
Portugal Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras, Ministry of the Interior	Government ministry		0.5	Publications: 0 Contacts: 28 Case law: 0 Legislation: 0	2003 pilot study 2003 National network directory	Inventory of statistical data (2003)	Has attempted to set up a national network and two meetings were held.	Understaffed.
Sweden Statistics Sweden Integration Board Migration Board	Collaboration of 3 government authorities: the Statistical office, the Migration Board and the National Integration Office	€182,286	1	Publications: 72 Contacts: 132 Case law: 1 Legislation: 3	2003 pilot study 2003 National network directory Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics Networking report	Inventory of statistical data, policy, legislation, research overview (2003)	Yet to be developed beyond the core group of member organisations.	More staff time is needed for the NCP to develop and expand its activities in accordance with the work programme.

NCP	Status	Total budget (planned - 2004)	Total staff (FTE)	Inputs information system	Research outputs	Other outputs	National networking	Main issues and obstacles
NON-FUNDED NCPs								
Czech Republic Unit for International Relations and Information on countries of origin, Department of Asylum and Migration, Ministry of Interior	Government ministry		Less than 30% of one FTE		Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics Small-scale study on reception	Visit to the Dutch contact point.	Development has just started.	Limited human and financial resources. Have encountered some obstacles to the development of the national network.
Finland Statistics Finland	Government statistical office		15% of one FTE		Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics		Organised a meeting with its partners.	Lack of funding.
France Observatoire statistique de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration	Government ministry	€38,000	0.5		Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics	Report on asylum. Participated in conferences.		The NCP was set up recently and is currently lacking sufficient human and financial resources which has affected outputs.
Spain Observatorio Permanente para la Inmigración, Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs	Government ministry	€148,888	One person (not sure of FTE)		Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics	National newsletter	Have good national contacts among their normal mandate. No official network has been established.	Lack of staff and financial resources.
UK Immigration Research and Statistics Service, Immigration and Nationality Directorate, Home Office	Government ministry		1-1.5	Publications: 51 Contacts: 0 Case law: 0 Legislation: 0	2003 pilot study		Has identified and contacted potential partners and visited some of the core partners.	Lack of staff and financial resources.
OBSERVERS								
Cyprus	Hasn't been attending meetings.							
Denmark	Hasn't been attending meetings.							

NCP	Status	Total budget (planned - 2004)	Total staff (FTE)	Inputs to information system	Research outputs	Other outputs	National networking	Main issues and obstacles
Estonia	Plans to designate an NCP by the beginning of October.				Contribution to Annual Report on Statistics.			Lack of staff and financial resources. Lack of statistics on migration flows to Estonia.
Hungary	Has not yet designated an NCP. Plans to designate one by the end of the year.							
Latvia	A full-time official of the European Affairs and International Department of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs will carry out the work of the EMN contact point in 2006.				Contribution to Annual Report on Statistics.			Difficulty with reliable asylum and immigration statistics. Lack of financial and human resources, or adequate facilities.
Lithuania	NCP not designated yet.				Contribution to Annual Report on Statistics.			Lack of human and financial resources. Lack of motivation = not sure of benefits.
Luxemburg	Hasn't been attending meetings.							
Poland	NCP not selected yet. Plans to designate one by the end of the year.				Contribution to Annual Report on Statistics.	In cooperation with Italian NCP organised a seminar in Poland.		Financial resources needed to establish a contact point. Some obstacles to information gathering.
Slovakia	NCP not designated yet.				Completing contribution to Annual Report on Statistics.			Internal and organisational obstacles. Lack of personnel and financing.
Slovenia	Hasn't been attending meetings??							

When looking at the different types of outputs expected, as listed in the overview table, the following can be concluded:

Inputs to the computer-based information system

All NCPs were expected to provide inputs to the information system by the end of 2004. In June 2005, nine funded NCPs and one non-funded NCP had inputted information relating to publications, contacts, case law and legislation to the information system. A total of 1228 data records have been entered into the system. Even though the NCP work programmes did not include a minimum number of inputs to be provided, an average of 128 per NCP (ranging from 16 by the Dutch NCP to 304 included by the German NCP) can be considered to be relatively low. Most of the inputs made are records relating to publications and data. Only three NCPs have entered information on case law.

The reason for the lack of inputs are twofold. On the one hand, some NCPs do not have the capacity to collect and document information. On the other hand, information on, for example, case law, is simply not available in some countries. One NCP, for example, commented that this would require a call for tender to help the NCP develop a specialised database. Some NCPs have mentioned the difficulty of inputting data which only exist in national languages. This would require the translation of this information, which would take up a lot of time and resources.

Research outputs

The research outputs examined below relate to those included under the 2002 and 2003 budgets, implemented in 2003 and 2004 respectively. (Activities implemented under the 2004 budget will not be examined as they are currently being implemented, having started in December 2004 and running through 2005.)

2003 pilot study

The aim of the first pilot research study project was to test the analytical and research capacity of the network. Its objectives were to examine a topic of interest to all Member States as well as the European institutions through a systematic and comparative method which would provide useful information and contribute to informed policy-making. At the same time, the pilot study allowed for the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the network as well as areas for improvement. The subject chosen for the study was the “Impact of immigration on Europe’s societies”.

Nine Member States took part in the study (see table 3.2 on NCP outputs), including the UK NCP which does not receive co-financing. Belgium decided not to participate. Many NCPs did not have sufficient staff and/or experience with the subject matter of the first pilot study to conduct the study themselves. This was solved by involving network partners in the drafting of the study (in the case of Austria) or by outsourcing it to external researchers (Germany, Portugal, Sweden). The Commission and Scientific Coordinator have described the reports to be of a high quality. The Austrian NCP has published its pilot study and the Italian NCP presented the findings of its study in Poland during a seminar jointly organised with the Polish EMN contact persons. All NCPs will have the opportunity to present the findings of this first pilot research study project during an enlarged EMN meeting to be held during the second half of 2005.

2003 national network directory and national networking

The 2003 national network directory provides an inventory of potential and actual network partners on the national level. Six NCPs (Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Sweden) have compiled a national network directory so far. Each NCP has, to some extent, attempted to establish contact with researchers and research institutes and other specialised institutions at national level in view of developing a national network. Most NCPs made initial contacts and initiated the setting up of their networks by identifying and contacting potential partners by letter or questionnaire. This was followed in some cases (Austria, Ireland, Netherlands, Sweden) by visits to each potential network partner to establish face-to-face contact, or through meetings to which all potential partners were invited (Finland, Germany, Portugal). Potential network partners were identified through existing contacts, or Internet or database searches. These partners include research institutes and researchers, as well as international organisations working in the field of migration. Contacts with NGOs have taken place at a later stage.

The state of development of each NCP's national network varies from one NCP to the next. Some NCPs have managed to bring together the most relevant national actors and have even been able to involve them in the drafting of the first pilot study, for example, in the case of Austria and Portugal. The Austrian NCP invited its network members to participate in a seminar they organised on Migration and Health, some of whom acted as keynote speakers or chairs in workshops. The Austrian, Irish and Dutch NCPs keep their network partners informed of EMN activities through newsletters or mailings.

Other NCPs have admitted that they are only at a very early stage of establishing a national network. Several NCP representatives interviewed have mentioned the difficulty of encouraging national partners to participate and invest time in the network if they do not see how they could derive any benefit from their participation. NCPs feel that they should be able to offer something in return (for example, access to information or publicity), but believe that at the present time they are not able to offer any added-value to their cooperation. One of the EMN contact persons from a new Member State commented that there have not been sufficient results coming out of EMN to persuade national stakeholders of its usefulness. For NCPs in government ministries (e.g. the UK), the establishment of such a network is not a "logical" step given their status. The UK NCP, for example, is under the direct responsibility of the Home Office, and it is therefore not part of their overall mandate to network with other national actors and stakeholders, and perhaps even "inappropriate" as it might raise false expectations.

The results of the on-line survey have revealed that two thirds of respondents (who are made up of network partners) feel that when they have been requested to provide inputs to the network, the procedures for doing this were clear and easy to follow. One third responded that these procedures were not easy to follow, while an equivalent number replied 'to some extent'.

Contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics

The Commission's Annual Report on Statistics on Migration, Asylum and Return presents the patterns and trends with regard to the movement of migrants and asylum applicants to and from the EU25, as well as Norway, Iceland, Bulgaria and Romania.

10 NCPs and 4 observers contributed to the report by supplying information on national policies and practices, and analysing national figures. Slovakia is in the process of completing its contribution.

2004 policy analysis report

The objective of the annual policy report is to obtain an overview of national policy developments and to conduct a comparative analysis of these. It focuses on changes in legislation and progress made in relation to the implementation of EU legislation in the field of migration and asylum, as well as national political developments and the implementation of measures directed towards migrants in areas such as housing or the labour market. Only four NCPs (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Ireland) participated in this activity, as it was not mandatory.

Networking (status) report

The aim of the networking report was to provide feedback on NCP progress in the establishment of national networks and identify success factors as well as problems and obstacles. Seven NCPs (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden) have produced national networking reports.

Other outputs

NCPs have also submitted other research studies and reports which are useful to the needs of the network (but not always eligible for co-financing). Some examples, mainly produced as part of the 2002 and 2003 budgets, include:

- Austrian NCP: Organisation of a seminar on Migration and Health; Report on Asylum and Migration Trends in Austria from 1997 to 2003; Organisation in collaboration with the Italian NCP of a hearing on the Green Paper on economic migration.
- Belgian NCP: a website is being developed.
- French NCP: report on asylum.
- Greek NCP: report on Greek asylum and migration policy (2003); study on the labour market status of migrant workers.
- Irish NCP: summary of Irish immigration and asylum case law from 1985 to 2004, summary of legislation, case law and policy measures; directory of organisations, researchers and research (2004).
- Italian NCP: development of a website; report on legislation and jurisdiction (2003); organisation of a seminar to present findings of pilot study in Poland, organisation with the Austrian NCP of a hearing on the Green Paper on economic migration.
- Dutch NCP: publication of a national information leaflet and newsletter.
- Polish observer: Organised a seminar in cooperation with the Italian NCP.
- Portuguese NCP: Inventory of statistical data (2003)
- Spain: publication of a national newsletter.

- Swedish NCP: Inventory of statistical data, policy overview, legislation overview, research overview (2003).

Exchanges/visits between NCPs:

There have been several visits which have taken place between NCPs to share experiences and exchange ideas and working methods. Some of the EMN contact persons in the new Member States have also had the opportunity to have exchanges with “older” NCPs to find out how to go about setting up an NCP. Some examples of such visits include:

- The Irish NCP visited the Austrian NCP in February 2005 to discuss website and IT development.
- The Austrian NCP visited the Italian NCP in February 2005 to discuss the joint organisation of hearing on the Green Paper on Economic Migration.
- The Czech NCP visited the Dutch NCP in February 2005.
- The Italian NCP visited the Polish NCP in order to share experiences and good practices. A seminar was also organised to present the findings of the Italian pilot study.
- The EMN contact persons for Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia paid a visit to the Belgian NCP in 2004 to learn about their experiences with setting up the NCP.
- The Dutch NCP visited the Austrian NCP in May 2004.
- The Belgian NCP paid a visit to the Dutch NCP in September 2003.
- The Slovakian NCP has been in contact with the Belgian and Czech NCPs to ask about their experience in establishing NCPs.
- The Italian NCP has plans to visit the Austrian and Hungarian NCPs.

Rapid response tool

On their own initiative, NCPs have developed a “rapid response tool” to collect and exchange information among network members. These ad hoc information requests are launched by an NCP in need of information on a specific topic. Examples include a request from the Portuguese NCP on extradition procedures, and information on the number of migrants from the new Member States arriving in the “old” Member States requested by the Swedish NCP. Such requests are generally made on a monthly basis and answers are generally received quickly. The number of information requests has been steadily increasing, raising concerns among some NCPs about resource implications. This tool has proven to be a very useful mechanism to collect and exchange information on specific topics quickly.

Current work programme

Activities presently being implemented under the 2004 budget include the further development of activities related to national networking, data collection and research. A second research study project has been launched examining illegally resident third country nationals in the EU Member States. A second EMN policy analysis report and two small-scale studies will also be drafted (one will examine the social situation of

asylum applicants within reception systems in the EU25). Members will also contribute to the 2003 annual report on statistics.

Obstacles to completing the work programme

There are several reasons for the uneven progress amongst the NCPs. The most important ones are listed below:

- ***Insufficient human and financial resources.*** Many NCPs have lamented the fact that their human and financial resources are insufficient to meet the tasks and outputs expected of them. This has presented obstacles to the development of the network. Despite this apparent insufficiency, the funds made available during the first two phases of implementation were not completely absorbed. NCPs located in government ministries seem to be insufficiently staffed and/or have little time to dedicate to the activities of the EMN. This may be due to a lack of commitment on the part of Member State authorities. The financial issues of the NCPs are further discussed under section 3.3.3 below.
- ***Difficulties in accessing relevant and reliable data.*** Access to data has been an obstacle for NCPs not located in government administrations who have to rely on ministry sources for the data they need. In some cases, statistical information has to be purchased. Also, Member States with a more recent history of immigration and asylum seeking have less information available on certain topics related to integration issues, such the labour mobility of immigrants. This is the case of Ireland and Portugal, as well as the new Member States.
- ***Turn-over/changes in staff.*** Some NCPs located in government administrations have been subject to re-structuring processes within ministries which have resulted in a change of responsibilities for NCP staff members, or the sudden appointment of new contact persons. This has been the case for the French, Spanish and Portuguese NCPs. Such changes can hamper progress and continuity.
- ***Unclear expectations at the beginning.*** Several NCP representatives also highlighted that during the first year of implementation, the terms of reference were vague and unclear and lacked clarity and focus. As a result, NCPs were not clear about expectations and did not know how to interpret the terms of reference.
- ***Language issues.*** The fact that English is the working language of the EMN has presented considerable obstacles to NCPs located in the Southern Member States as well as France. As all documents and inputs to the information system must be submitted in English, these NCPs have had difficulties meeting deadlines because of the time that has to be put aside for translation. This also entails an additional financial burden as the costs of translation need to be borne by the NCPs and can take up a significant part of their budgets. It was suggested that translation should be covered by Commission services. Language is also a concern for the new Member States. EMN contacts in these countries have pointed out that data and legislation is available in national languages only and that translations are not available. Also, there are few practitioners able to work in English.

3.3.2 The EMN information system

3.3.2.1 The set-up

The Technical University Berlin (TUB) was subcontracted by the BIVS (Berlin Institute for Comparative Research), the organisation already included in BIVS's proposal to the Commission's open invitation to tender concerning the scientific coordination of the EMN. The objective was to set up and run a computer-based information system which the NCPs should input the data they collected into. It was one of the tasks of the Scientific Coordinator to assess the technical capacity and IT solutions used by contact points. However, as the team undertook visits to all NCPs from February to May 2004, they realised that the original proposal to establish a fully federated information system was not feasible and that a hybrid strategy (i.e. a central repository management system) needed to be adopted, since most NCPs did not have adequate or sufficiently flexible systems.

The first prototype of the repository management system supporting the collection of contact information was released in April 2004. The pilot system was expanded in June by the web-based templates for publications and in October 2004 for legislation, case law and opinions. The simple search and guided search (i.e. navigation) was initially released in October 2004.

What regards the input of data into the system, a number of different options are possible depending on whether the NCP already has a system which is possible to use and connect to the central system or if they need to set up a completely new system. For instance, the Austrian NCP started implementing a completely new and innovative system. In short, the options are the following:

- Central system – fill in different templates
- Build up own system – import to central
- The Netherlands and Germany already had their own systems with huge amounts of data. The TUB first built a system to import the data to the central system. This will be developed so the data does not have to be imported to be available through the central system, but it will be an automatic process to retrieve the data.

A metadata system is used to categorise the services. The metadata template is not constrained by the TUB Berlin or the Commission, but the NCPs decide themselves what information they want to make accessible to others. For example, personal data can be maintained for their own purposes (i.e. for the NCP only) or be made available to the entire network. However, the TUB and the Commission can make recommendations such as that some provision of information should be mandatory or optional. The TUB made such suggestions which they sent to the NCPs who had 3 weeks to respond. After the responses had been received, amendments were made. On the first template the NCPs submitted more than 100 responses and suggestions for improvements. The draft was made into a database model that was circulated to the NCPs, which tested a stable version.

The TUB provides all the NCPs with updates about what is going on and changes to the system. They also recommend all NCPs to implement the system they have

developed. The TUB assisted the Austrian NCP in setting up a new, innovative system, and in February 2005 the Irish NCP made a visit to the Austrian NCP to learn about how the system was set up. The TUB assisted this meeting. However, not all NCPs have budgets / IT competences to maintain the solution, as it is necessary to have someone working rather exclusively on this task. One option would be to “migrate” the central system to some NCPs (copy the system to their own server etc). However, this must be decided by the Commission since they financed the work of the TUB and therefore have copyright of the work. There are also security restrictions which hinder the process – some NCPs (especially those part of ministries) may not have the possibility to publish all material. This is the challenge of the structure with heterogeneous NCPs.

Heterogeneous NCPs can, however, also provide advantages. The way the network has been set up now has provided the opportunity to test different options in an informal way. This means that the network is open to nearly everyone and that the system as it has developed is quite flexible. On the other hand, it also means that the central management system will be running for a rather long time, especially with regard to the new Member States now entering the network. In the future it will, however, be possible to work with a distributed system.

What regards the information availability, the network involves several different information providers. For example, in Statistics Sweden it is necessary to apply several different criteria to get a picture of the current situation. In the United Kingdom the whole legislation in the country is possible to access.

3.3.2.2 Assessment of EMN central information integration system (CIIS)

This assessment of the information system is based on reporting by the Technical University of Berlin (TUB), additional clarifications provided during a meeting with the TUB and access to the EMN website and database. The TUB proposes to build an information integration system based on integration on metadata level which will enable users to locate documents relevant to European migration issues, and content providers to categorise such documents. The documents can be stored both in a central repository, as well as in their original locations on the NCP's network. In the case of the latter, the CIIS will only hold information on where the documents reside and provide a link to them. The advantage of this system means that the onus of maintaining the documents, and the resulting cost, is shared between the EU and the NCP level. The disadvantage is that there will be different computer networks associated with the CIIS, each with varying levels of technological infrastructure and each requiring management and periodic maintenance.

A. The technical approach

The TUB's approach is to store information about each document in a database that the user can then search. To enable users to perform random searches, a document's entry in the database has a *metadata* field that holds a list of keywords associated with the document. The document's keywords are chosen by the content provider, i.e., the person who adds the document details to the database. To standardise keywords, they are selected from a list that TUB has named the Thesaurus.

Information is sent to and from the underlying database in XML format. XML (eXtensible Markup Language) standardises the information and renders it in a form

that can be readily passed between systems. The main reason for choosing XML is that information that already exists in databases can be easily imported into the new CIIS database.

The TUB's proposed system represents a popular approach to building knowledge management systems and will be most effective if there will be large amounts of document details added to the CIIS database. Also, the use of XML *future proofs* the system: if it is superseded then the data can be migrated to the new system with minimal re-working. The downside is that it is a "bespoke" system, i.e. built from the ground up for a single client. This means that a) it will take a relatively long time to build (when compared to already existing systems such as for examples weblogic with a similar functionality) and b) it might be difficult for any other organisation to take it over should the TUB no longer be involved in the contract, as it is, in a sense, "unique" and quite complex. Although there is no issue of ownership of the programming code (the TUB have stated that both the programming code and compiled binary data will be available to a new contractor), the TUB's support might still be needed for any future expansion and upgrade of the system due to the relative complexity of the model according to which the system is built. At the very least, an organisation with similar technical knowledge and expertise as the TUB will have to be involved.

The system is set up to handle a huge quantity of information, possibly far more than will be needed. Although this may be considered extreme at the moment, it means that in case of a huge increase of data inputs in the future, a new system will not have to be built. However, the system is being constructed with some specific new technologies (e.g. the Struts Framework and Velocity templates) which are not common at the moment and have not been accepted by the web development "community" as a whole. The danger is that while the technology the TUB has chosen is seeking to find widespread acceptance, a new technology appears, is embraced by a lot of developers and becomes standard. This might render the TUB system obsolete in the longer term.

The information system is at present hosted on the server of the Scientific Coordinator. In principle, it should be possible to transfer the system to the Commission's part of the Europa website, although there is a slight possibility that the EMN system is technically too sophisticated for the latter. The extent of these potential problems can only be identified by inviting the Europe system managers to thoroughly review the system created for the EMN. However, even in the case the system results incompatible, there is still the possibility of hosting (part of) it (against a relatively low cost) on an appropriate external server provider while providing access to the system through Europa.

B. Usability

The EMN website

The overall look and feel of the EMN website is rather basic and not particularly engaging. It is noted that this is not the final design and that these are just preliminary pages designed by the web programmers at TUB. The sections that were reviewed included Search, Navigation and Database Login, all accessed from the left hand side menu. These seem to be the only sections available at present.

The left hand side menu is the principal navigation device and is a constant on each page. It is simple but may lack clarity because of the choice of link names and its use

of icons at the bottom. The icons are not really representative and could appear confusing. They have tooltips (descriptive text that appears when the mouse is held over an icon) but the danger is that if users cannot recognise or understand an icon, they will not rollover it in the first place. If icons are to be used on the final site, they should be professionally designed. The link names are not necessarily clear. For example, the link named Database Login should read *Add or Amend Content*.

Search: This is the primary search screen for the site. It allows users to perform free-text searches and filter the results by country or resource type (publications and contact details).

The page is reasonably clear to understand but could perhaps benefit from having some brief on-screen instructions, such as “Deselect those countries you do not wish to search”.

Again, the use of icons to represent the links to the User Guides is poor. However, the guides themselves are clear and it is particularly useful to have an on-line guide, though it does not offer a text search function.

