



Refugee Crisis: Greece activates EU Civil protection mechanism, agrees Frontex operation at border with former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and triggers RABIT mechanism

Brussels, 3 December 2015

Greece has today taken three actions to address the refugee crisis, activating EU mechanisms designed to assist in crisis situations.

Greece has today activated the EU Civil Protection Mechanism to benefit from material support to help cope with the influx of refugees and asylum seekers in the country. Greece has requested items such as tents, generators, beds, sanitary equipment and emergency first aid kits. This voluntary delivery of aid is coordinated by the European Commission's [Emergency Response Coordination Centre \(ERCC\)](#) which is working closely with the Greek authorities and the other participating states in the Mechanism for a swift response to the request.

Greece has also today agreed an [operational plan](#) with Frontex for a new operation at the Greek border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where the agency will assist with the registration of migrants. The deployment of additional officers will begin next week.

Greece has also today put in a formal request for the deployment a [Rapid Border Intervention Team](#) operation to provide immediate border guard support at its external border in the Aegean islands. Frontex will now process the request as a matter of priority.

Over 50,000 people have arrived in Greece since 1 November. The scale is immense and the Commission is working very closely with the Greek authorities to assist them in this challenge.

European Commission President Juncker asked the Director General for the Structural Reform Support Service to follow this process very closely and the Commission's teams have been working hand in hand with the Greek authorities for months.

Background

On Wednesday 21 October, European Commission President Juncker called for a Leaders' Meeting on refugee flows along the Western Balkans route to address the emergency situation unfolding along this route. At this meeting, leaders agreed that Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania would strengthen the management of the external land border. In this respect, it was agreed that Frontex would assist Greece in the registration of refugees and migrants who have not yet been registered in the country.

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism can be activated by a Member State and countries outside the EU if they feel overwhelmed by a crisis. The Mechanism can mobilise various types of in-kind assistance, including modules (teams and equipment), shelter, medical supplies and other non-food items, as well as expertise. Participating States provide the assistance, and the Commission can also co-finance the transport of relief items and experts to the country in question. In the case of the refugee crisis, the co-financing has

been increased from 55% to 85%. To respond to the urgent needs caused by an unprecedented inflow of refugees and migrants, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has now been activated by five countries in 2015. The mechanism was activated by Hungary (request for assistance met) and Serbia in September. Slovenia and Croatia activated the mechanism in October.

Member States can request the deployment of Rapid border intervention teams (RABIT) to provide immediate border guard support in cases of urgent or exceptional migratory pressure. The Mechanism provides operational assistance for a limited period of time. Frontex funds and deploys national technical and human resources drawn from Member States. The Mechanism has only been activated once, but successfully: A successful operation at the Greek-Turkish border in 2010 stabilised the situation and brought down the number of arrivals.

For more information

[All press materials on the EU Migration Agenda](#)

Factsheet: [The Rapid Border Intervention Teams Mechanism \(RABIT\)](#)

Factsheet: [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

Table: [Member States' Support to Civil Protection Mechanism for Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia](#)

[Western Balkan Leaders' Meeting Statement](#)

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