Navigation: The use of the title “Navigation” for this section is not well thought out. It implies that the section contains some kind of additional site navigation structure when it does, in fact, offer an alternative search mechanism.

The clickable map is a good feature; most people recognise the national boundaries and can make their selection accordingly, there are, however, tooltips that display the country name. It may be better if the countries are displayed in a different colour to the rest of Europe.

Search and Navigation both perform the same function but with a different user interface. It would be logical to choose just one of them and name the left hand side link with a tile like “Search for Documents”.

Once a search has been performed a page listing all the documents relevant to the search criteria is displayed. Again, a series of icons are used but there is no on-screen key to what the symbols mean. In particular, the use of a magnifying glass icon to link to further details is confusing since the magnifying glass symbol has come to represent a search function on most websites and software interfaces. At the bottom of each document description is a list of keywords that filter out any documents that do not contain the same keywords. Although this is a useful function in itself, there is no on-screen indication that clicking on the keyword list will have this effect – relying on user-guides is not sufficient.

If further information is requested about a particular document, a new webpage is opened on top of the current page. This new page is not part of the sites *history collection*, which means that the browser’s back button has no effect and appears greyed-out. The back button is the most common button used by web users, particularly those with little experience.

Database Login

This is the interface for adding content to the CIIS repository. The first thing that strikes the user is that the look and feel of the interface is completely different to that of the EMN site, so much so that users may believe that they have been redirected to a disassociated site. The TUB, however, claim that none of their testers were confused by this change in style.

The overall design of this section is not user-friendly. The page appears as a web page where it should really be presented as a software user interface, which is essentially what it is. For example, the link that enables the content provider to add his/her name and email address details is labelled Contact. The connotation that *contact* has when used in a webpage is to display contact details of the site owner.

3.3.3 Financial progress

The financial resources allocated to set up the network were quite limited for a pilot project. The network was set up in 2002 through a €1.4 million budget for pilot action. Seven NCPs received grants in that year. Despite the limited resources which were allocated in this year, the total budget was not completely absorbed due to delays starting up the network. A preparatory action was subsequently implemented for a period of three years from 2003 to 2005. The budget for 2003 amounted to €2.3 million and included grants for nine NCPs as well as financial provisions for the scientific and administrative coordination of the network. The 2004 budget provides €2.9 million in grants for ten NCPs and the coordination of the network.

The delayed start-up of the network however caused a substantial level of under spending. It seems that in the first year of implementation budget absorption was less than 20%. This is comprehensible when considering that the 2002 budget was made available for a relatively brief period of six months, i.e. from March/April to September / October 2003. The activities which are being undertaken in 2004 are being funded through the 2003 budget line. So far it seems that financial absorption is improving, which justifies the increase of funds for the 2004 budget, to be implemented in 2005.

The following subsections analyse financial inputs and progress for the Commission, the Scientific Coordinator and the NCPs.

3.3.3.1 Resources at EU level

It is estimated that within DG JLS one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) was dedicated to the management, development and coordination of the EMN between mid-2002 to end 2003. Since the beginning of 2004, approximately two FTEs have been inputted to dealing with the EMN. Secretarial assistance has been limited to the organisation of meetings and the processing of reimbursement of travel expenses.

Based on this estimate and taking the average Commission grade of B2 (84,868 euro per staff, B" being the grade usually applied for calculating overall costs of Commission officials), the EMN cost between 84,868 and 169,736 euro per year in terms of EC human resources. Added to this are the overheads, which are calculated at a standard rate of 21,167 euro per person (DG Budget rate from 2001), thus costing between 21,167 and 42,334euro.

3.3.3.2 Resources at the level of the scientific coordinator

The Scientific Coordinator was contracted at the end of December 2003, with a budget amounting to €740,000 per year. It is difficult to estimate their exact cost allocations by type of activity and final costs incurred, as so far, due to administrative reasons explored in section 3.2 above, they have not yet received their final payment on the first contractual year.

A large part of the Scientific Coordinator's budget is earmarked for the development of the information system. The exact costs of the system are again difficult to estimate, especially given that the Berlin University only started its development end of December 2003 and as the specific costs of the system do not seem to be itemised in the Commission's contract with the Scientific Coordination Team.

On the basis of the 2003 BIVS application, the following calculations have been made:

- Berlin University staff members were allocated to the project, for a total value of 189,600 euro.
- In terms of reimbursable expenses, the system required the purchasing of hardware and software, as well as translation, for a total value of 60,700 euro.

This brings the total *minimum* anticipated annual cost for the system at 250,300 euro. However, a few more costs could be added to his calculation, such as data experts, web design, and editor / content managers, which together add up to 86,400 euro. This brings the total *maximum* anticipated annual cost for the system at 336,700 euro.

By subtracting the estimated costs for the information system from the total budget available, costs for the "pure" network coordination and scientific support would range between 489,700 euro and 403,300 euro.

3.3.3.3 Resources and financial progress at NCP level

Information on financial progress made by the NCPs is very limited, as it is based on:

- Planned and paid expenditure for budget year 2002 (implementation year 2003)
- Planned expenditure for budget year 2003 (implementation year 2004) and, in three cases (Austria, Belgium and Greece) paid expenditure according to the NCP's financial statements.
- Planned expenditure for budget year 2004 (implementation year 2005).

The lack of data makes it impossible to assess whether, with respect to their first budget year, NCPs are improving or worsening their financial performance. It is also very difficult to verify and compare any other trends in relation to financial allocations, categorisation of expenditure, etc.

Overall, the NCP budgets seem to depend on their status and the human resources invested at national level. With regard to the former, the fact that, for example, some NCPs hosted within national authorities makes it impossible unable to charge staff costs (unless employees are not public officials). With regard to the latter, NCPs invest

between 0.5 – 3 FTE into their EMN contributions, which clearly impacts on their estimated costs.

The tables included in this section review the following NCP budgetary information:

- Planned versus paid expenditure for budget year 2002 (implementation year 2003) by category of expenditure (Table 3.3)
- Planned versus paid expenditure for budget year 2002 (implementation year 2003) by co-financing structure (Table 3.4)
- Planned versus paid expenditure for budget year 2003 by category of expenditure and co-financing structure (Table 3.5)
- Trends in planned expenditure between 2002 and 2004 by category of expenditure (Table 3.6)
- Trends in planned expenditure between 2002 and 2004 by co-financing structure (Table 3.7)
- Trends in the level of categories of expenditure between 2002 and 2004 (Table 3.8)

Each table will briefly be discussed in terms of comments and findings.

Table 3.3. - Planned versus paid expenditure for budget year 2002 (implementation year 2003) by category of expenditure

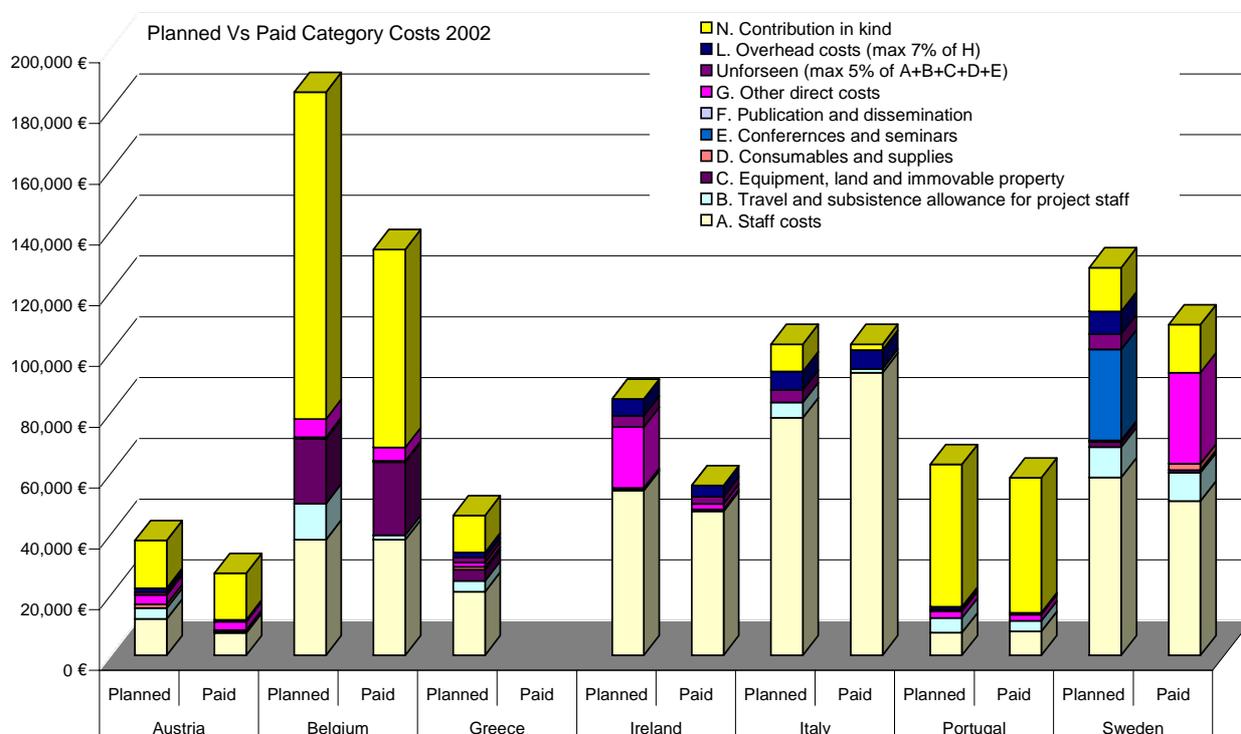
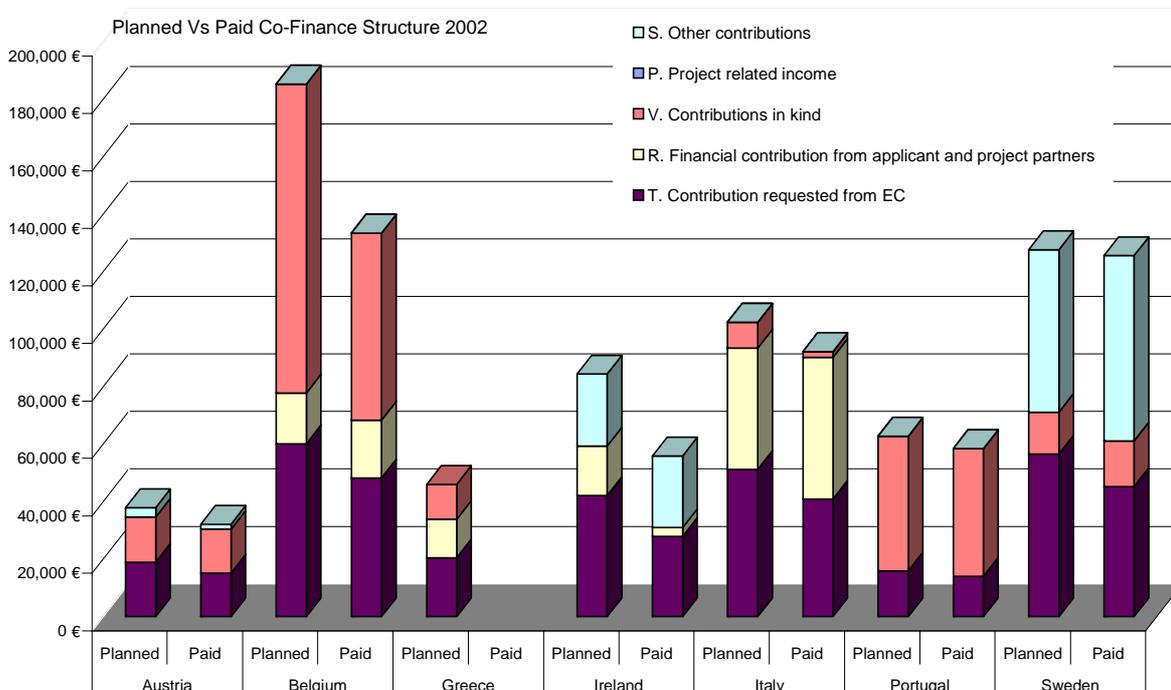


Table 3.4 - Planned versus paid expenditure for budget year 2002 (implementation year 2003) by co-financing structure

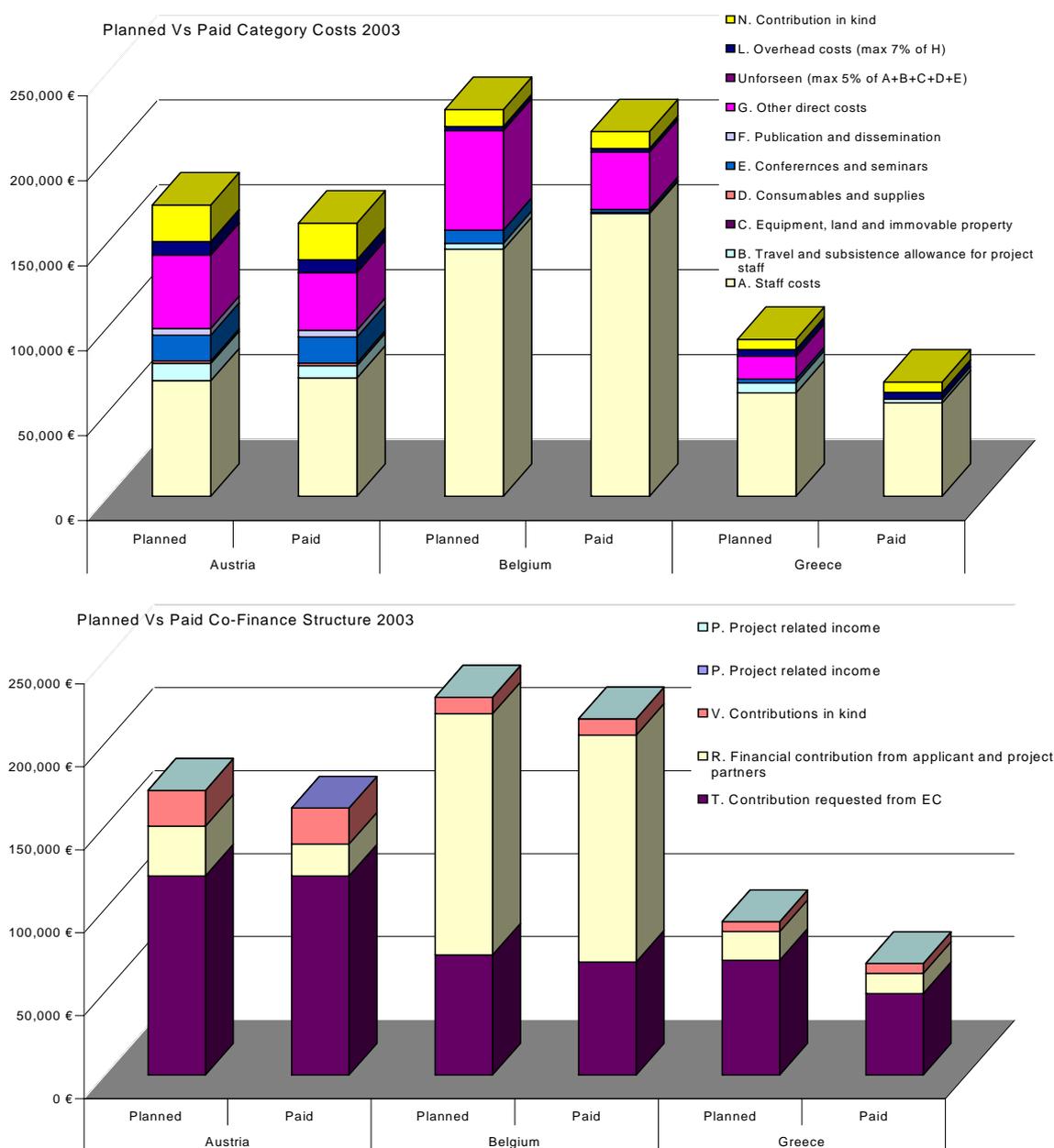


The planned – paid comparison reflects the various difficulties and delays experienced in the first year of implementation and the fact that the funding was only made

available for a period of six months, i.e. from March / April to September / October 2003. Budget absorption was less than 70%, and particularly low in Austria, Belgium and Ireland. No decision on payment to Greece has yet been reached.

Given the little information available on budget year 2003 (implementation year 2004), the following table shows planned – paid comparisons for only three Member States, namely Austria, Belgium and Greece.

Table 3.5 - Planned versus paid expenditure for budget year 2003 by category of expenditure and co-financing structure



The planned – paid expenditure for the three NCPs which have submitted their final reporting show an overall increase in the budget as well as improved absorption levels especially for Austria and Belgium. This increase confirms NCP comments on their higher inputs and workload. The limited information available however does not allow for any assumptions as to the financial performance of the remaining NCPs.

Table 3.6 - Trends in planned expenditure between 2002 and 2004 by category of expenditure

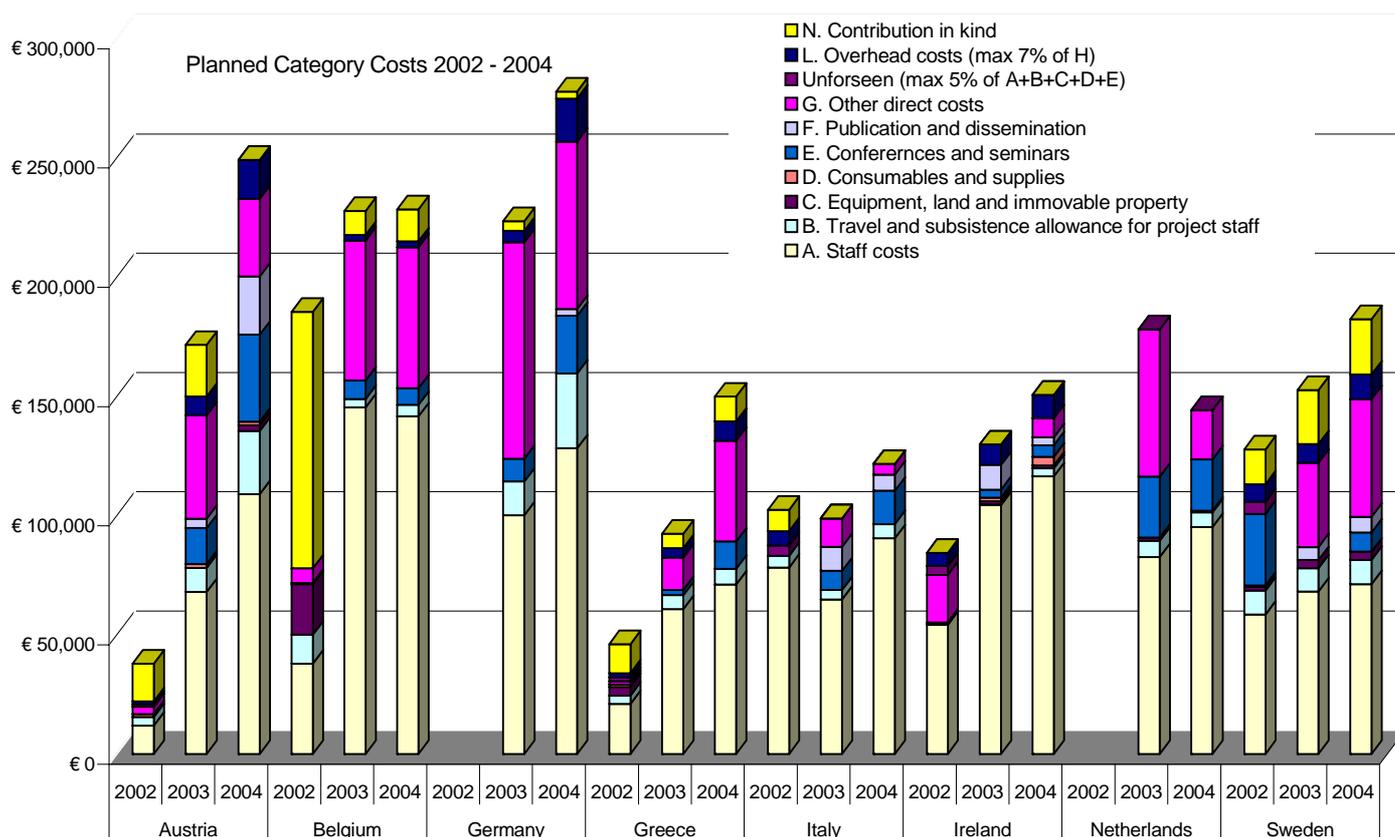
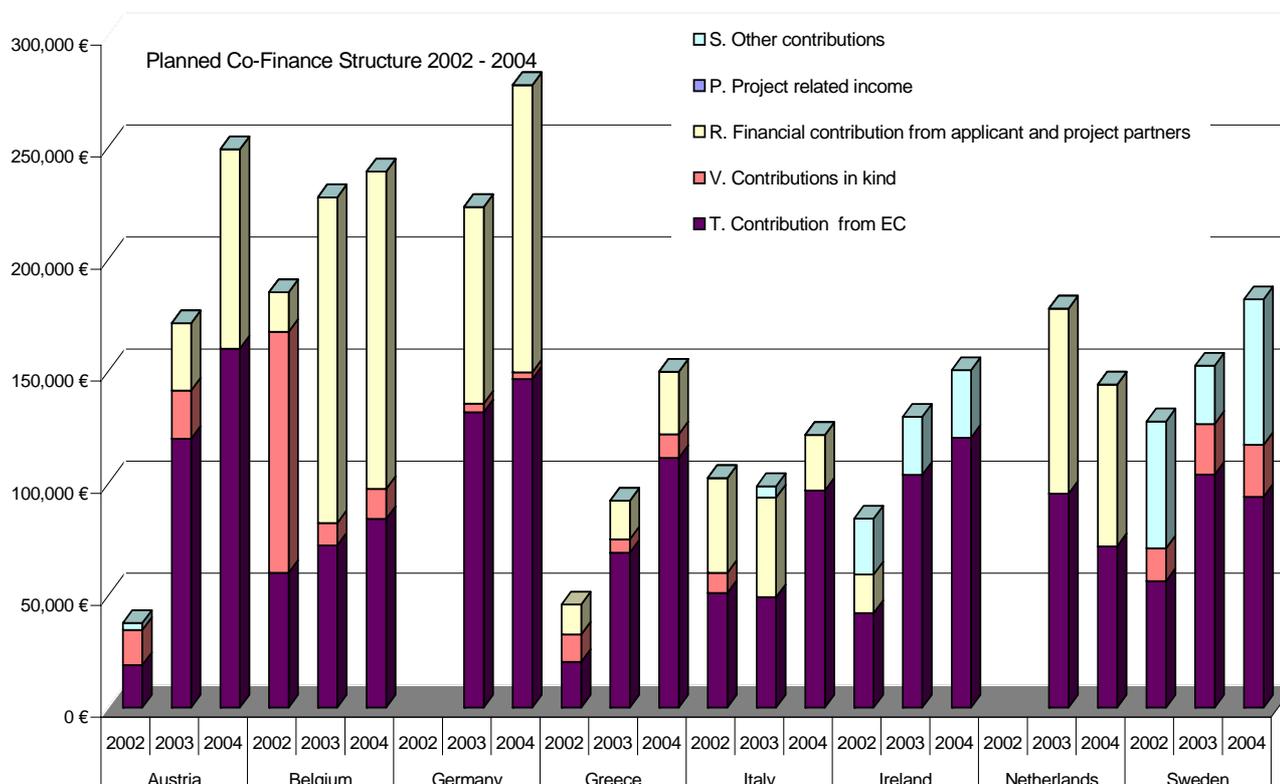


Table 3.7 - Trends in planned expenditure between 2002 and 2004 by co-financing structure

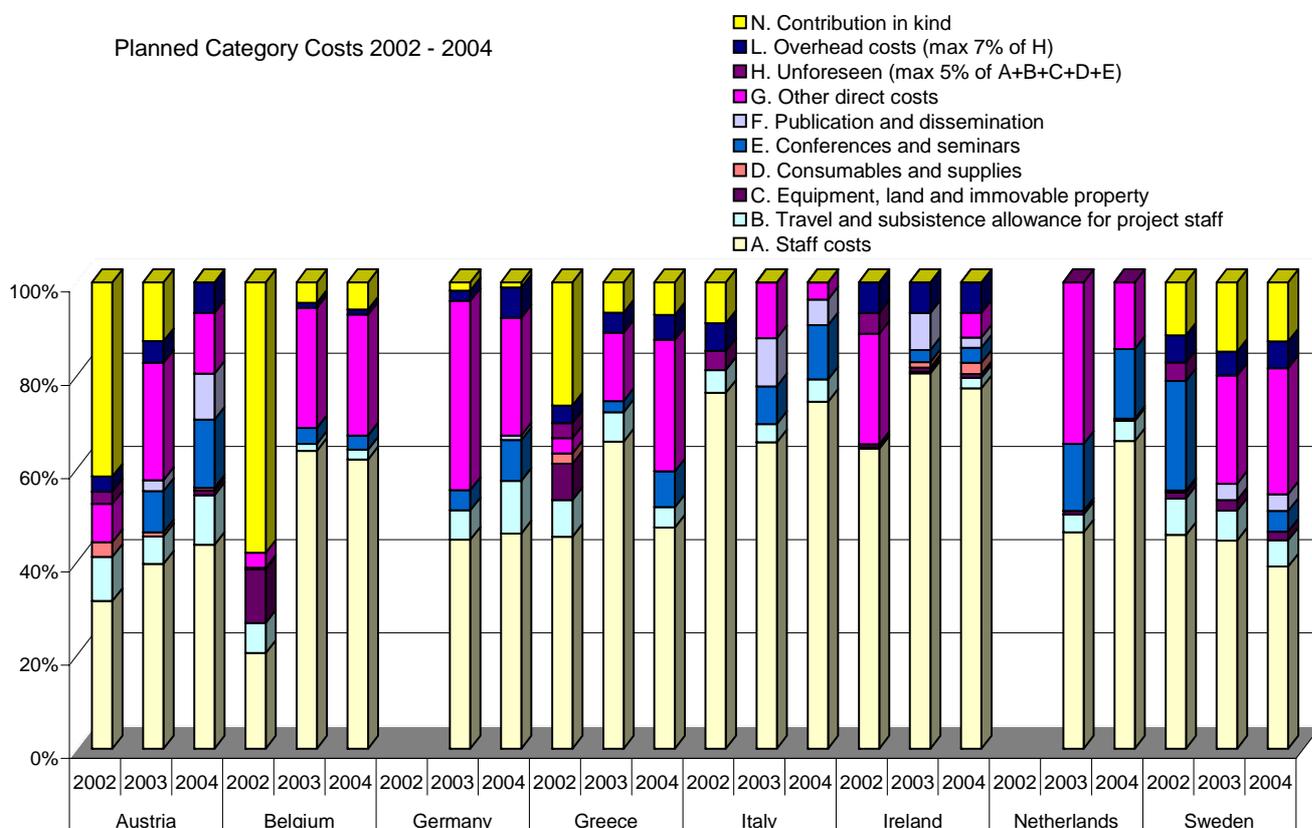


For the large majority of the NCPs, the planned costs have been steadily increasing between the budget years 2002 and 2004. This is a positive reflection of the increased level of activity of the EMN, although no useful comments can of course be made without seeing at least the paid expenditure for all NCPs with regard to budget year 2003.

The highest budgets, on average, were allocated to Austria, Belgium and Germany. Whilst this reflect in part their level of participation, the budget will also be influenced by the size of the country, the scale of asylum and migration issues, and possibly the overall commitment of authorities to co-finance the NCP.

The categories of expenditure confirm that staff costs “other direct” costs constitute most of the resources requested. When looking at the co-financing structure, most NCPs seem to have “fixed” partners: those that access contributions from other sources remain to do so, whilst the majority of NCPs continues to work with a single national co-financing source.

Table 3.8 - Trends in the level of categories of expenditure between 2002 and



2004

The last table shows the trends and division between categories of expenditure in percentages of the total NCP planned budgets between 2002 and 2004 (budget years). Again, it is difficult to comment without having information on paid expenditure over at least two years of implementation. Overall, staff costs take up the majority of the NCP budgets, with the exception of Spain, where staff is probably covered by the Ministry responsible for the NCP. Costs for consumables and equipment are very low or not included for most of the NCPs, which implies that they are working as part of existing structures. Nearly all increasingly plan to organise or attend seminars and conferences, which is a positive sign of the network's growing interaction with other international and national actors.

3.3.4 Overall considerations on effectiveness and value for money of the EMN

On the basis of the previous sections assessing progress of implementation and financial progress of the EMN, this part of the report includes considerations on the effectiveness and value for money of the network. These are first discussed at the different levels (EU, national), subsequently the EMN operation is compared with other networking activity.

3.3.4.1 Effectiveness and value for money at EU level

The total costs for EMN management and coordination are presented in the table below:

Table 3.9 – Annual costs for management and implementation at central level

Management and coordination	Maximum annual costs in euro
Commission staff	169,736
Commission overheads	42,334
Scientific coordination	403,300 - 489,700
Information system	250,300 - 336,700
Total	952,070

At EU level, the running of the EMN is effective and value for money overall high. When considering what has been achieved by the network, despite some issues in relation to management and decision-making processes, as well as some typical problems due to the experimental nature of the EMN project, costs incurred are relatively low. The Commission does not invest more than 2 FTE in managing the network, which corresponds to a maximum of 212,000 euro annually. With these resources, it steers the network, leads the organisation of meetings and liaises with the Scientific Coordinator. In addition, the allocated resources also include financial management and administration of the contracts with the Scientific Coordinator and the NCP, which requires substantial time inputs.

The decision to contract an organisation for the scientific coordination of the network was good. The effectiveness of the latter is very high, as can be concluded when reviewing what has been achieved against their work programme, and most delays and problems encountered were, to an extent, beyond their control. Some questions could be placed as to the value for money of the information system, which costs, in comparison with other systems, are relatively high. Clearly the system will have the capacity to handle enormous quantities of data and information, and be adaptable to future developments in IT, but the way in which the system was built could have been more cost-efficient.

3.3.4.2 Effectiveness and value for money at NCP level

The effectiveness of the NCPs varies greatly, as can be seen from both the extent to which they have completed their work programmes and from the funding allocated to them. Some are performing very well, and against relatively low costs, whilst financial allocations to others seem harder to justify when looking at their results and outputs.

In order to be able to draw some conclusions on the effectiveness and value for money at NCP level, EPEC developed a rating system which sought to consider the NCPs in their “totality”, i.e. addressing all factors contributing to or influencing their effectiveness and value for money. The system therefore looks at a wide range of criteria ranging from assessing the level of independence of NCPs and addressing their capacity and to criteria measuring their performance and visibility, as these all somehow affect the extent to which the network’s objectives are being achieved. The rating system has been used to provide a tentative indication of the effectiveness of each NCP and to “categorise” them on the basis of these characteristics.

On the basis of the rating, NCPs have been categorised into three groups:

1. Effective NCPs

Effective NCPs have in common that they are independent bodies not subject to direct government control. They received high scores for independence and performance. Interestingly, these NCPs also generally scored high marks for continuity (in terms of staff working on the project), capacity and human resources, experience and commitment/motivation, and to some extent performance, visibility and cost efficiency.

2. Reasonably effective NCPs

The second grouping is made up of NCPs which mainly fall under the responsibility of government ministries. These NCPs received high scores for reliability, continuity and performance, medium-level scores for capacity/staffing, but lower marks for independence and visibility.

3. NCPs with issues inhibiting their effectiveness.

The third grouping also mainly includes NCPs located in government ministries. Most have not received EMN funding. They scored high points for reliability and an average score for continuity, experience and cost efficiency. They received low scores for independence, objectivity, capacity/staffing, performance, and visibility.

All the already existing NCPs (funded as well as non-funded) have been examined according to ten criteria. Six criteria are rated on the basis of a qualitative assessment on a scale from 1 to 4. One criterion, related to cost-efficiency, is rated on a scale from 1 to 3. The three remaining criteria attribute points to products, visibility activities and areas of expertise. The definitions used for the different criteria are explained below.

CRITERION 1: Independence (to work independently, without too much control from others / lengthy procedures)

An independent body not subject to any government control or influence is considered to have the highest degree of independence. Such bodies can work independently and take its own decisions while avoiding bureaucracy and extensive procedures.

- *The NCP is a body under auspices of a government ministry with little autonomy – 1 point*
- *The NCP is a body under auspices of a government ministry with relative autonomy – 2 points*
- *The NCP is a body independent of the government but under some/significant government control/influence/dependence – 3 points*
- *The NCP is an independent body not subject to government control/influence – 4 points*

CRITERION 2: Objectivity (to provide objective information, using and verifying multiple sources)

An independent body can provide unbiased information be more objective than a government body, which may tend to promote its own policies.

- *The NCP is a government body – 1 point*
- *The NCP is an independent body – 2 points*
- *The NCP is a government body with links to other information sources – 3 points*
- *The NCP is an independent body with links to government sources – 4 points*

CRITERION 3: Reliability (to provide accurate information, from the most reliable source)

A government body has best access to official sources of information.

- *The NCP is an independent body – 1 point*
- *The NCP is an independent body with links to government sources – 2 points*
- *The NCP is a government body with links to other sources – 3 points*
- *The NCP is a government body – 4 points*

CRITERION 4: Capacity / staffing (human resources available to deliver the tasks)

This examines the number of full-time equivalents (FTE) available to deliver tasks.

- *NCP staff is equivalent to less than one FTE – 1 point*

- *NCP staff is equivalent to 1-2 FTE – 2 points*
- *NCP staff is equivalent to 3-4 FTE – 3 points*
- *NCP staff is equivalent to over 5 FTE – 4 points*

CRITERION 5: Continuity (extent to which same staff stays on the project)

Development can be hampered by frequent staff changes within NCPs as this does not ensure continuity.

- *Staff working on EMN has changed more than 3 times since the start – 1 point*
- *Staff working on EMN has changed more than twice since the start – 2 points*
- *Staff working on EMN has changed once since the start – 3 points*
- *Staff working on the EMN has remained the same since the beginning – 4 points*

CRITERION 6: Experience (relevant expertise for undertaking the tasks)

Ideally an NCP should have relevant experience and expertise in all five areas: IT, research, documenting, networking, data collection and management. 1 point for each.

- *1 point is given for each area of expertise: IT, Research, Documenting, Networking, Data collection, Management*

CRITERION 7: Commitment / motivation (level of commitment to the EMN, e.g. attending meetings, involvement, responsiveness etc)

This examines the level of commitment to the EMN, i.e. attendance at meetings, level of responsiveness, providing feedback, etc. This is something which is difficult to evaluate. Attendance at meetings is only one indication of commitment. For this reason extra points have been allotted if the NCP has organised other activities, such as visits to/with other NCPs, the organisation of meetings and seminars, and other outputs.

A. Attendance of EMN meetings

- *The NCP has not attended any EMN meetings – 1 point*
- *The NCP has attended only a few EMN meetings – 2 points*
- *The NCP has attended almost all EMN meetings – 3 points*
- *The NCP has attended all EMN meetings – 4 points*

B. Other activities: i.e. visits to other NCPs, organisation of meetings and seminars, other outputs.

- *The NCP has not organised other activities – 1 point*
- *The NCP has organised one other activity – 2 points*

- *The NCP has organised two other activities – 3 points*
- *The NCP has organised three or more additional activities – 4 points*

CRITERION 8: Performance (degree to which NCPs delivered products agreed in work programme)

This examines which products planned under the 2002 and 2003 budgets have been delivered.

- *1 point is given for each product delivered: 2003 pilot study, 2003 national network directory, 2004 policy analysis report, networking report, contribution to 2002 annual report on statistics*

CRITERION 9: Visibility (extent to which they are disseminating their results, have a website, organise meetings, etc)

This evaluates the extent to which NCPs are disseminating their results through publications, a website, the organisation of meetings and seminars, etc.

- *1 point is given for each ‘visibility activity’, i.e. website, national newsletter, organisation of a meeting, other publications, etc.*

CRITERION 10: Cost efficiency (amount requested / charged for undertaking the activities)

Cost efficiency is a challenge to measure. An attempt was made to measure cost efficiency by taking the amount requested under the 2003 budget and dividing it with the number of products delivered to arrive at an estimate of cost effectiveness.

- *The NCP is not very cost efficient – 1 point*
- *The NCP is somewhat cost efficient – 2 points*
- *The NCP is very cost efficient – 3 points*

3.3.4.3 Value for money of the EMN operation in comparison with other network activity

On the basis of the above considerations on the effectiveness of the EMN's different levels, it may also be useful to also assess the extent to which the network's outputs and results have been achieved at a reasonable cost. It should be noted that a proper assessment would only be possible if more information was available on the final (i.e. paid) costs as opposed to planned budgets.

For this, it is proposed to compare the EMN to two other network structures financed by the Commission, namely the European Employment Observatory (EEO) and the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). The comparison shows the differences in costs between three information collection networks which are all centrally coordinated, with inputs from national “agents” but with very different structures in terms of financing and status: the EMN being a co-financed network; the EEO being fully contracted to an external service provider; and the EUMC constituting a Community Agency.

The table below presents the budget breakdown of the three networks.

Table 3.11 – Financial breakdowns of EMN, EEO and EUMC (2004)

	EMN	EEO	EUMC
Brief summary of scope	Information collection network in the area of asylum and migration at the European level.	Network contributing to the development of the European Employment Strategy through the provision of information and comparative research on employment policies and labour market trends.	Information collection network on racism, xenophobia, islamophobia and anti-Semitism at the European level
Form / management	Co-financed network, managed by the Commission with inputs of external coordination unit.	Contracted network, managed by external contractor	Community Agency, with own independent management structure
Central administration			
Commission staff	169,736	169,736	NA
Commission overheads	42,334	42,334	NA
Coordination (external)	403,300	160,000	3,316,000
Information system	336,700	40,000	105,000
Building, equipment and operating expenditure	NA	NA	746,000
Information and communication	NA	NA	1,623,000
Other (e.g. evaluation, translation, etc)	159,000	100,000	NA
<i>Subtotal:</i>	<i>1,111,070</i>	<i>512,070</i>	<i>5,790,000</i>
National partners			
National Agents	1,690,861	600,000	2,279,000
Total	2,801,931	1,112,070	8,069,000

From the table it can be concluded that the costs incurred for the EMN are relatively low when comparing it with the financial resources necessary for running an Agency. The higher costs for the Agency can, however, largely be attributed to the wider remit the latter has (including a publications outlet, organisation of workshops, etc) and to the fact that it has its own, fully staffed, central remises, together accounting for nearly 75% of the EUMC's total budget. The allocation for the national partners is actually quite close to the one provided to the EMN's NCPs, especially when taking into consideration that the EUMC involves participation of all "old" Member States and preparations to include all New Member States are on the way.

The EMN is relatively expensive when looking at the costs incurred for running a fully outsourced network such as the EEO. In this scenario, the Commission has signed a contract with a single organisation, which subcontracts national experts in each Member State. Whilst the remit of the EEO is "limited" to the production of annual and thematic reports on selected topics of employment policy and the labour market, from a comparative point of view, it is considered an efficient and effective network by its users (the Commission and Member States), addressing well-targeted and relevant subjects. The costs for the information systems of the three networks also vary greatly. The low costs for the EEO system are due to the limited functions of its website, which includes general information on the network, access to its publications and links / contacts of the national agents and relevant Member State ministries. The news section is, however, quite elaborate, providing detailed monthly newsletters with information on policy and other developments at EU and Member State level relevant to employment. The estimated costs of the EUMC information system, which is very similar to the one being developed for the EMN, are still low in comparison to those incurred for the latter. Due account should, however, be taken to the fact that the EMN information system is still in its start-up and development phase, whilst the EUMC system is well-established and requires maintenance and updating only.

3.4 Conclusions and recommendations from the EMN pilot and preparatory phase

3.4.1 Conclusions

Relevance and suitability of the network

The EMN is strongly embedded in asylum and migration policy within the EU and key EU policy documents and actors are referring to its potential use. The future network should maximise its potential to contribute to and support developments in these areas.

The decision to launch the network as a co-financed pilot action was the most suitable option when taking into account the challenges posed by the specific subject area and the need for flexibility. The duration of three years for the pilot and preparatory action was adequate to establish a sound foundation from which first experiences could be drawn. New policy and other contextual developments, as well as the network's experiences to date, call for a renewed policy architecture and design.

The network could have benefited from more clarity and focus with regard to its mandate and functions. Whilst the intention in setting up the network was to explore different possibilities in relation to functions and tasks on a "trial and error" basis, the overall approach to setting up the different tasks and activities of the EMN seemed to be *ad hoc* and unsuitable for an experimental network in its start-up phase. There may

have been benefit in a more “phased” approach, instead of starting many different actions and activities within a relatively short period of time, requiring very different sets of skills (i.e. ranging from research to IT skills) and a level of capacity which not all NCPs possessed.

Some aspects of the structure chosen for the EMN, in relation the very heterogeneous NCPs, may have influenced the network’s independency and ability to produce objective and reliable data.

Organisational efficiency

The creation of the network suffered delays due to Member State reservations and the “trial and error” approach chosen for implementing the pilot and preparatory action. Such delays are common for most experimental and networking projects.

Good progress has been made with regard to the organisation and development of the NCPs. 24 Member States are currently participating in the EMN, of which 14 have officially nominated an NCP and nine are receiving funding. However, the fact that each Member State directly designated the NCPs resulted in the creation of a network made up of a heterogeneous collection of organisations, with greatly differing resources and capacities. These organisational arrangements impacted on the overall effectiveness of the network.

The management “triangle” between the Commission, the Scientific Coordinator and the NCPs led to confusion and lack of clarity with regard to roles and responsibilities. It also influenced the extent to which contractually agreed activities could be enforced, thus also inhibiting the extent to which objectives have been achieved. In addition, the current structure of the EMN does not give NCPs a say in the decision-making process, nor does it allow for the involvement (or require the commitment) of Member State representatives.

There is an overall lack of clarity on the mandate, functions and activities of the EMN. The contracting of the Scientific Coordinator was extremely beneficial as it has greatly helped the further specification and clarification of tasks, both through the development of the annual work programmes and the elaboration of the terms of reference for certain activities. However, New Member States are reluctant to join the network and commit a national structure and resources until the remit and functions of the EMN are further clarified and defined.

NCPs located in government ministries are often subject to hierarchical decision-making procedures which can slow down the implementation of activities and financial procedures which require the agreement and consultation of higher authorities. This compromises an NCP’s independence. NCPs outside national authorities have experienced difficulties in accessing data and information. The network could have benefited from clearer (possibly written) agreements from the relevant departments of national administrations agreeing that they would collaborate with and support NCPs.

The institutional arrangements and architecture chosen for the set up a co-financed grant-based network required a high level of inputs from the Commission for its administration. Adequate internal human resources were lacking to actively lead the implementation process.

The Commission's financial procedures are slow and complicated and have caused considerable delays to the set-up of the network and the implementation of work activities. The fact that the EMN is a co-financed network has also presented a range of practical problems to funding for NCPs located in public ministries. In these cases, tailored solutions had to be found where possible. Many NCPs did not have experience with applications for EU funding, which further slowed down the application process and delayed the release of funding. Finally, the fact that funding contracts run according to a one-year financing programme has also been cited as highly problematic for many NCPs, as this does not allow for a long-term financial perspective especially if funding is only received after several months of delay.

Communication and contact between NCPs and the Commission tends to be very positive. Responses to inquiries and requests are generally prompt and efficient. The fact that the Commission contact person has remained constant has been beneficial. Communication between the NCPs and the Scientific Coordinator has been insufficient. The Scientific Coordinator is aware of this and is making efforts to address this gap.

Insufficient organisational efforts have been placed on making the EMN more visible and on disseminating its products. The EMN is virtually unknown to the outside world. Even though only at this stage such products are being delivered, there would still have been benefit in promoting the network overall, as actors external to the EMN are querying its value for money.

Increasingly the EMN is, however, becoming a network in the "true sense of the word". NCPs are developing bilateral and multilateral contracts, and are jointly building their capacity. Contact with other relevant European networks and projects (such as the Integration Network, THESIM and CARIM) were started in an effort to bring added-value to the network. However this has not led to intensified collaboration with these actors.

Other organisations working in the field of information and data collection in the field of asylum and migration feel that they could have been involved in some of the activities of the network in terms of providing inputs and establishing cooperation.

Achievement of objectives and effectiveness

The effectiveness of both the Commission and Scientific Coordinator is relatively high but has been affected by delays due to lengthy administration and financial procedures and uneven performance on the part of NCPs. The Scientific Coordinator has played an important role in the development of the network by contributing a significant number of inputs and outputs, including the development of the information system in conjunction with the Technical University of Berlin. Its effectiveness is very high despite the delays and problems it encountered which were beyond its control.

Varying results have been achieved at NCP level. Only a minority of NCPs have been able to complete the work programme. Obstacles encountered include difficulties interpreting the terms and reference at start-up, problems with human and financial resources, their capacities and level of commitment, and difficulty accessing data and information. NCPs located in ministries have encountered practical problems relating to the undertaking and completion of study projects due to a lack of research capacity as

well as other problems linked to funding procedures, re-structuring processes and staff turnover.

When looking at factors influencing NCP performance, it is noted that NCPs situated in government offices have facilitated access to official data and statistical sources which is vital to the task of information collection. Access to statistical data has been an obstacle for NCPs not located in government administrations who have to rely on ministry sources for the information they need.

NCPs have taken the initiative to conduct several visits and exchanges between them (including between “old” and “new” members to learn from each other’s experiences and know-how. This has contributed to the development of partnership-building. Such exchanges have been *ad hoc* in nature. The use of the rapid response mechanism by NCPs to quickly collect national information relating to specific topics has been particularly beneficial and evidence of the development of the networking aspect of EMN.

The results of a rating of NCP effectiveness has shown that NCPs fall into three groups: those that are effective and cost-efficient, a second group which are only reasonably effective, and a third group of NCPs experiencing problems inhibiting their effectiveness.

The delayed start-up of the network caused a substantial level of underspending as budget absorption was less than 20% in the first year of implementation. This is understandable considering that the 2002 budget was made available for a six-month period. Insufficient human and financial procedures at Commission and NCP levels presented obstacles to the effective development of the network. At the same time, there were problems absorbing the budget due to co-financing requirements and eligibility issues. Financial absorption, however, seems to be improving, justifying an increase of funds from one budget year to the next.

The information system developed by the TUB offers a good level of functionality and is able to handle a large quantity of information. The data can easily be migrated to a new system if necessary, though it may be difficult to manage by another organisation due to its complexity and uniqueness. The development of the system could have potentially been more cost efficient.

When comparing the EMN with other network activity such as the European Employment Observatory, evidence suggests that the EMN is relatively expensive. However, if compared to the costs of an Agency such as the EUMC, the EMN is very cost effective.

3.4.2 Recommendations for the future EMN

The future EMN should further reinforce its integration in asylum and migration policy within the EU. This will strongly depend on the extent to which it can meet the information needs of the Community and its ability to deliver reliable, up-to-date, more importantly, comparable data and information.

The future EMN should have a clear mandate, objectives, functions and outputs from the very start. These should be elaborated into a work programme with a realistic timetable and clearly specified products. Commitment from the Member States to the above will need to be ensured to enable the successful performance of the network.

The EMN should have a clear organisational structure, preferably including a body to steer the work and an executive body (e.g. a coordination unit) to implement activities. The latter should have a direct contractual relation with the national structures.

The network of NCPs should be expanded to cover all 25 Member States. Strong emphasis should be placed on ensuring that the NCPs comply with rigid criteria in relation to their technical and professional capacity to avoid uneven performance as occurred during the pilot preparatory phase. The network should include contingency resources to cover activities for which very specific expertise is required.

NCPs should be independent and objective. It is, therefore, not advisable that the future EMN includes national structures in government ministries. Ideally, the network should work with independent national correspondents who have the commitment and support of national authorities.

Regular EMN meetings should be organised to increase the capacity of the network and to enhance knowledge sharing and comparisons. External relevant actors and activities (such as other networks) should be involved in a systematic manner to enhance synergies and avoid duplication.

Financial procedures and processes should be optimised, so that they do not inhibit progress of implementation. There is little scope for continuing to fund the network through a budget line, nor through co-financing. This approach entails a high workload in terms of management and administration for the Commission, and lacks the possibility to make inputs to the network mandatory. Other funding options, such as outsourcing should therefore be pursued.

The future EMN should have clear internal and external communication procedures. With regard to the latter, the network would benefit from a proper marketing strategy to raise awareness and promote its products.

4 ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY MECHANISMS – FOUR OPTIONS

4.1 Sources accessed for the development of alternative options for the EMN

Simultaneously with the assessment of progress of implementation of the EMN's pilot and preparatory action, EPEC started the development of four alternative options for the future network. The options were modelled on the basis of:

- Discussions with the Commission at inception and interim reporting stages
- Interviews with key actors internal and external to the EMN and the online survey to national actors
- Visits and questionnaires to the NCPs
- Review of existing network developments, arrangements and requirements.

Table 4.1 on the following pages summarises the opinions and views of the different actors with regard to the future of the network, which varied greatly. Where possible, a distinction has been made by type of actor. Overall, the discussions on the future of the EMN showed that many actors are strongly convinced of the potential of the network. They consider that the network could have the unique position of collecting and analysing data and information concerning the full territory of the EU25, and ensuring efficient and easy access to this information. They also feel that the EMN could well tap into and benefit from the process of improving data harmonisation and comparisons which is increasingly being pursued by the Commission. The EMN would also have an important role in launching analysis and, to some extent, research on topics which are relevant to policy development in the EU, to respond to information needs, cover information gaps and to anticipate relevant trends and developments. The future EMN is also seen as a potential tool to promote exchanges of information and learning between the different actors and stakeholders in the fields of asylum and migration.

But there was overall consensus that the EMN's potential could only be fully developed on the following conditions:

- Increased focus should be placed on the visibility of the network and activities to raise awareness.
- The network should “open up” to a wider public at the earliest state possible, sharing its first products and generally informing users of developments.
- The network should project a coherent and homogeneous image to the outside world.
- Stronger and more operational links and cooperation partnerships should be established with other stakeholders at EU and national level.
- High efforts should be placed on reinforcing the “credibility” and “authority” of the network.

Table 4.1 – Summary of key actors’ views and opinions

	Problems and needs	Status	Mandate, priorities and objectives	Structure	Functions / tasks	Management
Overall comments	A clear outline of problems and needs is required as the pilot phase left space for ambiguities. The problems and needs to be addressed by the EMN should be “limited” and realistic.	Agency , co-financed network or contracted network. Possibly a transition phase between different statuses, if necessary.	The mandate and priorities are to be clarified and more precisely defined. The mandate and objectives should be fully coherent with the functions and be realistic.	EMN needs to be a long-term structure. The current structure was adequate for a pilot preparatory action but a more formal, more structured and permanent shape is needed to optimise its performance and visibility.	At present the functions and tasks lack clarity and direction, especially to the “outside world”. The future EMN needs a clear, transparent and possibly “public” work programme. The future network should be highly visible.	More actors should be involved in the management and decision-making of the future EMN.
“Internal” EMN actors	The Commission is too involved in the policy development process and does not have the capacity to analyse and collect timely and reliable data and information on the development of national policy developments.	An open virtual network was mentioned.	A clear mandate with concrete objectives is required. The EMN should be recognised as an important source of information for government and policy makers. The EMN should place high efforts on analysing asylum and migration issues comprehensively.	The structure of the EMN should incorporate some form of management or advisory board for asylum and migration. It should be less ad-hoc than previous initiatives.	Offering views and opinions, answering requests from Community institutions, publishing reports. Activities should also focus on making the network visible. Advising on need for statistics in certain areas and proposing alternative methods to for example, make estimations. Using unofficial data where this is of better quality. Acting an early warning system.	A coordination body or other form of centralised secretariat is needed to ensure harmony between the sources and to include references for all countries. The NCPs should also be “harmonised”
NCPs	Insufficient links between local / national and EU actors/ The issue of national data and information not being translated.	Overall view that the co-financed structures it not working properly and places a very high administrative burden on all parties involved.	Goals and priorities should be much clearer with respect to current EMN. Influencing EU and national policies. Undertake objective research. Provide up-to-date information Inform policy makers	Most NCPs indicated that the MS should propose or select the national structures for the future EMN. However, NCPs in Ministries are not always equally independent and often depend on lengthy bureaucratic procedures. Strong minimum requirements needed for the NCPs in relation to capacity, research experience, IT, language, etc.	Compare migratory movements while taking account of institutional differences. Present coherent trend analysis and forecasting. Act as a think-tank Promote the exchange of views and experiences in all areas of asylum and migration of MS, not just EC.	The relationship between the coordination unit and the Commission to be clearly defined. Consultation of NCPs on work programme. Creation of a Steering Group.
Other networks and think-tanks	The EMN needs to avoid duplication with, for example, the Migration Policy Group and ECRE. Strong links should be created to Eurostat.	A high-profile network.	The EMN’s main goal should be to collect and share information. It should act as a single reference point filtering and synthesising information and coordinating questions and answers. The network should establish an interface between policy-makers	NCPs need to be independent, in order to be able to provide good and unbiased information – not repeating government views. They could be made up of contracted experts. The NCPs should be more homogeneous.	The EMN should cooperate with other networks to avoid duplication and develop synergies, as well as working on data and information harmonisation. Sufficient resources should be set aside for the creation of operational and long-term links, which should be “enforceable” in some cases.	Management should involve some consultation of other networks, to shape the work programme. Topics should be driven by stakeholders. Management should include good internal communication. Network meetings should have a clear strategy based on

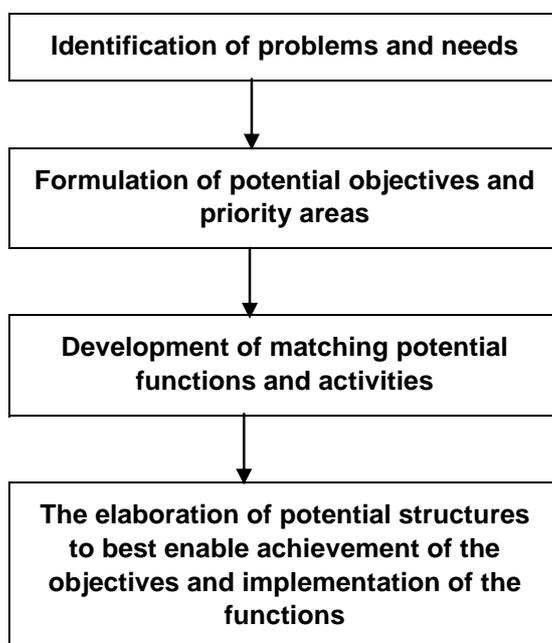
	Problems and needs	Status	Mandate, priorities and objectives	Structure	Functions / tasks	Management
			and the research community. Also, it could improve the use of statistics in policy making. The EMN should make sure that where asylum and refugee issues are different, these should not be confounded with migration.		Analyse Member State policies, address topics on which research is lacking.	preparatory work. The network should include departments for statistics, legislation, public opinion survey, synthesis and communication.
International organisations	The dissemination of information has developed considerably thanks to the Internet. Information is available but what is needed is a "portal".		The EMN should make sure that asylum and	The NCPs should not be made up of government officials. NGOs would for example be better suited. The current structure is not ideal – potential users want a predictable high-level service delivered by a consistent network.	The EMN should contact international organisations and data providers and work closely with them. There should be regular data and information exchanges.	
National actors¹⁰	Statistical needs have to be clarified and data harmonised before the EMN can properly operate. It is important to establish the added value of the EMN. It could potentially overlap with CIREFI.	The idea of establishing an Agency may be premature.	Priority areas identified concern the provision of access to existing sources of information on migration and asylum and facilitating exchanges of information between sources and users. Another important priority concerns analysing and comparing information on migration and asylum. A great deal of national actors comment that they are not clear on the EMN's current mandate and priorities.		Comparative analyses and facilitating exchanges of experiences and information, also between sources and users, are often mentioned as important functions for the EMN, although there is no clear consensus. Some mention that the provision of new information rather than the compilation and comparison of existing information may enhance the added value of the EMN.	

¹⁰ Based on interviews with national actors and responses to the Online survey.

4.2 Four phases for developing the alternative options

As introduced in section 1, the development of the alternative delivery mechanisms is a four-phase process:

Figure 4.1 – Steps for creating alternative options for the EMN



4.2.1 Phase 1 – Identification of problems and needs

The first phase focused on the identification of problems and needs that the EMN could address. The analysis of these has been extensively discussed as part of section 2 of this report. Figure 4.2 represents the summary list which resulted from the assessment.

Figure 4.2 – Initially proposed summary list of problems and needs

<p>1. Need to inform future EU policy developments with regard to asylum and migration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient information and analysis of EU25 national legal and policy developments and linkages to EU policy - Insufficient information and analysis of EU25 national and EU legislation and policies and on the issues linked to asylum and migration, e.g. employment - Need to monitor and assess achievements and effects of current EU policy, including comparing national (practical) implementation of EU legislation - Need to monitor and compare policy outside the EU <p>2. Insufficient information management and coordination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of fast access to comprehensive and relevant information - Lack of identifying and tackling information gaps and overlaps
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- Lack of linkages between information sources
 - Need for single reference point tailored to specific user groups
- 3. Lack of information on policy and legislation, including analysis and evaluation**
- Insufficient information on effects and trends of national policy agendas
- 4. Problems of statistical data and information**
- Lack of harmonisation and comparability
 - Insufficient data quality / reliability
 - Insufficient indicators used
 - Lack of using data for comparative quantitative analysis and information on trends in EU25
 - Insufficient use of data for other analytical activity, e.g. policy reviews, qualitative reporting, etc
- 5. Problems of information in and from the New Member States**
- NMS information not fully integrated into existing structures of data collection
 - Potential capacity, competence and experience issues in the NMS
 - Potential information gaps
- 6. Need for information on specific and pertinent topics**
- Gaps in information on certain relevant topics
 - No “quick response service” to provide information upon request of EU institutions
 - Need for forecasting and/or early-warning system
 - Need for proactive proposals for new research on pertinent themes
- 7. Need to take advantage of ICT developments**
- Continuous ICT developments
 - Competing search engines and other systems
 - Need to select the most cost-effective and sustainable ICT option
 - Need to ensure user-friendliness and easy technical understanding

It is stressed that this is an exhaustive listing of potential problems and needs. The four different options as proposed further along in this section greatly influence the extent to which the problems and needs listed are being addressed.

4.2.2 Phases 2 and 3 – Objectives, priority areas and functions

The second and third phases in the process to develop alternative options for the EMN concerned the formulation of the overall objectives and functions to address the problems and needs identified. On the basis of the evaluation tasks, it was proposed to only make very few amendments to the original objectives of the EMN, as overall these seemed to suffice and be in line with the general objectives of other, similar activity,

such as for example the EUMC and the EMCDDA. The following reformulations were initially proposed:

- To meet *and anticipate* the information needs on migration and asylum of Community Institutions, Member States and, ~~in the longer term,~~ of the general public.
- To provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on asylum and migration and related themes, *with a view to supporting EU policy in this area.*

In order to clarify and specify the overall objectives, it was subsequently proposed to break these down into well-targeted priority areas for action, linked to operational functions and activities. Figure 4.3 present the list that was initially proposed. As indicated for the list of problems and needs in Figure 4.2, it is stressed that this is an exhaustive listing of possibilities. Ultimately, the range of objectives, priority areas and functions, as well as the degree of emphasis placed on them, depends on the type of option chosen, the legal and institutional arrangements selected and the resources made available to the network.

Figure 4.3 – Initially proposed list of priority areas, functions and activities

<p>Priority areas for objectives and functions / tasks and outputs:</p> <p><i>A. To collect analyse and exchange existing up-to-date data and information</i></p> <p>This area relates to collecting, registering and analysing information, including data resulting from research, data collection activity such as Eurostat, information made available by Member States, and resulting from Community, non-governmental national sources as well as competent international organisations. It involves the production of inventories and reports reviewing and analysing the information collected with the main purpose of reporting to Community and national authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting secondary data and information (statistics, research and other activity, policy and legislative developments, etc) - Reviewing and analysing data and information collected - Making inventories of research and other activity at national level - Producing annual country and EU synthesis reports - Producing thematic country and EU synthesis reports <p><i>B. To improve data-comparison methods</i></p> <p>This priority area aims to improve comparability, objectivity and reliability of data at EU level by working jointly with other relevant actors, such as Eurostat, UNHCR and THESIM, on the development and elaboration of indicators and common criteria, in line with the newly proposed Regulation on Community statistics on international migration and asylum. Ultimately, activity under this priority area will ensure greater uniformity of the measurement methods used by the Member States and the Community and facilitate / structure exchange of information in terms of quality and quantity (e.g. databases).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposing indicators, definitions and criteria to improve comparability and harmonisation of data - Facilitate and structure exchange of information on data-comparisons
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- Comment on existing data collection methods
- To serve as testing ground for new practices and methods aimed at improving the availability and comparability of data

C. To undertake research and studies covering the full EU

This area relates to new (primary and secondary) research and study activities launched and implemented by the network, either as part of its agreed work programme or upon the specific request of Community institutions (and possibly other actors), concerning asylum and migration and themes linked to this multidimensional phenomenon. It may involve, if deemed necessary, the organisation of meetings of experts, the creation of ad-hoc working groups and other temporary sub-structures to optimise the quality of the work in terms of methods and expertise. This priority area is distinct from priority area A¹¹ above in the sense that the research undertaken is non-routine, carried out upon an agreed proposal (and terms of reference), and aimed at supporting policy making and improving the theoretical understanding of the phenomenon. The outputs will lead to reports and papers for audiences that can have both an “operational” or a “non-operational” interest (e.g. including academic users).

- Responding to information needs related to European priorities
- Anticipating information needs related to European priorities
- Undertake research and analysis upon request (against payment) of third parties
- Provide grants to external research (for topics requiring specific expertise)
- Monitor return policy
- Study implementation of EU legislation in the field of asylum and migration
- Analyse the impact of policy and legislative proposals
- Monitor migratory developments and movements and assess root causes
- Focus on specific themes such as migration and skills shortages or demographic developments, illegal immigration, etc.

D. To enable access to and disseminate and raise awareness of the network and its outputs

This priority area focuses on making available the information produced by the network to the Community and other user groups, with the twofold purpose to improve the visibility of the network and to enhance knowledge and understanding of asylum and migration. It also involves the provision of a comprehensive organisational and technical system capable of linking information, ensuring easy and user-friendly access and enabling exchanges of information and learning.

- Elaborating a comprehensive network to link the outputs of information collection
- Providing access to information through an online computer-based system
- Produce publications, folders, newsletters
- Facilitating and enhancing the exchange of information amongst sources and users through (virtual) meetings and seminars
- To organise “Learning Sessions” for selected audience (e.g national policy makers)

¹¹ In practice, priority area A is not 100% distinct from priority area C. For the purpose of building the different Options, as well as their budget, it is however important to separate the two areas and their related functions.

- To provide a physical public source for information and migration
- To organise public conferences and meeting on selected subjects

E. To issue views and opinions

This priority area attributes to the network an advisory role, enabling it, on the basis of its information collection, analysis and research activities, to provide guidance and make recommendations on policy developments and implementation. In the case the EMN will also be charged with monitoring and analysing trends and movements, this will also include forecasting and the issuing of warnings.

- Provide guidance on transposition of EU directives in the field of asylum and migration
- Issue warnings on trends and potential movements
- Make recommendations on EU policy
- Draft independent opinions (along the lines of what has been proposed for the Fundamental Rights Agency, i.e. opinions which are not binding for those to which they are addressed)

F. To coordinate information and to cooperate with other European and international bodies

This priority area concerns specific activities to improve coordination between national, Community and international bodies and their programmes / actions, to promote the network's products and results, to improve information transmission, exchanges of experiences and learning, to enhance cooperation and optimise joint actions. Specific focus will be placed on operating at EU level to avoid duplication of effort and to allow for capitalisation on the strengths of existing information sources.

G. To provide a platform for different "voices" in the field

The last priority area concerns the establishment of a platform where different types of actors and stakeholders (e.g. policy and decision makers, researchers, the civil society, including migrant organisations, individual migrants, the social partners and NGOs) can present and exchange views, experiences and best practices. The platform could either be a virtual one (i.e. a discussion forum and/or newsletter) or a physical one (i.e. through the organisation of events).

4.2.3 Phase 4 – Initially proposed options for policy scope and structure

Phases 1-3 provided the widest spectrum possible for the EMN's future mandate, objectives, priority areas and functions. On this basis, EPEC developed four options for discussion with the Commission. Each of the options contributed differently, and to a different extent, to addressing the problems and needs, and to the achievement of the objectives and priority areas. Each also proposed a different structure / status for managing and implementing the network.

It is possible to conceptualise the four options described further below in terms of their *scope* being "limited" or "large" in terms problems and needs addressed, and in terms of *priority areas and tasks* attributed to the network. Figure 4.4 characterises the four options proposed in respect of these two dimensions.

Figure 4.4. – Policy options to reach policy objectives

TASKS		POLICY OPTIONS	
Limited	↓	<i>Option 1: Observatory of migration and asylum flows</i>	<i>Option 2: Observatory of migration and asylum flows and effects</i>
		<i>Option 3: Research ‘Centre’ on EU migration and asylum</i>	
			<i>Option 4: EU Asylum & Migration ‘Agency’</i>
Large			
SCOPE	→	Limited	Large

The evaluation team decided not to maintain the “status quo” option (which would be common practice for undertaking an impact assessment) as this status cannot be continued. The first phase of the EMN was a pilot project, funded under a budget line for preparatory action only available for a limited period of time. The current characteristics of the EMN, in terms of form and functions, are integrated or elaborated in four newly proposed options, as presented in the individual sheets below.

OPTION 1	<i>Observatory of migration and asylum flows and national (i.e. Member State) factors affecting flows including Member State policies and legislation</i>
Coverage	This is the most “minimalist” option, in which the EMN’s role is restricted to the collection of information and the monitoring of developments on asylum and migration flows and factors affecting these. It would perform an information collection and management function only, thus gathering statistics and information on Member State policy, legislation and research in the field of asylum and migration. Reporting would be restricted to reflecting and analysing the national situations and enabling EU level comparisons and synthesis.
Remit	The remit could be considered as “technical assistance” to the Commission and the MS to inform them on developments in their respective territories and to compare these with developments in other countries. Some networking would be required to ensure the comparability of the work undertaken and the data and information used.
Organisational structure	<p>The organisational structure of Option 1 is similar to the one adopted for the European Employment Observatory (EEO) and the SME Observatory. Box 1 below provides further details on the EEO’s structure.</p> <p><u>Central coordination</u></p> <p>The Commission signs a multi-annual framework contract with a suitable organisation (i.e. private sector or institute) through a public or restricted tendering process. The contractor would be responsible for coordinating and synthesising the national inputs. The framework contract would include resources for analysis and cross-national comparisons as well as for reporting on relevant EU and international developments not covered by the national inputs.</p> <p><u>National level contributions</u></p> <p>National correspondents independent of, but acceptable to Member States are appointed by the framework contractor. A parallel network of officials within relevant national government departments is established who would report on current policies and liaise with the national correspondents.</p> <p><u>Decision-making and management</u></p> <p>The framework contract would be managed by DG JLS, possibly with a Steering Committee involving other stakeholders, including relevant Directorates (e.g. Eurostat) and international bodies. The parallel network of government officials has some influence on the formulation of work priorities but they are not part of the Steering Committee.</p>
Information system	The information system would primarily serve to store data and other information and to present reporting, and possibly be built as a central server which would enable external uploading (similar to CIRCA). There is a website for the wider public, but this is limited to present public reporting. The system would be managed by the contracted coordinator.
Objectivity, reliability and comparability issues	The correspondents are independent of governments but are in close liaison with their respective “policy partner” in each country. This ensures the reliability of the data, as it is provided through public sources, whilst at the same time it is made sure that data is treated / analysed objectively by an independent expert. Improved comparability of the data would be pursued through involvement of Eurostat in the Steering Committee and liaison with other relevant actors, but the network would not have a leading role in this regard.

Key priority areas and activities	Optional priority areas and activities
<p><i>A. To collect and analyse secondary data and information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting secondary data and information (statistics, research and other activity, policy and legislative developments, etc) - Reviewing and analysing data and information collected - Making inventories of research and other activity at national level - Producing annual country EU synthesis reports <p><i>B. To improve data-comparison methods</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposing indicators, definitions and criteria to improve comparability and harmonisation of data - Facilitate and structure exchange of information on data-comparisons - Comment on existing data collection methods - To serve as a testing ground for new practices and methods to improve availability and comparability of data 	<p><i>A. To collect and analyse secondary data and information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Producing thematic country and EU synthesis reports - D. To disseminate and raise awareness on the network and its outputs - Elaborating a comprehensive network to link the outputs of information collection - Providing access to information through a computer-based system - Produce publications, newsletters <p><i>F. To cooperate with other European and international bodies</i></p>

Box 1 – Structure of the EEO

The EEO has a national network of correspondents (SYSDM) in 29 countries. The correspondents are independent of government but the Member State ministries can veto their appointments. The correspondents (through sub contracts) are managed via a single contract with a private contractor (currently GHK/IPISS). The budget for the contractor including payments to all correspondents is circa 1 million euro per annum. The framework contract is renewable for up to four years. There is no co financing involved. The main outputs are 4 quarterly reviews and 2 thematic reviews. The reviews have been quite wide ranging and have covered migration in the past. The correspondents meet once a year. It has been in operation for around 15 years. There are other relevant costs incurred by the Commission Services. It is managed by DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

The SYSDM network is complemented by a network called MISEP which includes ministry representatives on employment policy and of employment services. It is a long established network. It is not funded by the Commission. There is a proposal that the two annual meetings of MISEP should be held at the expense of the MS holding the Presidency. The MISEP network provides a point of contact for the independent SYSDM correspondents. The MISEP has some influence over work priorities but there is no formal EEO Management Board.

The precise functions of the MISEP and SYSDM networks have evolved. Some of the review functions of the MISEP network have been taken on though the Peer Review process. The SYSDM correspondents are involved in the assessment of the National Action Plans (NAPs) within the European Employment Strategy. These assessments are undertaken for the Commission and are confidential. The EEO activity therefore goes beyond descriptive monitoring. At one stage the SYSDM network had and maintained a database of literature and a library. However this is no longer the case. This reflects an increased trust of the correspondents and recognition of their ability to provide analysis and views. In particular, the correspondents comment on the quality of the evidence base.

OPTION 2	<i>Observatory of migration and asylum flows and effects and national factors affecting flows including Member State policies and legislation</i>
Coverage	<u>This Option should be considered an “Option 1 Plus”.</u> In this option the EMN will do all the activities in Option 1 but the network would also collect information and monitor developments linked to asylum and migration, such as the employment, social integration, housing and discrimination experienced by third country nationals and asylum seekers/refugees. This option could include some forecasting work.
Remit	The remit could be considered as “technical assistance” and reporting would be of a factual nature, reflecting and analysing the national situations with EU comparisons and synthesis, covering the full EU25 territory. This option would require a wider pool of expertise and greater resources. Some networking would be required to ensure the comparability of the work undertaken.
Organisational structure	<p>The organisational structure of Option 2 is similar to the one proposed for Option 1, i.e. based on the EEO and SME Observatory.</p> <p><u>Central coordination</u></p> <p>The Commission signs a multi-annual framework contract with a suitable organisation (i.e. private sector or institute) through a public or restricted tendering process. The contractor would be responsible for coordinating and synthesising the national and thematic inputs. The framework contract would include resources for analysis and cross-national comparisons, as well as for reporting on relevant EU and international developments not covered by the national inputs.</p> <p><u>National level contributions</u></p> <p>National correspondents independent of, but acceptable to Member States are appointed by the framework contractor. Several correspondents would probably be required in each Member State reflecting the need for different experience and specialisation. A parallel network of officials within relevant national government departments is established who would report on current policies and liaise with the national correspondents. Officials would be drawn from several relevant departments and agencies. Some involvement at national level of civil society and migrant organisations would be desirable.</p> <p><u>Decision-making and management</u></p> <p>The framework contract would be managed by DG JLS, possibly with a Steering Committee involving other stakeholders, including relevant Directorates (e.g. Eurostat, DG Employment) and international bodies.</p> <p>In order to ensure the quality of the work especially with regard to the themes related to asylum and migration, a Scientific Committee could be established to oversee the network’s activities and to be consulted on work priorities. The parallel network of government officials has some influence on the formulation of work priorities but they are not part of the Steering Committee.</p>
Information system	The information system would be the same as under Option 1. It would primarily serve to store data and other information and to present reporting, and possibly be built as a central server which would enable external uploading (similar to CIRCA). There is a website for the wider public, but this is limited to present public reporting. The system would be managed by the contracted coordinator.

<p>Objectivity, reliability and comparability issues</p>	<p>The correspondents are independent of governments but are in close liaison with their respective “policy partners” in each country. This ensures the reliability of the data, as it is provided through public sources, whilst at the same time it is made sure that data is treated objectively by an independent expert. Improved comparability of the data would be pursued through involvement of Eurostat in the Steering Committee and liaison with other relevant actors. The Scientific Committee could further work on harmonisation of data and information.</p>
<p>Key priority areas and activities</p> <p><i>A. To collect and analyse secondary data and information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting secondary data and information (statistics, research and other activity, policy and legislative developments, etc) - Reviewing and analysing data and information collected - Making inventories of research and other activity at national level - Producing annual country EU synthesis reports - Producing thematic country and EU synthesis reports <p><i>B. To improve data-comparison methods</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposing indicators, definitions and criteria to improve comparability and harmonisation of data - Facilitate and structure exchange of information on data-comparisons - Comment on existing data collection methods - To serve as a testing ground for new practices and methods to improve availability and comparability of data 	<p>Optional priority areas and activities</p> <p><i>D. To disseminate and raise awareness on the network and its outputs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaborating a comprehensive network to link the outputs of information collection - Providing access to information through a computer-based system - Produce publications, newsletters <p><i>F. To cooperate with other European and international bodies</i></p>

OPTION 3	Research ‘Centre’ on EU migration and asylum flows and effects and national factors affecting flows including Member State policies and legislation	
Coverage	This Option should be considered as an “Option 2 Plus”. The coverage of the EMN under this option would be the same as described under Option 2 above, but the ‘Centre’ would be empowered to launch thematic ‘new’ research and studies on its own initiative or on the request of the Commission or other EU institutions. The network would therefore be well placed to contribute to policy debate and development at the EU level.	
Remit	The remit of the Centre would be similar to the current preparatory action of the EMN, in the sense that it would provide reports of a factual nature (e.g. inputs to the annual statistics reports, policy reports) as well as undertake “new” research. The Centre’s activities would cover the full EU25 territory, although some thematic research may only address groups of Member States (e.g. when looking at external border control). This option would require additional resources, a strong coordination body and a high level of expertise in a wide variety of thematic fields and contexts. In addition, the ‘new’ research would require intensive networking to agree on methods, terms of references, and to discuss and compare results and outcomes.	
Organisational structure	There are two possible ways for organising this option:	
	<p>Structure 1: Agency (see also Box 2 for an example)</p> <p><u>Central coordination</u></p> <p>An Agency is established by a Council regulation. The Agency would have resources for analysis and cross-national comparisons and the commissioning and management of research. It would also cover reporting on relevant EU and international developments not covered by the national inputs.</p> <p><u>National level contributions</u></p> <p>National correspondents independent of but acceptable to Member States are appointed by the Agency. Several correspondents would probably be required, together forming a National Contact Point, in each Member State reflecting the need for different experience and specialisation (e.g. research, statistical data, IT, communication, etc). Experts and other staff could be drawn from different organisations and seconded to work for the national contact point (which could “physically” exist too, i.e. have its own premises, but this would lead to much higher costs). The National Contact Points could receive national co-financing. Involvement of civil society and migrant organisations would be desirable.</p>	<p>Structure 2: Co-financed network</p> <p><u>Central coordination</u></p> <p>Through an open or restricted call for tender, a suitable organisation is appointed to act as a coordination unit for the network. The organisation needs to comply with high standards in relation to both coordination, research and ICT. The unit would have resources for analysis and cross-national comparisons and the commissioning and management of research. It would also cover linking to relevant EU and international developments not covered by the national inputs.</p> <p><u>National level contributions</u></p> <p>A co-financed network of National Contact Points is established. Contact points are selected through a tendering process by the Commission, possibly with some “validation” by the Member States. Several staff members would probably be required in each Member State reflecting the need for different experience and specialisation (e.g. research, statistical data, IT, communication, etc). Involvement of civil society and migrant organisations would be desirable.</p>

	<p>Ideally, the contact points should be supported by the participation of officials from a parallel network of representatives from relevant national government departments, to be established to report on current policies. Such officials would be drawn from several relevant departments and agencies.</p> <p><u>Decision-making and management</u></p> <p>The agency would be quasi autonomous of the Commission, led by an administrative (and possibly executive) board including EC and a selected (possibly rotating) number of Member State officials and supported by ad-hoc working groups / committees (e.g. consisting of invited experts) to steer the thematic content and method the work.</p>	<p>Ideally, the contact points should also include the participation of officials from a parallel network of representatives from relevant national government departments, to be established to report on current policies. Such officials would be drawn from several relevant departments and agencies.</p> <p><u>Decision-making and management</u></p> <p>The network would be managed by the Commission, who would preside a Steering Group including the coordination unit, relevant directorates (e.g. Eurostat, DG Employment) and international bodies and a selected (possibly rotating) number of representatives from the parallel network of government representatives. It would be supported by ad-hoc working groups / committees to steer the thematic content and methods for undertaking the work.</p>
<p>Information system</p>	<p>The information system would reflect the centre’s wider scope and have a high focus on the quality of information presentation, accessibility and visibility. The system would maintain and further elaborate its current design, thus allowing direct linking by National Contact Points. The management of the system would be the responsibility of the Agency (Structure 1) or the Coordination unit (Structure 2).</p>	
<p>Objectivity, reliability and comparability issues</p>	<p>The National Contact Points under both structures are independent of governments but are in close liaison with their respective “policy partners” in each country. This ensures the reliability of the data, as it is provided through public sources, whilst at the same time it is made sure that data is treated objectively by an independent body.</p> <p>A co-financed network of National Contact Points which is proposed under Structure 2 (and raised as a possibility for Structure 1) would however be dependent on national financing, which may influence the objectivity if Member States wish to “clear” reports and other outputs before their publication. Whilst the direct appointment by the Agency of correspondents to compose the National Contact Points (Structure 1) facilitates a selection based on rigid criteria and conditions to guarantee the capacity and expertise for handling data and information, the tendering process (Structure 2) may encounter substantial difficulties in ensuring the same quality of contact points. This may be addressed through enabling the tenderers to establish consortia of more than one organisation.</p> <p>Improved comparability of the data would be actively pursued through involvement of Eurostat in the Steering Committee and possibly through working groups / committees or participation in similar activity (e.g. projects focusing on data harmonisation).</p>	

Key priority areas and activities	Optional priority areas and activities
<p><i>A. To collect and analyse secondary data and information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting secondary data and information (statistics, research and other activity, policy and legislative developments, etc) - Reviewing and analysing data and information collected - Making inventories of research and other activity at national level - Producing annual country EU synthesis reports - Producing thematic country and EU synthesis reports <p><i>B. To improve data-comparison methods</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposing indicators, definitions and criteria to improve comparability and harmonisation of data - Facilitate and structure exchange of information on data-comparisons - Comment on existing data collection methods - To serve as a testing ground for new practices and methods to improve availability and comparability of data <p><i>C. To undertake new research and studies covering the full EU</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responding to information needs related to European priorities - Study implementation of EU legislation on of asylum and migration - Analyse the impact of policy and legislative proposals - Monitor migratory developments and movements and assess root causes - Focus on specific themes such as migration and demographic developments, illegal immigration, etc. <p><i>D. To disseminate and raise awareness on the network and its outputs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaborating a comprehensive network to link the outputs of information collection - Providing access to information through a computer-based system - Produce publications, newsletters 	<p><i>C. To undertake new research and studies covering the full EU</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide grants to external research - Anticipating information needs related to European priorities - Undertake research and analysis upon request of third parties - Monitor return policy <p><i>D. To disseminate and raise awareness on the network and its outputs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To organise “Learning Sessions” for selected audience (e.g. national policy makers) - To provide a physical public source for information and migration - To organise public conferences and meeting on selected subjects <p><i>F. To cooperate with other European and international bodies</i></p> <p><i>G. To provide a platform for different “voices” in the field</i></p>

Box 2 – Structure of the EMCDDA

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) based in Lisbon is a Community agency established in 1993. Its role is to provide the EU and Member States with objective, reliable and comparable information on drugs and drug addiction. The Centre has 26 members: the 25 EU Member States and Norway. The EMCDDA consists of two statutory bodies: the Management Board and the Scientific Committee. The Management Board is the main decision-making body of the EMCDDA. It meets at least once a year and consists of one representative from each EU Member State, two representatives from the EC and two experts in the field of drugs designated by the EP. The Board adopts a three-year work programme for the Centre as well as annual work programmes (and budget). The Scientific Committee consists of one representative from each EU Member State and Norway. It delivers an opinion on any scientific aspect of the Centre's activities submitted to it by the Board or the Executive Director. The Committee is convened by its Chairman at least once a year. The Executive Director of the EMCDDA is accountable for the Centre's activities to the Board and attends its meetings, and is also the Centre's legal representative. The Executive Director is proposed by the European Commission and appointed by the Centre's Management Board for a renewable five-year period.

The Centre's annual budget is €12.5 million. 26% of the budget goes to the European Information Network on Drugs and Drug Addiction (Reitox) of national focus points. At central level, the Agency employs 77 staff members. The Reitox is made up of one focal point for each EU Member State and Norway, nominated by the Member States. (There is also a European focal point.) Each focal point receives €105,000 from the Centre, which is matched by the Member State. The role of a focal point is to coordinate information sources to meet EMCDDA requirements for information on the drug situation in each Member State.

OPTION 4	<i>EU Asylum & Migration ‘Agency’ for monitoring, research and assessments of EU migration and asylum flows and effects and national factors affecting flows including Member State policies and legislation</i>
Coverage	This Option should be considered an “Option 3 Plus”. The coverage and scope of the EMN under this option would be the same as under option 3 above, but the Agency would also issue informed opinions, views and recommendations both regarding EU and national policy developments. The Agency would need to have a high level of independence and the right to be consulted on policy making. It would also need to deliver high quality outputs in order for its views to be taken into consideration by EU and national policy-makers (i.e. achieve some level of “authority”).
Remit	The remit of the Centre would include factual reporting, independent research and providing informed views and opinions. The Agency’s activities would cover the full EU25 territory, although some thematic research may only address groups of Member States (e.g. when looking at external border control). This option would require strong leadership (i.e. a clear strategy and remit), high levels of coordination and networking and high levels of expertise, as well as links to policy and decision makers at national and EU level. It would also require the commitment of all Member States.
Organisational structure	<p><u>Central coordination</u></p> <p>An Agency is established by a Council regulation, ensuring its independence and additional resources to develop and validate opinions and contribute to the policy development process. The Agency would have resources for analysis and cross-national comparisons and the commissioning and management of research. It would also cover reporting on relevant EU and international developments not covered by the national inputs.</p> <p><u>National level contributions</u></p> <p>The Agency would establish a network of “national outposts”, i.e. physical centres including staff with different expertise (i.e. research, statistics, IT, communication) and with common standard equipment across the EU. The staff selected for the outposts are independent of, but acceptable to Member States. The resources at national level would in particular need to allow for assessments of national policies. The national outputs could be open to the public. Involvement of civil society and migrant organisations would be desirable.</p> <p><u>Decision-making and management</u></p> <p>The agency would be autonomous of the Commission, led by an administrative (and possibly executive) board including the EC and a selected (possibly rotating) number of Member State officials and supported by (ad-hoc or permanent) working groups / committees (e.g. consisting of invited experts) to steer the thematic content and method the work.</p>
Information system	The information system should be state-of-the art, including possibilities for direct linking and with a high focus on the quality of information presentation, accessibility and visibility. The system would maintain and further elaborate its current design, thus allowing direct linking by National Contact Points. Part of the system would be open to all users, to ensure dissemination and awareness raising, whilst there would also be restricted areas open to selected users only (e.g. for access to confidential or otherwise sensitive information). The system would be managed by the Agency.

<p>Objectivity, reliability and comparability issues</p>	<p>The Agency's independence is regulated by Community law, thus ensuring its objectivity. The national outposts are independent of governments but Member States are committed to channelling the necessary data and information to the outposts. This ensures the reliability of the data, as it is provided through public sources, whilst at the same time it is made sure that data is treated objectively by an independent body. Improved comparability of the data would be actively pursued through involvement of Eurostat in the Steering Committee and possibly through working groups / committees or participation in similar activity (e.g. projects focusing on data harmonisation).</p>
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<p>Key priority areas and activities</p>	<p>Optional priority areas and activities</p>
<p><i>A. To collect and analyse secondary data and information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting secondary data and information (statistics, research and other activity, policy and legislative developments, etc) - Reviewing and analysing data and information collected - Making inventories of research and other activity at national level - Producing annual country EU synthesis reports - Producing thematic country and EU synthesis reports <p><i>B. To improve data-comparison methods</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposing indicators, definitions and criteria to improve comparability and harmonisation of data - Facilitate and structure exchange of information on data-comparisons - Comment on existing data collection methods - To serve as a testing ground for new practices and methods to improve availability and comparability of data <p><i>C. To undertake new research and studies covering the full EU</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responding to information needs related to European priorities - Anticipating information needs related to European priorities - Undertake research and analysis upon request of third parties - Provide grants to external research - Monitor return policy - Study implementation of EU legislation on of asylum and migration - Analyse the impact of policy and legislative proposals - Monitor migratory developments and movements and assess root causes - Focus on specific themes such as migration and demographic developments, illegal immigration, etc. <p><i>D. To disseminate and raise awareness on the network and its outputs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaborating a comprehensive network to link the outputs of information collection - Providing access to information through a computer-based system - Produce publications, newsletters <p><i>E. To issue views and opinions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide guidance on transposition of EU directives in the field of asylum and migration - Issue warnings on trends and potential movements - Make recommendations on EU policy - Draft independent opinions <p><i>F. To cooperate with other European and international bodies</i></p> <p><i>G. To provide a platform for different "voices" in the field</i></p>	<p><i>D. To disseminate and raise awareness on the network and its outputs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To organise "Learning Sessions" for selected audience (e.g national policy makers) - To provide a physical public source for information and migration - To organise public conferences and meeting on selected subjects

4.2.4 Estimated costs of the four options against the current EMN

The evaluation team also estimated the costs of the four options, and compared these against the costs of the current EMN. The estimates, as presented in Figure 4.5 below, have been divided into costs associated with core staff and operational costs associated with the main functions of the prospective structures within each option. Budget lines have been introduced for work on third countries and Candidate countries in a manner that allows for the options to be considered with and without these activities.

Figure 4.5 - Estimated costs of the options

	Current EMN	Option 1 <i>Observatory of migration and asylum flows</i>	Option 2 <i>Observatory of migration and asylum flows and effects</i>	Option 3 <i>Research 'Centre' on EU migration and asylum</i>	Option 4 <i>EU Asylum & Migration 'Agency'</i>
Core costs	Central coordinator: €740,000 (including information system)	Central co-ordinator: €400,000	Central co-ordinator: €500,000	Agency (structure 1) or Coordination unit (structure 2): 30 staff = €2.5 million ¹² Overhead: € 0.6 million ¹³	Agency: 70 staff (incl. policy staff) = €6 million ¹⁴ Overhead: €1.5 million ¹⁵
National contact points	Around €200,000 (incl. co-financing)	€75,000 x 25 = €1.9million	€175,000 x 25 = €4.4 million	€250,000 x 25 = €6.3 million (possibly co-financed)	€ 750,000 million per contact point = €18.8 million
SUB TOTAL		€2.3 million	€4.9 million	€ 9.4 million	€26.3 million
OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES					
Research funds		None	None	€1 million	€1.5 million
Dissemination (website, information system, conferences)		€300,000	€400,000	€1.5 million	€1.5 million
Work with candidate countries		€50,000 per candidate country	€100,000 per candidate country	€200,000 per candidate country	€400,000 per candidate country
Work on third countries	None	€1 million	€1 million	€1 million	€1 million
TOTAL	Maximum €3 million	€3.6 million (excluding candidate country work)	€6.3 million (excluding candidate country work)	€11.9 million (excluding candidate country work), 9.7 million if assuming 50% co-financing of National contact points	€28.8 million (excluding candidate country work)

¹² Standard DG Budget rate at €85,000 approx per staff member annually.

¹³ Standard DG Budget rate at €21,000 approx per staff member annually.

¹⁴ Standard DG Budget rate at €85,000 approx per staff member annually.

¹⁵ Standard DG Budget rate at €21,000 approx per staff member annually.

4.3 Preliminary assessment of strengths and weaknesses

For each of the options proposed, EPEC undertook a preliminary assessment of:

- The extent to which the option addressed the problems and needs identified
- The extent to which the option met the priority areas and functions envisaged for the network
- The legal basis proposed for the policy options
- The division of responsibilities and complementarity.

The detailed tables for assessing and cross-analysing the above issues are included in the Annex F to this report. The main outcomes of these assessments were elaborated into a preliminary assessment of the overall strengths and weaknesses of each of the proposed options, as included in the summary overview below.

Figure 4.6 – Preliminary overall assessment of strengths and weaknesses

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focused scope with clear tasks and outputs ▪ Homogeneous structure ▪ Managed by the Commission ▪ Links to national policy through parallel network of government officials ▪ Contractual responsibility for national level contributions with organisation contracted for coordination (leading also to less administration) ▪ Resources available for analysis and cross-national comparisons ▪ Good level of objectivity and reliability ▪ Cost-effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited scope ▪ Low visibility ▪ No “solid” legal basis ▪ Lack of direct influence of Member States on the network’s work programme may lead to decreased commitment ▪ Current information system only partly used
Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focused scope with clear tasks and outputs, but taking into account themes and developments related to asylum and migration. ▪ Homogeneous structure ▪ Managed by the Commission ▪ Links to national policy through parallel network of government officials ▪ Scientific Committee monitoring quality of work and consulted on priorities. ▪ Contractual responsibility for national level contributions with organisation contracted for coordination (leading also to less administration) ▪ Resources available for analysis and cross-national comparisons ▪ Good level of objectivity and reliability ▪ Relatively cost-effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relatively limited scope (no research) ▪ Low visibility ▪ No “solid” legal basis ▪ Lack of direct influence of Member States on the network’s work programme may lead to decreased commitment ▪ Current information system only partly used

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wide scope ▪ Well placed to inform policy debate and developments at EU level ▪ Agency (Structure 1) provides legal basis and independence ▪ Agency (Structure 1) has direct contractual responsibility for national level contributions ▪ Strong focus on quality criteria / conditions for national level inputs in Co-financed network (Structure 2) ▪ Decision making involves Commission and Member States ▪ Working groups / committees steering content and method of work ▪ Current information system used and further developed ▪ Specific focus on enhancing data comparability / harmonisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independence from the Commission means reduced control over work programme (Structure 1) ▪ Agency may be premature as still politically sensitive (Structure 1) ▪ Resource intensive ▪ Risk of bureaucracy ▪ Potential coordination and national capacity / issues especially during the start-up phase ▪ Risk of poor quality research and information collection if methodological processes are insufficiently developed and agreed ▪ In case of national co-financing, potential issues in relation to objectivity and independence ▪ Co-financed network (structure 2) leads to high administrative burden for Commission and potential delays to contracting
Option 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very wide scope and level of independency ▪ Increased “authority” (provided good quality work is delivered) ▪ Direct voice in policy debate and developments at EU level ▪ Enabling other actors to also voice their views ▪ Agency provides legal basis ▪ Agency has direct responsibility for national outposts ▪ Decision making involves Commission and Member States ▪ Working groups / committees steering content and method of work ▪ Current information system used and further developed ▪ Specific focus on enhancing data comparability / harmonisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independence from the Commission means reduced control over work programme and views ▪ Agency may be premature as still politically sensitive ▪ An Agency issuing views may not receive Member State support ▪ Very resource intensive ▪ Risk of bureaucracy ▪ Potential coordination and national capacity issues especially during start-up phase ▪ Risk of poor quality research and information collection if methodological processes are insufficiently developed and agreed

The four options were first introduced in the interim report. Following the Commission’s comments, the revised version of this report included additional details (e.g. with regard to the management of the information system, coordination and administration, etc) to assist the client in assessing the acceptability and suitability of the options. It was decided to not pursue Option 1 as its coverage and remit were less than what was currently being undertaken by the EMN.

Options 2-4 were extensively discussed during a Brainstorming workshop held with the Commission and the Scientific Coordinator on 31 May 2005. The outcomes of this workshop, and the further development of the preferred option, are elaborated in the next section.

5 EPEC'S PREFERRED OPTION FOR THE FUTURE EMN

5.1 Outcomes of the Brainstorming workshop

The Brainstorming workshop, held on 31 May 2005, sought to launch an in-depth discussion on the three options the Commission had asked EPEC to further elaborate, with the aim to assist EPEC in selecting and elaborating an option which it considered most suitable for the network. The workshop started with a presentation of the options and the steps followed to develop these (i.e. the four phases as described in section 4.2), including a detailed overview of the problems and needs identified, the reformulated objectives and the priority areas and functions proposed.

Most attention was placed on discussing the potential priority areas and functions, as these were pivotal for deciding which option, and especially which network structure, would be most appropriate. It was stressed by the evaluation team that the three options under discussion were by no means “set in stone” – in practice the network option to be elaborated in more detail could be a combination or derivative of one or more of the proposed options.

5.1.1 *Setting the objectives*

The participants first discussed whether the (slightly) reformulated objectives, as proposed by the evaluation team, were adequate for the new network. On the basis of these discussions, the following phrasing appears to best suit the future EMN:

- To meet the information needs on migration and asylum of Community institutions, Member States and the general public.
- To provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on asylum and migration, and related themes, with a view to supporting policy within the EU in this area.

5.1.2 *Considerations on the priority areas and the functions*

Each of the workshop participants were asked to “rank” the importance of the priority areas, and to identify the functions within the priority areas that should be implemented by the future EMN. The evaluation team had prepared a set of slides that listed the proposed functions for each priority area, and considerations of costs, possible constraints and lessons. These are attached as Annex F.2 to this report.

Whilst the detailed selection of the functions is presented in the elaboration of the preferred option as described in section 5.2, the following emerged from the discussions:

Priority Area A – “To collect, analyse and exchange existing, up-to-date data and information”, is a *core mandatory area* of the EMN. It is a relatively expensive priority area but with a clear limit, based on the concept of diminished returns. Due account should be taken of existing EU information and data collection agencies, such as the EUMC, EMCCDA and the EEO, especially in terms of setup. This Priority Area requires good data and information flows and storage.

Priority Area B – “To improve data-comparison methods” is important and mandatory area for the EMN. It is relatively “cheap”. Whilst the main responsibility for data production will remain with Eurostat, the EMN could have an important role in the debate on data harmonisation and comparability. SOPEMI produces good data but this is only available in yearbooks, does not concern the full EU25 and is not geared towards the Commission’s needs. This Priority area requires however good cooperation with and commitment of various actors outside the field, including projects such as THESIM and organisations such as the UNHCR (asylum only). The testing of new methods requires high levels of expertise, which may not be feasible at the start of the “reshaped” EMN.

Priority Area C – “To undertake (new) research and studies covering the full EU territory” is *to be reformulated*, as most activities listed in this area are not essential for the network to address. In terms of costs, this Priority Area is “elastic”, there are hypothetically no limits on the quantity of research that could be requested, which will heavily influence the costs. The participants agreed, however, that the purpose of the EMN should not be to undertake new research in the strictest, purely scientific sense of the word and thus be “competing” with academic institutions. It should concentrate on activities to study, analyse and assess developments which have a strong policy relevance and mainly depend on already existing sources, thus limiting primary research to an absolute minimum. Another important task of the EMN would be to identify gaps in the existing offer of research. This Priority Area requires good organisation and a wide variety of expertise, which will influence the way in which the NCPs will be shaped. The extent of research and analysis should be clearly defined at the onset of the network.

Priority Area D – “To enable access to, disseminate and raise awareness of the network and its outputs”. Raising the visibility of the network was overall recognised as *important and mandatory*, as well as ensuring good communication between relevant actors. The extent to which the “general public” can be involved in the EMN is to be defined. This Priority area is potentially expensive, depending on what kind of tools one would put into place for dissemination and raising awareness. In general, exchanges and dissemination activities should be more issue-oriented, and mainly involve a “selected” group of users and providers of information. It requires good organisational skills and efficient use and elaboration of the current computer-based information system.

Priority Area E – “To issue views and opinions” is a relatively inexpensive Priority Area, but with big consequences. The participants agreed that for the EMN in the immediate future, this would *not be a suitable area*, but that on the longer term, with a more stable and independent structure, the EMN might fulfil a similar role. However, it was anticipated that no matter what status, a network providing recommendations and issuing independent views in the area of asylum and migration would always be a source of controversy. Also, the network would require a high level of “authority”, in the sense that it should be considered amongst the most trustworthy and independent sources of information.

Priority Area F – “To coordinate information and to cooperate with other European and international bodies” is considered a *core mandatory area* of the EMN. A key element of this Priority Area should be the cooperation with other bodies to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance synergies with others. It is a relatively

inexpensive area, requiring however clear agreements between the different bodies to maximise the benefits from cooperation and regular liaison for the contacts to be truly useful.

Priority Area G – “To provide a platform for different voices in the field” is *not a Priority Area* for the EMN in the immediate future, possibly on the longer term. The costs of this Priority Area are “elastic”, as they strongly depend on the “shape” one wants to give to the platform (e.g. virtual, published, meetings). Some elements of this Priority Area could be partially taken up by Priority Area D above.

5.1.3 Considerations on the status and structure

The staffing of DG JLS will not be increased in the coming years, with the exception of the financial departments given that the DG will increasingly have to deal with fund administration. It is therefore essential that the management of the new EMN does not constitute a heavy burden for the Commission. To an extent, this excludes a fully co-financed network, given the reported high inputs required for running and administrating the pilot preparatory action of the EMN.

As also mentioned earlier, there is increased “resistance” to setting up a Community Agency. Firstly, DG Budget is drawing attention to the high costs for setting up and running an Agency and to the permanent character of such a structure. One should also consider that DG JLS will be, in the near future, setting up and managing three Agencies (the Fundamental Rights Agency, the External Border Agency and the Refugee Agency), which will require high financial and human inputs. Finally, a Community Agency is an independent structure, where the Commission will be unable to have a leading role but rather depend on the interests of Member States and other actors. Given that the area of asylum and migration is certainly not one of the most “consensual” policy areas, it may be better to ensure, especially in the first years of operation, a strong central “leadership” with inputs from relevant stakeholders. At this point in time, there might be scope in setting up a structure which is not as permanent as an Agency but flexible enough to possibly become one on the longer term.

The fully outsourced option was considered interesting, and potentially offering “the best of both worlds”. However, concerns were raised whether the network, being managed by an external contractor who would subcontract NCPs, would still be able to obtain the active commitment of the Member States. When looking at possible contracting options, overall it seems that the best contractual form would be a framework contract, possibly with the option for tenderers to form a consortium.

When considering such an option, due account needs to be taken of market factors. Potential tenderers would on the one hand need to be credible to the EC in terms of: experience of EU level coordination work; scale and size relative to the scale of the contract; and, subject area and range of competences required. On the other hand tenderers would themselves need to weigh up the risk of entering a contract where the majority (possibly around 80%) of the inputs (and costs incurred) will be the responsibility of sub contractors from the 25 Member States. In the light of these considerations a call for tender of a framework contract valued in excess of 5 million euro per annum would run the risk of generating very few (or no) satisfactory tenders.

5.1.4 Additional issues to be taken into account

From the discussions at the brainstorming workshop, the following additional issues emerged:

- The description of the preferred option should consider how the EMN's work programme would be developed, as well as the resources required for implementing the work programme.
- It would be important to ensure that the preferred option for the EMN will have the ability to act as a "quick response service".
- Some level of "outsourcing" of activities should be allowed in the preferred option. What was learned from the pilot preparatory action is that in some cases the NCPs will not have the necessary expertise in-house, for example, when having to deal with very specific topics or themes.
- The presentation of the preferred option should include a clear definition and description of the NCP's mandate, tasks and what they should look like in terms of capacity and expertise.
- It is important to consider what kind of management and coordination arrangements would be required to best ensure the commitment and active participation of the Member States.
- The description of the preferred option should address the differences between the Member States in terms of availability, access and quality of information on asylum and migration. The estimates as to the financial resources required to run the network should also, in as far as possible, recognise the fact that some Member States, due to the size of their territory, the scale of the problem, etc, will need higher resource allocations than others.

5.2 Elaboration of the preferred option for the future EMN – "Observatory for monitoring and analysis of EU asylum and migration flows and effects"

On the basis of the discussions during the brainstorming workshop, EPEC considers that the best suitable option would, in practice, be a combination of the originally proposed options 2 and 3 (see section 4.2.3 for the full description of both options). The mandate, shape and activities of this suggested "new" delivery mechanism for the EMN are described in this section. Prior to detailing the coverage, remit, priority areas, budget breakdown etc of the network, the two following figures provide a summary and schematic overview is provided to gain a quick understanding of what is being proposed.

Figure 5.1 – Summary overview of the EMN preferred option

“Observatory for monitoring and analysis of EU asylum and migration flows and effects”

The future ENM would be managed by the EC DGJLS within a framework of an interservice Steering group and with inputs from an Advisory Committee and network of Member State officials drawn from the ministries with responsibility for migration asylum and integration policies. The EC management would take the lead in the coordination with other international organisations and the selection and management of the framework contractor.

The main products of the future ENM would be provided by a framework contractor selected after an open call for tenders. In response to the call, tenderers would be invited to nominate ‘experts’ from each Member State. The final selection of national experts would be subject to agreement with the EC and the Member State concerned. Different tenderers would be able to nominate the same experts and the selection of experts would not be a criterion in the award of the framework contract. The call for tenders would also indicate the basis for resource allocations between Member States for the inputs of national experts. The framework contractor would engage the agreed national experts as sub contractors. The total annual gross value of the framework contract would be 5 million euro of which 1 million would be for EU level coordination and related activities. 4 million euro would be allocated to the national experts.

Resources would also be available to Member State public authorities to address specific structural problems in data availability. These resources would be allocated following an open call for proposals and co-financing would be available at up to 90%. The framework contractor could be invited to manage these grants on behalf of the EC.

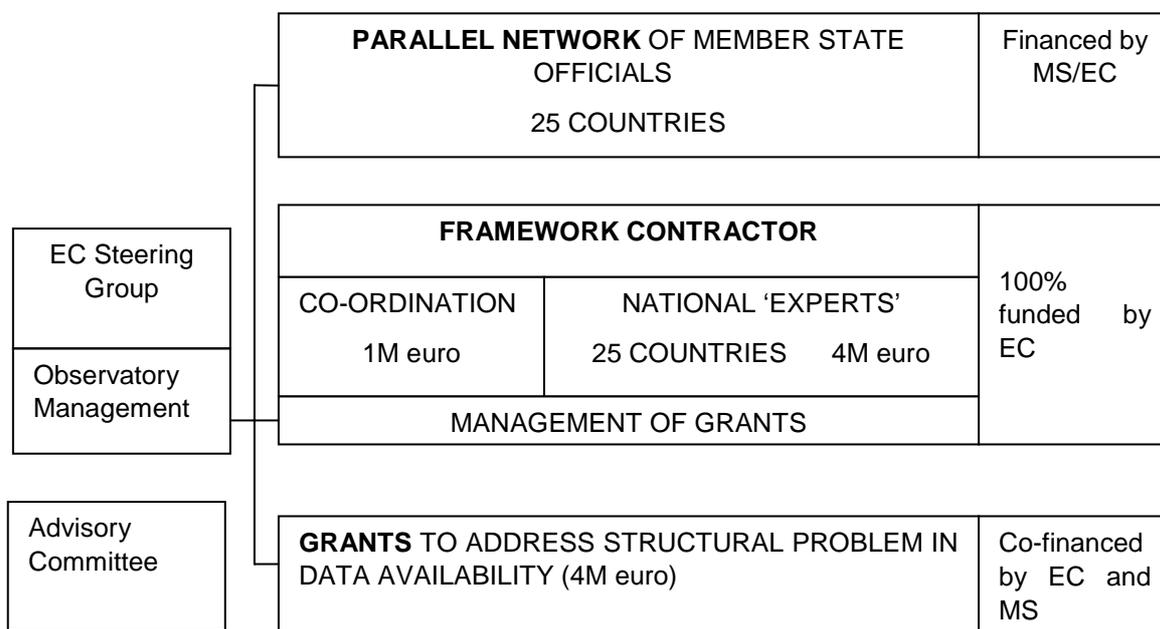
Figure 5.2 – Schematic structure for the preferred option of the future EMN

Title: Observatory for monitoring and analysis of EU asylum and migration flows and effect

Objectives

- To meet the information needs on migration and asylum of Community Institutions, Member States and the general public;
- To provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on asylum and migration and related themes, with a view to supporting policy within the EU in these areas.

Structure



5.2.1 Coverage

The EMN's role concerns the collection of information, the monitoring and analysis of developments on asylum and migration flows and factors affecting these. The Observatory will also ensure the collection of information, monitoring and analysis of developments linked to asylum and migration, such as employment, social integration, housing and discrimination. It will also be responsible for undertaking new study activity and some trend analysis and forecasting work. The Observatory would be well placed to contribute to the policy debate and development within the EU.

5.2.2 Remit

The remit could be considered as an extensive form of "technical assistance" to the Commission and the Member States to inform them on developments in their respective territories and to compare these with developments in other countries. Reporting is mostly of a factual nature, reflecting and analysing the national situations with EU comparisons and syntheses, covering the full EU25, although in some cases thematic work may only address groups of Member States (e.g. when looking at external border control or specific types of migrants). An important part of the Observatory's work would be to provide a fast response service and to launch, upon the request of the Community or as part of its work programme, study activities which are aimed at supporting the specific requirements of policy-making.

The EMN will require a strong coordination body and high levels of expertise in a variety of thematic fields and contexts. Intensive internal networking would also be required to agree on methods, terms of references etc for the fast response and study activities, and to discuss results and outcomes. Networking with actors outside the EMN would be essential to ensure synergies and capitalisation of strengths and to avoid duplication.

5.2.3 **Key priority areas – functions and products**

The following Priority Areas and functions have been selected for the future EMN. Emphasis is put on the fact that these do not, necessarily, have to be implemented from the onset of the network – they can be launched gradually, and expanded over the years. Also, as the network takes on a more stable structure, additional functions can be added to it as the need arises.

The list below also includes a description of the activities and products to be delivered under each priority area, indicated in *Italics*.

General tasks

The general tasks relate to the day-to-day management and administration of the network at EU and national level, as well as general meetings of the full network and of actors involved in management and coordination. This includes the following activities:

- Contract management and quality control at EU coordination level
- Overall network management and coordination of national inputs at EU coordination level
- Organising and participation in bi-annual meetings and seminars for all EMN actors
- Contract meetings with the Commission
- Contract management and administration of national structures
- Grant administration (see also the subsections on organisational structure and funding and budget below)

Priority Area A - To collect, analyse and exchange existing up-to-date data and information

This area relates to collecting, registering and analysing existing information, including data resulting from research, data collection activity such as Eurostat, information made available by Member States, and resulting from Community, non-governmental national sources as well as competent international organisations. It involves the production of inventories and reports reviewing and analysing the information collected with the main purpose of reporting to Community and national authorities. Functions and products included as part of this Priority Area:

- Collecting secondary data and information (statistics, research and other activity, policy and legislative developments, etc) and reviewing and analysing data and information collected *This is an ongoing activity to be undertaken by the national structures.*
- Making inventories of research and other activity at national level. *This is an ongoing activity to be undertaken by the national structures.*
- Producing annual country and EU synthesis reports. *National reports are to be produced by the national structures. The annual reports could for example*

concern an overview of policy, legislative and institutional developments and work on national statistics. The EU coordination level is responsible for editing the national inputs and for preparing an EU synthesis.

- *Producing thematic country and EU synthesis reports. Two thematic reports per year are to be produced by the national structures. The EU coordination level is responsible for editing the national inputs and for preparing an EU synthesis.*

Priority Area B - To improve data-comparison methods

This priority area aims to improve comparability, objectivity and reliability of data at EU level by working jointly with other relevant actors, such as Eurostat, UNHCR and THESIM, on the development and elaboration of indicators and common criteria, in line with the newly proposed Regulation on Community statistics on international migration and asylum. Ultimately, activity under this priority area will ensure greater uniformity of the measurement methods used by the Member States and the Community and facilitate / structure exchange of information in terms of quality and quantity (e.g. databases).

- *Proposing indicators, definitions and criteria to improve comparability and harmonisation of data. The national structures provide inputs, to be coordinated and reviewed by the EU coordination level. The latter also reviews international developments.*
- *Facilitate and structure exchange of information on data-comparisons. Mainly to be undertaken at EU coordination level.*
- *Comment on existing data collection methods. The national structures provide inputs, to be coordinated and reviewed by the EU coordination level. The latter also reviews international developments.*
- *To serve as testing ground for new practices and methods aimed at improving the availability and comparability of data. Coordination at EU level is responsible for testing and reporting on testing.*

Priority Area C - To undertake new studies and analyses covering the full EU¹⁶

This area relates to the network's capacity to undertake "new" and rather specific, often small-scale study activities in the area of asylum and migration and themes linked to this multidimensional phenomenon, either as part of the EMN's agreed work programme, or, more importantly, upon the specific request of Community institutions. In a few cases, this will involve some extent of primary research where information is not readily available, but overall the data and information necessary for undertaking the study should be obtained through existing sources at national / international level. It may involve, if deemed necessary, the organisation of meetings of experts, the creation of ad-hoc working groups and other temporary sub-structures to optimise the quality of the work in terms of methods and expertise. This priority area is distinct from

¹⁶ In practice, priority area A is not 100% distinct from priority area C. For the purpose of building the budget, it is however important to separate the two areas and their related functions.

priority area A above in the sense that the research undertaken is meant to be quick, “sharp” and non-routine, providing national and EU overviews of issues that are of relevance to policy-makers and may improve detailed understanding of the phenomenon. The activities are carried out upon an agreed request, or on the basis of a proposal and terms of reference.

- Rapid response service: responding to information needs related to European priorities. *The national structures provide inputs upon request – not all may be able to provide information each time. The EU level coordination is responsible for editing and summarising the information. It is estimated that between 7 – 15 responses are requested per year.*
- Anticipating information needs and identifying information gaps related to European priorities. *The national structures report on the situation in their context and make proposals once per year. The EU level coordination provides an overview, as well as draws conclusions and makes recommendations on gaps and future needs.*
- Trend analysis: monitoring migratory developments and movements and assess root causes. *The national structures analyse trends in developments and movements in their context, including some forecasting. At EU level, the national inputs are analysed and an EU overview is prepared.*
- Focus on specific, specialist themes such as migration and skills shortages or demographic developments, illegal immigration, etc. *Two specific studies per year are being undertaken by the national structures. The coordination at EU level edits the national inputs and provides an EU synthesis.*
- Analyse the impact of policy and legislative proposals. *Twice a year, the national structures assess the impact of policy and legislative developments on their country. The coordination at EU level edits the national inputs and provides an EU synthesis.*
- In a few cases: providing grants to external activity (for topics requiring specific expertise). *Where national structures, or the EU coordination level, are unable to undertake studies due to a lack of capacity or expertise, grants can be provided to external actors for carrying these out. Grants are coordinated at EU coordination level, upon a specific request from a national structure.*

Priority Area D - To enable access to and disseminate and raise awareness of the network and its outputs

This Priority Area focuses on enhancing communication between relevant actors and making available the information produced by the network to the Community and other user groups. It has the twofold purpose to improve the visibility of the network and to enhance knowledge and understanding of asylum and migration. Activities also include the provision of a comprehensive organisational and technical system capable of linking information, ensuring easy and user-friendly access and enabling exchanges of information and learning.

- Elaborating a comprehensive network to link the outputs of information collection. *The EU level coordination maintains and further develops the*

information system. The national structures provide inputs to the system and are consulted on its further development.

- Providing access to information through an online computer-based system. *The EMN website, including the information system which appears as an online database, is maintained and developed at EU coordination level.*
- Produce publications, folders, newsletters. *Publications of a selected number of reports and studies are being laid out and published at EU coordination level, and made available on the website. Electronic newsletters are circulated, which include inputs from the national structures.*
- Facilitating and enhancing the exchange of information amongst sources and users through issue-oriented (virtual) meetings and other types of gatherings. *Policy and practical exchange events are organised at EU coordination level for a selected number of invitees. Inputs may be required from the national structures, who are also responsible, in their respective country, to create national networks.*

Priority Area E - To coordinate information and to cooperate with other European and international bodies

This priority area concerns specific activities to improve coordination between national, Community and international bodies and their programmes / actions, to avoid duplication of effort and to allow for complementarity and capitalisation on the strengths of existing information sources. Actions further serve to promote the network's products and results, to improve information transmission, exchanges of experiences and learning, to enhance cooperation and optimise joint actions. *These activities are undertaken at EU coordination level.*

5.2.4 Organisational structure

Status

Running the EMN

For carrying out its work programme, the network would be set up through a multi-annual framework contract with an external single economic operator¹⁷ as coordination unit. The contractor would be responsible for proposing and subcontracting the national structures. In this way a direct contractual link is created between the Commission, the coordination unit and the national structures.

The Commission manages a great deal of framework contracts, in both the services, works and supplies sectors. Many DGs have framework contracts for IT services, for example, or for the delivery of office equipment. But framework contracts are also increasingly put in place for evaluation and monitoring activities, impact assessments, dissemination and the organisation of events, and many other types of services.

¹⁷ The terms "single economic operator" is used here as opposed to a framework contract with several economic partners, where the different operators will have to make an offer each time a specific service is requested. The most advantageous offer is then selected.

In order to comply with requirements in relation to technical and professional capacity and quality assurance, there may be benefit in the contractor forming a Consortium including several organisations that would share the risks and rewards of taking responsibility for the framework contract. Certainly it is unlikely that a single organisation would have all the skills required in house for the coordination functions ((e.g. EU coordination skills, IT, thematic expertise, communications etc). However, the Commission may prefer that one organisation holds the contract and assumes overall responsibility.

In principle, there are no financial limits on the size of a EC framework contract. They have a maximum duration of four years (annually renewable), unless there are justifiable exceptional circumstances. An initial period of four years would well suit the future EMN, as it will allow for a proper start-up/transition phase while leaving sufficient time to implement all activities and plan for the next phase of the network (should the Commission be considering a change of status to, for example, a Community agency).

The framework contract for the EMN could be tendered through an expression of interest procedure beforehand (and thus be based on restricted tendering afterwards) or launched through an open call for tenders. Given that the number of tenderers submitting a proposal is unlikely to be high, due to the substantial value of the contract and the wide variety of expertise and capacity requested, it would save time to tender through an open call.

The Terms of Reference should impose strong quality criteria on both the coordination unit and the national structures. If possible, they should include a clear overview of what is expected from the contractor and subcontractors, as well as a detailed work programme. It should be made clear that the national structures proposed will need to have the approval of the Member States and that the nominations of national experts in the tenders would not be a basis for selection. Alternatively, the Commission could itself propose the composition of the national structures.

Addressing structural issues, encouraging special initiatives and ensuring the commitment of the Member States

In addition to the framework contract, it is proposed to keep part of the EMN funding a grant, to be co-financed by the Member States. The grants would be distributed on the basis of applications for funding.

The grants would be made available to Member States with specific structural problems and needs in relation to data and information on asylum and migration and for “special” projects and initiatives to improve the visibility of the EMN and the quality of its products. For example, a country may experience a lack of good quantitative data on asylum seekers, as this is not systematically pulled together by the different authorities involved. The Member State can apply for EMN funding to improve data collection processes and structures. Member States or preferably groups of Member States can also request funding for “special projects”, for example the organisation of an international event aimed at promoting the EMN, the preparation of a common publication, etc. The EU financing share should be close to the maximum percentages allowed (e.g. up to 90%) to reflect that the fund is targeting structural issues of countries that are, in a sense, lagging behind, and special, sometimes even experimental, initiatives.

The grants will support structural improvements with regard to the collection of data and information and encourage Member States to increase their performance and collaboration. At the same time, it increases their commitment to the overall objectives and work programme of the EMN.

Central coordination

As described above, the Commission signs a contract with a suitable consortium or organisation through an open or restricted tendering process. The contractor would act as the central coordination unit for the national and thematic inputs. The framework contract would also include resources for analyses and cross-national comparisons, as well as for reporting on relevant EU and international developments not covered by the national inputs. The coordination unit has to prove that they comply with a set of clear minimum criteria to be able to undertake the tasks required by the contract. Such criteria would relate to their professional and technical capacity in relation to:

- Proven expertise with regard to the management and coordination of large-scale contracts (e.g. technical assistance, other framework contracts, etc)
- Proven expertise in relation to fund / programme administration
- Proven expertise with regard to IT software development
- Proven capacity with regard to IT equipment
- Proven experience in the area of asylum and migration
- Proven human resource capacity and availability to undertake the various activities required

National level contributions

National structures / NCPs

The call for tenders would invite the tenders to nominate the national structures. After the selection of the preferred contractor the appointment of the national structures could be confirmed. The framework contract would require the contractor to appoint national structures which are independent of, but acceptable to the Member States. Prior to contract signature, both the Commission and the Member States would have the right to propose alternative experts. In any case, all national correspondents have to prove that they comply with a set of clear minimum criteria to be able to undertake the tasks required. Such criteria would relate to their professional and technical capacity in relation to:

- Proven expertise in the area of asylum and migration
- Proven expertise with regard to documenting, preparing inventories and abstracts, etc
- Proven IT skills and equipment
- Proven human resource capacity and availability to undertake the various activities required

- Proven ability to set up collaboration schemes and networking with other national agents
- Ability to work and write in English

The number of national experts per country will depend on the national allocation available for undertaking the tasks (see also the subsection on funding and budget below) and the extent to which one correspondent can cover more than one area of expertise and specialisation. In some countries, only one or two correspondents could be appointed to lead the national structure, whilst in other countries there might be four or five different persons providing the national inputs to the EMN (not on a fulltime basis, for example). It is emphasised that the number of staff manning a national structure is less important – what really matters is whether the national structure is able to deliver the products required. Finally, national experts forming together a national structure could come from different agencies and organisations. This is likely to favour objectivity and links to the national context but the framework contractor would need to be sure that lines of responsibility were completely clear.

Network of national government officials

In order to have a direct link to national policy making and to facilitate access to information at Member State level, it is proposed to establish a parallel network of officials within relevant national government departments who would liaise with the national correspondents and report on current policies. Officials would be drawn from several relevant departments and agencies. It is proposed that twice a year, the parallel network will meet with the Commission, the EMN coordination unit and the national correspondents, to discuss progress and work priorities, and to share information on policy, legislative and institutional developments.

The network could either comprise national officials proposed by the Member States, or be built upon the already existing CIA (Committee on Immigration and Asylum), which meets six times a year. When opting for the former, financial and human resources should be reserved for the organisation of the meetings. This is further discussed in the subsection on funding and budget.

Decision-making and management

The Commission has overall responsibility for the EMN, both with regard to managing the framework contract and the grants. With regard to the former, there would be scope for setting up a Steering Group involving other stakeholders (for example Eurostat, DG Employment and possibly an international organisation) to assist the development of the network's work programme.

In order to ensure the quality of the work, (ad-hoc/temporary) scientific or advisory committees could be established to oversee some of the network's specific activities or to be consulted on work priorities. The committees could be made up of invited internal or external experts, with a preference for academic actors and representatives from civil society and migration organisations.

The parallel network of national government officials will be consulted on the network's work priorities and programme of the EMN, but will not be in a position to "veto" plans.

As indicated above, the grants for addressing structural issues and encouraging special initiatives would be under the responsibility of the Commission. Management inputs will be substantially less than the current grant administration due to the lower number of projects. As part of the framework contract, the coordination unit could be requested to assist the Commission in the selection process (i.e. checking applications on the basis of pre-set criteria), monitoring (i.e. checking reporting) and financial administration (e.g. checking financial reporting).

5.2.5 Information system

It is proposed to maintain the basis of the current EMN computer-based information system and website and to further elaborate and expand their functions. Both would be managed by the coordination unit. For reasons detailed in section 3, it may however be advisable to migrate the information database to a system which is less complex in terms of model, more in line with current “mainstream” approaches and, more importantly, less expensive in the long term. Examples of systems which could be applied for migrating the information database are:

1. One suggestion is to implement an *out of the box solution*, that is, one that uses readily available products and keeps coding time to a minimum. The search aspect of the site could be provided by the use of *Google Mini*. This is a customisable web page search tool from Google. It costs \$4,995 (in the US) and allows 50,000 documents of 220 types to be searched. The advantages are that it presents the results in the familiar, intuitive Google style but its look and feel can be customised to match the website’s brand. The disadvantages are that it will not offer a country search, nor will have a thesaurus-style list of keywords. Also, it will not be available in Europe until mid 2005.

Document information can be typed into an HTML template using an off-the-shelf content management system such as Macromedia Contribute (£99 per licence) and then uploaded to the website directly by the NCP. Below are links to the Google Mini and Contribute websites:

<http://www.google.com/enterprise/mini/index.html>

http://www.macromedia.com/software/contribute/?promoid=home_prod_contribute_uk_20040420

One step up from the Google Mini is the Google Search Appliance, which would provide the country search function. It also allows databases to be searched, recognises (50) languages and allows collections to be searched, i.e. documents relevant to a particular group such as legal professionals can be searched independently of other documents. Its principal disadvantage is that it requires a piece of hardware to be physically plugged into the webserver. This may be a problem if the site is hosted by a third party organisation who may not be keen to have hardware added to their computers.

A two year Google Search Appliance licence to search 150,000 documents will cost €13,500. Upgrades to allow a greater number of documents are available. A link to the Google Search Appliance site is below:

<http://www.google.co.uk/enterprise/>

The principal difference of this system to that being proposed by TUB is that documents will have to be stored in a central repository managed by the Commission. NCPs would have to upload or email documents for inclusion in the repository which means that the Commission would now become responsible for the accuracy of documents.

2. The second alternative approach would be to develop the CIIS system using a different technology to Java (the technology platform utilised by the TUB). There are a number of commonly used platforms including ASP, ASP.NET, PHP, JSP and ColdFusion all of which offer enough functionality to develop a system with the core features of CIIS.

For this example we will use Microsoft's ASP.NET as the development platform. It is widely accepted by the development community and was designed to make building robust web applications fast and easy.

The approach to developing a knowledge management system with ASP.NET would be similar to the TUB's in developing CIIS, that is it would have to be built from the ground up. The main advantages, though, are 1) ASP.NET is widespread with a large user base, track record and support network 2) development costs are lower. In the UK a Java developer's average annual salary is between £45k and £55k (€68k - €83k) whilst an ASP.NET developer's salary ranges between £24k and 30k (€36k - €45k).

3. A third approach would be to develop a non-federated knowledge management system where the documents reside in a central repository (see alternative approach 1). Rather than use an out of the box solution, this system would be bespoke. As in approach 2 above it could be built on a variety of technological platforms. An example of a similar system is the website database of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), <http://www.raxen.eumc.eu.int/1/webmill.php>.

The EUMC application is built with PHP (an open source server-side technology) and offers functionality very similar to the system proposed by the TUB – text searches, a thesaurus and access to a range of documents. It uses an underlying database that holds details on organizations and events as well as publications. The database is built in such a way as to relate documents and organizations. For example, if a user selects the Council Of Europe, not only are the contact details given for the organization but a list of documents that the Council has published or has edited is displayed.

Assuming that the database was created with MySQL (a database management system often used alongside PHP) then this approach would prove very cost-effective since both PHP and MySQL are both *open source* technologies which are distributed free of charge. The bulk of the system's set up costs would be design and development costs (the UK average salary for a PHP developer is £24k - £27k or €35 - €40). In fact the costs for the entire EUMC website, including the database is around €105,000 p.a.

If the Commission should decide to set up a truly federated system, national structures should, as a minimum be required to have the appropriate IT skills and equipment (or be provided with the appropriate tools) to link directly to the online database.

With regard to the accessibility of the EMN outputs, it is proposed to further develop the website with a view of making it more visible, user-friendly and interactive (e.g. through newsletters, animated discussion fora, etc).

In principle, the EMN website should have public access. Some parts however, could be restricted to specific users only. For example, all products and other information produced as part of Priority areas A and D could be automatically made public, as it concerns general annual and thematic reporting, making available publications and newsletters and enhancing virtual exchanges.

Information produced as part of Priority areas C and E could be assessed on a case-by-case basis as to their suitability to become public documents. One can imagine that not all rapid responses and specific studies under Priority area C would be suitable for public access, as they may include information of a confidential nature.

5.2.6 Funding and budget

The framework contract for running the network will be funded 100% by the Commission. Its total estimated annual value is up to a maximum value 5.1 million euro, thus totalling a maximum of 20.4 million euro for the maximum period of 4 years.

The grants allocated to address structural issues and to encourage special initiatives will have a maximum value of 4 million euro per year. As discussed previously, it is proposed to ensure a maximum of EC co-financing where possible, up to 90% to for projects addressing structural disadvantages in relation to data and information availability and quality, and up to 75% for special improvement initiatives.

The Framework Contract

The functions of the EMN are described under section 5.2.3 above, as well as indications on the number and type of activities and products to be delivered on a yearly basis. The next step has been to “translate” the various activities and products into either “person/days required to carry out the activity / to delivery the product” or into a fixed product price. A distinction is also made between costs incurred by the coordination unit and costs incurred by the national structures.

The contract includes ongoing activities, which the coordination unit and national structures are expected to implement throughout the year (for example, the national structures are required to undertake the task “Collecting secondary data and review and analysing the data and information collected” under Priority area A) on a continuous basis. However, a substantial part of the activities and products do not necessarily have to be undertaken in the quantity specified (for example, the “Rapid response service under Priority Area C will only be requested as the need arises). As the contract concerns a framework agreement, these activities and products are thus requested on a “call-off” basis, meaning that only those specifically requested by the Commission will need to be implemented and paid for. The 5 million euro allocated is therefore a maximum value, whilst the contract’s characteristics allow for sufficient flexibility to “downsize” Priority areas and cancel activities and products in case these cannot be undertaken.

The tables below show the estimated costs for the running the network. The first table (Table 4.2) presents the costs for the coordination unit, while the second one (Table 4.3) presents the costs for the national structures.

For Table 4.2 on coordination costs, an average day rate of 700 euro per person / day has been applied. Subtotals are shown to separate the costs for implementing the tasks from those allocated to reimbursable expenses and to grant administration which is optional. The total maximum cost for coordinating the EMN is estimated at **0.97 million euro per year**. This includes “operational tasks” in relation to overall contract management and networking, coordination of national inputs. “content-related tasks” such as the preparation of EU overviews, but also, to avoid lengthy Commission procedures, reimbursable expenditure reserved for printing, translation and meeting rooms.

The contract includes a maximum of 1,379 working days, which result in a 6.27 FTE per year.

Table 5.1 – Overview of coordination costs

General tasks	Unit price (average person/day)	Number	Total
Overall contract management and quality control	700	30	21,000
Overall network management and coordination of national structure contributions	700	30	21,000
Arranging bi-annual meetings and seminars with parallel officials network	700	10	7,000
Contract meetings with the Commission / Steering Group (every 2 months)	700	12	8,400
Priority A tasks - To collect, analyse and exchange existing up-to-date data and information			
Editing of annual and thematic reports (3 per year)	700	100	70,000
Preparation of EU syntheses (3 per year)	700	45	31,500
Priority B tasks - To improve data-comparison methods			
Meetings (twice a year) and communication with relevant actors	700	12	8,400
Reporting (proposing new indicators, commenting on methods, testing new practices, etc)	700	10	7,000
Priority C tasks - To undertake new studies and analyses covering the full EU			
Managing rapid-response service (coordination of national inputs and EU overview) up to 15 per year	700	50	35,000
Annual overview of information needs and gaps (compiling of national inputs and EU overview)	700	15	10,500
Annual trend analysis (compiling national inputs and EU overview)	700	15	10,500
EU synthesis and editing national inputs for specific studies (estimated twice a year)	700	40	28,000
EU synthesis and editing national inputs for impact analyses (estimated twice a year)	700	15	10,500
Contingency for specific research activities (average allocation)	10000	5	50,000
Priority D tasks - To enable access to and disseminate and raise awareness of the network and its outputs			
Information system management and development	700	100	70,000
Website content and electronic animation / communication	700	50	35,000
Publications and dissemination - strategy management and implementation	700	100	70,000
Organisation of (virtual) exchanges and events	700	30	21,000

General tasks	Unit price (average person/day)	Number	Total
Priority E tasks - To coordinate information and to cooperate with other European and international bodies			
Liaison with other actors	700	10	7,000
Reporting	700	5	3,500
Subtotal			525,300
Reimbursables			
Travel and subsistence	1000	100	100,000
Printing (layout and publishing)	4000	10	40,000
Meeting rooms	2500	4	10,000
Translation	5000	10	50,000
Interpretation	20000	2	40,000
Subtotal			765,300
Grant administration (Optional)			
Selection, monitoring, administration (5% of total annual budget available for grants)	200,000		200,000
TOTAL			965,300
Total days at 700 euro average day rate			1,379
Total FTE required			6.27

For table 5.2 concerning the inputs of the national structures, an average day rate of 500 euro per person / day has been applied. Subtotals are shown to separate the costs for implementing the main tasks from those allocated to reimbursable expenses and to grant administration which is optional.

The total maximum costs for the national inputs are estimated at **4.12 million euro per year**. As for the coordination unit, this includes “operational tasks” in relation to overall contract management and networking, “content-related tasks” such as the preparation of reports and responses, but also reimbursable expenditure reserved for travel and meeting rooms.

For the calculating the expenditure to be allocated to the national structures, countries have been divided into three groups (Annex H to this report explains how, and on the basis of which criteria, the groupings have been devised):

- Group 1 countries have a relatively high workload, due to the scale of the asylum and migration issue, and good access and availability to data and information. Their person / day costs are estimated to be relatively high, on the basis of the country’s GDP. This group includes the following countries: Luxembourg, Ireland, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Sweden
- Group 2 countries have a relatively medium workload, due to the scale of the asylum and migration issue, and reasonable access and availability of data and information. Their person / day costs are estimated to be medium, on the basis of the country’s GDP. This group includes the following countries: Finland, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Czech Republic, Portugal and Greece.

- Group 3 countries have a relatively low workload, due to the scale of the asylum and migration issue, and poor access and availability of data and information. Their person / day costs are estimated to be relatively low, on the basis of the country's GDP. This group includes the following countries: Slovak Republic, Poland, Slovenia, Malta, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Cyprus.

On the basis of this division, the average annual allocation for Group 1 countries amounts to 213,250 euro, for Group 2 countries this totals 163,875 euro and Group 3 countries receive a maximum of 137,263. Throughout the running of the network, the grouping of countries can change depending on contextual changes (e.g. a country moves from Group 2 to Group 1 as the scale of asylum and migration has drastically increased). The average FTE required for undertaking the work ranges from 1.94 for Group 1 countries and 1.49 for Group 2 countries to 1.25 for Group 3. On average, FTE inputs are 1.5 for all national structures. The number of maximum days required per year are 427 for Group 1 countries, 328 for Group 2 and 275 for Group 3. On average, national structures are expected to spend 329 days on the network.

Table 5.2 – Costs for national inputs

General tasks	Description of unit used	Group 1 (8 countries)	Group 2 (8 countries)	Group 3 (9 countries)	Total
Overall management and administration of national inputs	15000 euro for G1, 12500 euro for G2, 10000 euro for G3	120,000	100,000	90,000	310,000
Participation in EU bi-annual meetings and seminars with parallel network	6 days of 500 euro per country	24,000	24,000	27,000	75,000
Priority A tasks - To collect, analyse and exchange existing up-to-date data and information					
Ongoing data and information collection	35 days for G1, 22 days for G2, 10 days for G3	140,000	88,000	40,000	268,000
Inventorising and documenting information	30days for G1, 20 days for G2, 10 days for G3	120,000	80,000	40,000	240,000
Annual report	15,000 euro per report	120,000	120,000	135,000	375,000
Thematic reports	15,000 euro per report, 2 reports per year	240,000	240,000	270,000	750,000
Priority B tasks - To improve data-comparison methods					
Commenting on national data issues	4 days of 500 euro per country	16,000	16,000	18,000	50,000
Priority C tasks - To undertake new studies and analyses covering the full EU					
Rapid-response service - providing a quick national overview	1500 euro per rapid response per country, 15 responses estimated per year for G1, 11 for G2 and 7 for G3	180,000	132,000	94,500	406,500
National overview of information needs and gaps	2000 euro per overview per country	16,000	16,000	18,000	50,000
Annual national trend analysis	15 days of 500 euro for G1, 10 days for G2 and 5 days for G3	60,000	40,000	22,500	122,500

General tasks	Description of unit used	Group 1 (8 countries)	Group 2 (8 countries)	Group 3 (9 countries)	Total
Specific studies (two per year)	Two specific studies per year, 20,000 euro per report for G1, 12,000 euro for G2, 7,000 euro for G3	320,000	192,000	126,000	638,000
Impact analyses of EU legislative and policy proposals	1500 euro per analysis, two per year	24,000	24,000	27,000	75,000
Grant-reserve for specific research activities	NA				-
Priority D tasks - To enable access to and disseminate and raise awareness of the network and its outputs					
National inputs to information system	15 days for G1, 10 days for G2, 7 days for G3	84,000	56,000	44,100	184,100
National inputs to website and electronic communication	7500 euro for G1, 5000 euro for G2 and 2500 for G3	60,000	40,000	22,500	122,500
Publications and dissemination	NA				-
Organisation of national (virtual) exchanges and events (national networking)	17,500 euro for G1, 12000 euro for G2 and 7500 euro for G3	140,000	96,000	67,500	303,500
Priority E tasks - To coordinate information and to cooperate with other European and international bodies					
Liaison with other actors	NA				-
Reporting	NA				-
Subtotal					
Reimbursables					
Travel and subsistence	3 journeys of 1,000 euro per country	24,000	24,000	27,000	75,000
Printing (layout and publishing)	NA				-
Meeting rooms	1,000 euro per country	8,000	8,000	9,000	25,000
Subtotal					
Grant administration (Optional)					
Providing inputs to selection, monitoring and administration of projects in Member State	10,000 euro for G1, 15,000 for G2, 20,000 euro for G3	10,000	15,000	20,000	45,000
TOTAL		1,706,000	1,311,000	1,098,100	4,115,100
Average allocation per country					
Average allocation per country		213,250	163,875	137,263	164,604
Total days at 500 euro average day rate		426.50	327.75	274.53	329.21
Total FTE required		1.94	1.49	1.25	1.50

The Grants

As discussed under 5.2.4, it is proposed to make financial grants available to two types of projects:

- Projects to address specific structural problems and needs in relation to data and information on asylum and migration in certain Member States. In a view cases, certain data is simply not generated in some countries, or not put together by the different authorities involved. In others, there may be a lack of research in relation to certain aspects of asylum and migration. Through annual overviews of information needs and gaps, national structures will contribute to the identification of such structural problems. The overviews will help the Member States in preparing an application for funding, in terms of description of the problem, setting of objectives and development of actions.
- “Special” projects and initiatives to improve the visibility of the EMN and the quality of its outputs. In a sense, the allocations are meant to stimulate the Member States to take proactive action to promoting the network. They can submit an application to, for example, organise an international event to present some of the network’s products, or to launch a debate on a theme which is being addressed by the network. Preference should be given to joint submissions involving more than one Member State.

It is proposed that the Commission makes available between 2-4 million euro per year for the above projects. The availability of this funding should be actively promoted to the Member States. Applications should not, per se, be made by the Member States (it would be of great interest to also have NGOs, research institutes and other types of actors applying) but they should in general have the formal support of the Member State. The EU financing share should be close to the maximum percentages allowed (e.g. up to 90%) to reflect that the fund is targeting structural issues of countries that are, in a sense, lagging behind, and special, sometimes even experimental, initiatives.

As can be seen from the coordination and national structure budget breakdowns above, optional resources have been allocated to grant administration and monitoring, to minimise the Commission’s workload to manage the grants. The “downside” of making this part of the framework contractor’s tasks may be that it requires increased capacity and additional skills/expertise of both the coordination unit and the national correspondents, which may influence the extent to which a suitable contractor can be found when tendering.

5.2.7 Organisation of the work programme

The main ingredients for the EMN’s work programme are laid out in the Priority Areas and functions as proposed in section 5.2.3 above. As discussed previously, these are made up of a set of ongoing activities, which will not change substantially, and activities which will have to be decided in terms of theme, focus, etc. on a yearly basis. Examples of these are the thematic reports part of Priority Area A and the specific studies under Priority Area C.

In order to agree on the latter, it is proposed that the Commission, in collaboration with the Steering Group, formulates a proposal for the annual work programme. If applicable, advisory / scientific committee is consulted to check the relevance, feasibility and suitability of the proposed themes and initiatives. Specific attention is to

be paid to the issues in relation to objectivity, reliability and comparability of data and information so as to ensure the quality of the EMN's outputs.

Part of one of the bi-annual network meetings, involving the national structures and the parallel network of national government officials is used to discuss the work programme proposal. Where deemed necessary on the basis of comments made during this meeting, the Commission and the Steering Group may decide to revise the work programme. The meeting also serves to develop the detailed timetable for the different tasks and activities, as well as to agree on deadlines for specific outputs.

Progress of implementation of the work programme and timetable is monitored through the coordination unit's meetings every two months with the Commission (and Steering Group, if considered useful). Where necessary, adjustments will be made to take account of obstacles and challenges met.

The second bi-annual network meeting involving all actors active in the EMN will have the double purpose of taking stock of progress made so far and discussing the mid-term results and outcomes, and offering the participants the opportunity to come forward with proposals for activities to be undertaken in the next implementation year.

5.2.8 Users

At EU level, the main user of the information produced would be DG JLS. Certainly other Directorates General would be interested, such as for example DG Employment and DG Research, also with a view of ensuring complementarity with their activities and networking (e.g. the Networks of Excellence funded under the Framework Programmes). Eurostat would be another key user and provider for the EMN.

Other Community institutions should also be encouraged to make use of the EMN. The Council of Europe recently decided to "downscale" its plans for an observatory on migration and could therefore make use of the EMN for additional information needs. The European Parliament have supported the creation of the EMN budget line as well as the various Communications confirming the need for the EMN to become a more permanent structure, which shows their keen interest in the potential outputs of such a network.

Provided the network places a strong operational focus on its Priority Area in relation to cooperation with other coordinate information and to cooperate with other European and international bodies, the EMN could also be a useful provider and distributor of information for organisations and projects such as Sopemi, the data collection activities of the UNHCR and the Odysseus network.

At national level, Member State authorities have proved their interest in the EMN by enabling the development of NCPs and through their other forms of participation in the network (e.g. the observer status). The preferred option as presented above provides a range of additional benefits to national governments, as officials will be actively involved through the parallel network and as the EMN has the specific objective of "supporting policy within the EU" (and thus not just EU policy only). In addition, the Priority Areas and functions attributed to the preferred option will help them to obtain comparable information on the situation and context in other Member States. More importantly however, part of the EMN budget will be provided to them in the form of grants to deal with structural issues or to implement special projects.

Other actors using the EMN could be the research community at international and national level, practitioners and civil society and migrant organisations. As discussed under the Information system, access of some users could be restricted to public webpages only.

5.2.9 Objectivity, reliability and comparability

The national structures contracted through the framework agreement are fully independent from governments. They are selected on the basis of rigid criteria in relation to their professional and technical capacity and expertise. However, through the creation of the parallel national government officials, they are in close liaison with their respective “policy partners” in each country, who will keep them informed on relevant developments and help them to access data and information where this is restricted. This ensures the reliability of data, as it will be provided through public sources, whilst at the same time it is made sure that data is treated objectively by an independent body which will also take “non-official” data, information and views into account.

Improved comparability of data and information is actively pursued under Priority B of the network and would be further enhanced through the involvement of Eurostat in the network. The advisory / scientific committee could, in addition to overall quality assurance, also have a role in optimising harmonisation of data and information.

6 THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK, INTERVENTION LOGIC AND COMMUNITY ADDED VALUE OF THE FUTURE EMN

This section presents the logical framework and intervention logic for the preferred option described in section 5, and discusses the Community added value of the proposed future EMN. The purpose of developing a Logical Framework and a model for intervention logic is to:

- Address the question whether the case exists for the continuation of the EMN after the preparatory action.
- To focus and shape the objectives on the issues that are central for the Commission strategy and goals in the area of the common immigration and asylum policy.
- To develop concrete, measurable or at least verifiable objectives and corresponding indicators.

The problems and needs assessment, as well as the considerations as to the potential objectives, functions and tasks of the EMN has been the basis for drawing up a schematic version of the Logical Framework and intervention logic for the future network.

The table below presents the Logical Framework for the preferred option for the EMN. For each level of “intervention” (overall objective, purpose, activities and results), indicators and sources or verification have been proposed. Key assumptions for achieving the different levels have also been included.

Table 6.1 - Logical framework for the preferred option ‘Observatory for monitoring and analysis of EU asylum and migration flows and effects’

Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions
<p>Overall objective To meet the need for information on migration and asylum of Community institutions, Member States and the general public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction of users of Observatory products • Rates of citation of Observatory’s products in official and non-official Community documents, academic and policy literature, web search portals, media (including benchmarking against other Commission’s information systems) • Rates of traffic on the Observatory’s website (both public and restricted sections, broken down by ‘origin’ of the users) 	Surveys of data users (e.g. internet surveys, postal/ telephone questionnaires, interviews with key users at Community institutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observatory’s structure is flexible enough to respond to rapidly changing information needs and political priorities • Information needs from the Community institutions are communicated to the Observatory
<p>Purpose To provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on asylum and migration, and related themes, with a view to supporting EU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of good quality Observatory’s products (inventories, studies and reports) covering EU25 and using comparable data (i.e. number of reports published per year) 	Formal progress reports from central co-ordination unit, mapping the progress	

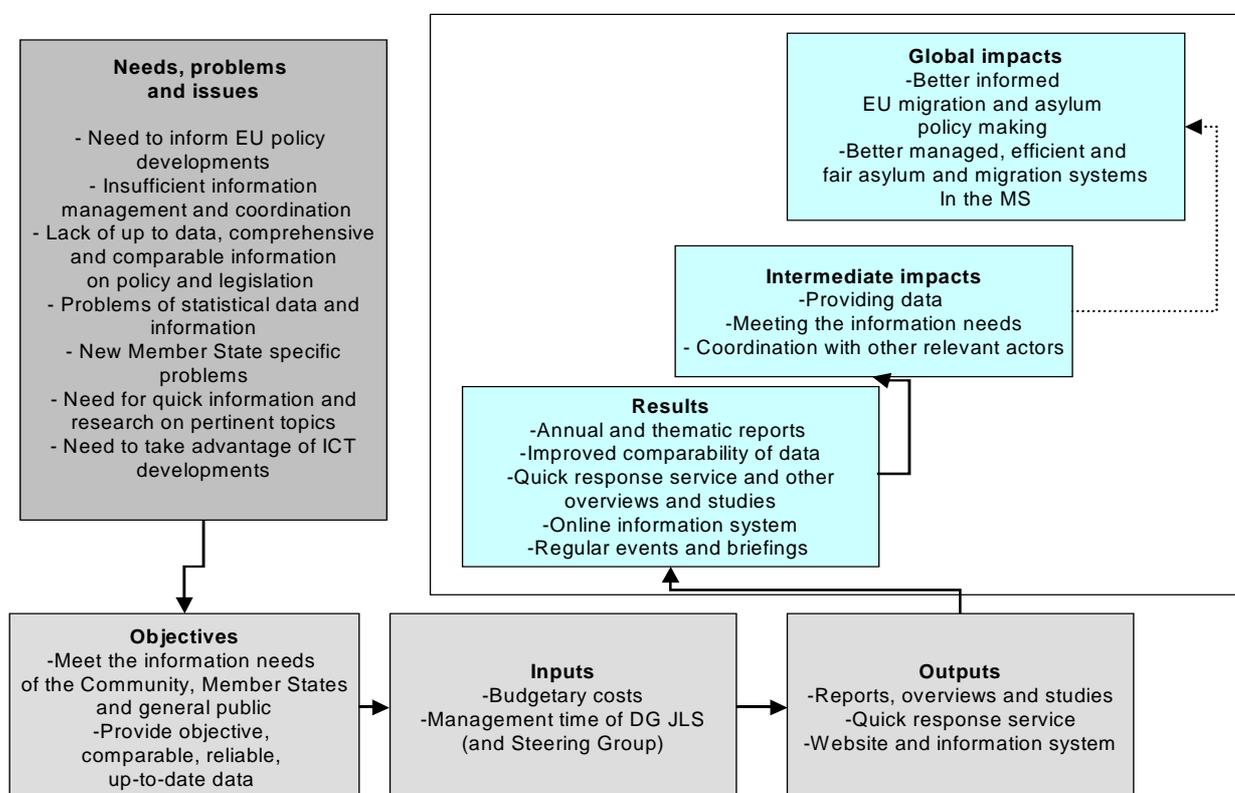
Description	Indicators	Source of verification	Assumptions
policy in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judgement on the quality of Observatory's products (by the users in the Community institutions, Member States, and general public) 	achieved and reporting on the user surveys	
<p>Activities</p> <p>A. Collection, analysis and exchange of existing data and information Production of inventories and annual and thematic reports</p> <p>B. Work with Member States and other actors to increase data comparability and harmonisation</p> <p>C. Undertake new, non-routine, research including rapid response services to the Community institutions and trend analysis</p> <p>D. Dissemination and awareness raising activities (networking, website, publications, events)</p> <p>E. Co-ordination with other relevant actors</p>	Availability of Observatory's products online and in paper form	<p>Formal progress report from central co-ordination unit</p> <p>External (independent) evaluation(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information systems of 25 national structures enable efficient work of the Observatory Member States are willing to co-operate with the Observatory Central co-ordinator has strong leadership skills to co-ordinate the work of 25 national structures and analytical skills to produce EU level synthesis reports National structures are established with experts in the field committed to the Observatory's work and able to carry out the tasks competently and on time Access to reliable, up-to-date, official and unofficial data from 25 Member States
<p>Results</p> <p>Inventories of available data and research</p> <p>Annual country and EU synthesis reports</p> <p>Thematic country and EU synthesis reports</p> <p>Improved comparability and harmonisation of data</p> <p>Quick response service to the requests from Community institutions</p> <p>Trend analyses and other specific studies</p> <p>Online information system, publications and events</p> <p>Regular exchanges and briefings to the Community institutions and other actors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of inventories and reports, providing comparable information across the EU25 Online information system Provision of quick and 'sharp' inputs at the request of the Community institutions Better transnational knowledge improvements and management Improved knowledge base amongst policy makers Improved awareness of EU migration and asylum policies Increased presence and weight of key EU message carriers in national policy debates Official policy statements consistent with EU priorities, adoption of guidelines, explicit incorporation of EU priorities in policy documents Adoption of indicators, targets, benchmarks and milestones pertinent to EU policy at national level Improved inter-linkages between EU policy interventions Improved EU policy making in the area of migration and asylum Better managed, more efficient and fairer migration and asylum systems in the MS 	<p>Formal progress report from central co-ordination unit</p> <p>External (independent) evaluation(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong quality assurance procedures Strategic leadership from DG JLS / Steering Committee on key priorities for Observatory's work Strong buy-in from Member States to support data comparability and harmonisation processes

The intervention logic for the preferred EMN option is presented in the figure below. Overall, there is a clear chain of logic between the problems and need identified, the objectives proposed and the inputs and outputs. The link is also strong between the outputs, results and intermediate impacts expected.

The link between the intermediate and global impacts expected is less obvious and certainly less easy to measure. Firstly, the EMN will only be a minor element in the wider actions and resources allocated to achieving these high-level objectives of asylum and migration policy at EU level. With a proposed annual budget of 9 million euro against a total of a yearly 1,016.19 million euro for interventions aimed at achieving the same objectives in the area of Solidarity and migration management proposed by the Commission, the EMN's effects cannot be expected to have a strong global impact. Another issue relates to the difficulty of measuring the extent to which the EMN would be contributing to these global impacts. Tools to be used could include surveys to policy makers, but in practice it is nearly impossible to obtain complete and reliable results as policy makers are extremely busy persons. Ultimately, there will be many other factors intervening on the global impacts, both within and outside the EU.

However, the EMN itself will have an important role in identifying these factors and in informing policy makers on trends which may affect political climates, agreements and commitments of stakeholders.

Figure 6.1 – Intervention logic for the preferred option ‘Observatory for monitoring and analysis of EU asylum and migration flows and effects’



The intervention logic presented above also confirms the added value of Community involvement for the EMN.

- Firstly, the network responds to a real demand, also detailed in section 2 analysing the problems and needs to be addressed by the EMN. The EMN is also highly relevant to wider policy developments related to asylum and migration as part of the Hague programme and the larger policy area of Justice, Freedom and Security. It also presents clear links to other policy areas such as employment, social affairs, discrimination and regional development.
- The EMN is an information tool tailored to the needs of the Community. Contrary to many other information collection activity, its purpose is to specifically meet the information needs of policy makers. Other existing activity may have similar themes, functions and coverage, but none of these are specifically geared towards supporting policy development. It is however essential that the EMN takes account of existing activity to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance synergies.
- When looking at coverage in particular, the EMN is the only network which will cover the full EU25 territory and which will have national structures in each of its Member States. This is particularly relevant for drawing comparisons between countries and for presenting credible EU overviews.
- The EMN will provide some unique features such as the rapid response service, trend analyses and the identification of information needs and gaps. These items will be presented in a format suitable for policy makers (i.e. with a high focus on the clarity, conciseness and relevance of the information presented).
- The EMN is likely to encourage Member States, due to their involvement in the network, to undertake common action and to increase cooperation between countries. This will benefit the implementation of EU policies at national level.
- The achievements to be realised by the EMN are based on clear terms of reference and the development of a realistic work programme, implemented through strong management and coordination bodies. In this sense, the network's achievements are unlikely to be heavily influenced by contextual circumstances outside the control / scope of the Commission. However, as anticipated in the description of the preferred option, the EMN will have to deal with varying national contexts in terms of the quality and availability of data and information. For the latter, action has been proposed through grants to finance structural improvements.
- At present, it is unlikely that problems would arise should the current EMN not be continued. The network as it stands is not sufficiently used to assume that its absence would cause substantial problems to EU policy making. But, as already highlighted, there is an increasing need for an instrument that will support policy development in the future by providing up-to-date, reliable and comparable information to allow for better informed policy decisions.