



Managing the refugee crisis: Immediate operational, budgetary and legal measures under the European Agenda on Migration

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The sudden rise in the number of people who are forced to flee their homes to escape violence and seek refuge, in their own countries or abroad, is a test for the European Union. The European Agenda for Migration presented by the Commission in May set out a comprehensive approach to migration management. Since then, a number of measures have been introduced – including the adoption of two emergency schemes to relocate 160,000 people in need of international protection from the Member States most affected to other EU Member States. The current refugee crisis, however, requires further, immediate action. The College of Commissioners today set out a set of **priority actions** to be taken **within the next six months** (Annex 1). President Juncker will present these to European Heads of State and Government tonight at an informal Summit.

European Commission President **Jean-Claude Juncker** said: *"In spite of our fragility, our self-perceived weaknesses, today it is Europe that is sought as a place of refuge and exile. This is something to be proud of, though it is not without its challenges. The first priority today is and must be addressing the refugee crisis. The decision to relocate 160,000 people from the most affected Member States is a historic first and a genuine, laudable expression of European solidarity. It cannot be the end of the story, however. It is time for further, bold, determined and concerted action by the European Union, by its institutions and by all its Member States."*

What has been done

Europe's response has been comprehensive and decisive in the past months:

- We **tripled our presence at sea**, increasing three fold the resources and assets available for Frontex Joint Operations Poseidon and Triton. Over 122,000 lives have been saved since then. Every life lost is one too many, but many more have been rescued that would have been lost otherwise – an increase of 250%.
- We have mobilised EU funding in support of the most affected Member States – **allocating over €70 million in emergency funding**, on top of the €7 billion in multiannual funding allocated to Member States over the period from 2014-20 to support their efforts in the field of migration and border management (Annex 2).
- We have **redoubled our efforts to tackle smugglers** and dismantle human trafficker groups. Cheap ships are now harder to come by, leading to less people putting their lives in peril in rickety, unseaworthy boats. As a result, the Central Mediterranean route has stabilised at around 115,000 arriving during the month of August, the same as last year.
- The European Union is also the **number one donor in the global efforts to alleviate the Syrian refugee crisis**. Around €4 billion have been mobilised by the European Commission and Member States in humanitarian, development, economic and stabilisation assistance to Syrians in their country and to refugees and their host communities in neighbouring Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey and Egypt. The European Commission has also allocated €1.8 billion from the EU's financial means to set up an ['Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration in Africa'](#).
- We have collectively **committed to resettling over 22,000 people** from outside of Europe, showing solidarity with our neighbours.
- With the adoption of the [Commission's second relocation proposal yesterday](#), Member States have demonstrated solidarity and **agreed to relocate 160,000 people in clear need of international protection** from the Member States most affected to other EU Member States.

Priority Actions for the Next 6 Months

The most pressing need is to support Member States managing exceptional numbers of refugees on

their territory. This requires action both inside and outside the EU.

1. Operational measures

- **Full roll-out of the Relocation Schemes and Migration Management Support Teams working in hotspot areas:** The Support Teams will have an instant impact on the most critical point in the chain – where the most affected Member States are finding the sheer number of arrivals too great to manage effectively. Staff and national experts from other EU Member States deployed by EU agencies (Frontex, the European Asylum Support Office [EASO], Europol) will help identify, screen and register migrants on entry to the EU, as well as to prepare and organise the return operations for those who have no right to stay. The Support Teams can only work in partnership with national authorities. Member States under pressure now need, as a priority, to finalise with the Commission and start to implement their roadmaps for the Support Teams working in hotspot areas by the end of this week. Member States should also identify a network of liaison officers for all relevant local and national government agencies by the end of this week so that the first relocation decisions can be implemented swiftly.
- **Trigger the Civil Protection Mechanism or Rapid Border Intervention Teams**, to call on immediate practical support of the EU and other EU Member States:
 - The **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** can be activated to mobilise various types of in-kind assistance, including modules (teams and equipment), shelter, medical supplies and other non-food items, as well as expertise.
 - Member States can request the deployment of **Rapid border intervention teams** 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.
- **Normalisation of the Schengen area and lifting internal border controls:** The temporary re-introduction of border controls in recent weeks by some Member can be justified in crisis situations under the Schengen Borders Code. But it can never be more than a short-term measure. What is needed now is action to restore the normal process of migration management as quickly as possible. Should these measures be prolonged or additional measures be requested, the Commission will formalise its assessment on the situation by adopting an opinion on the basis of the Schengen Borders Code.
- **Stepping up the diplomatic offensive and intensifying cooperation with third countries:** the Valletta Summit on Migration on 11-12 November 2015 will be an opportunity to show the new priority of migration issues in the EU's relations with African partners; the High-level Conference on the Western Balkans route in October 2015, will be the place to discuss the common task of tackling today's pressures and restoring stability to the management of migration via the Western Balkans route. The EU will also continue means working closely with key international organisations such as the UNHCR, the United Nations Development Programme and, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Red Cross to help tackling the refugee crisis at a global level.

2. Budgetary Support

- **Increasing the emergency funding for the most affected Member States:** The emergency funding available under the EU budget in this area has already been doubled this year, to reach €73 million which has already been exhausted. The Commission will come forward next week with a proposal to add €100 million to this budget for 2015.
- **Increasing the funding for the three relevant EU agencies** by €1.3 million to cover 60 staff for Frontex, 30 for EASO and 30 for Europol for 2015. In addition, the emergency funding for the most affected Member States and the funding for Frontex, EASO and Europol will be increased by €600 million for 2016. The EU's Agencies play an essential role in ensuring cooperation and in using the expertise available to best effect. They are now being asked to be far more active on the ground than was originally envisaged. The EU Agencies working on migration related areas therefore need a major injection of resources.
- **Restoring funding for food aid via the World Food Programme to 2014 levels.** Most EU Member States have reduced their contributions to the World Food Programme, some by up to 99% (Annex 3). The Commission will increase emergency humanitarian aid and civil protection resources by €200 million for 2015 to provide immediate resources to respond to demands from UNHCR and the World Food Programme and other relevant organisations in order to help refugees immediately.
- **Increasing humanitarian aid by €300 million** in 2016 to be ready to help refugees' essential

needs like food and shelter.

- **Increasing support for Syrian refugees:** The Commission will propose next week to reinforce the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) in 2015 by €300 million to allow an increase of the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis and provide assistance to third countries hosting refugees from Syria. Together with a further reorientation of funds from the Instrument for Pre-Accession, this will allow the total EU level funding for the Trust Fund in this phase to reach more than **€500 million**. Member State contributions should match the EU funding: so that the Fund would reach a total of at least **€1 billion**. This would be a powerful global demonstration of the EU's commitment to help Syrian refugees.
- **Addressing the shortfall in funding for the Syria crisis:** Only 38% of the funding requirements have been met. The impact of this shortfall is dramatic. UNICEF has reported that in recent months, up to 5 million people – about half of whom are children – have suffered major interruptions to their water supplies, with major risks of disease as a consequence. The EU and Member States should commit to cover half of this gap.
- **Working with our immediate neighbours:** For many years, pressure has been building on **Turkey**, Lebanon and Jordan as millions of refugees have fled Syria. Addressing the political turmoil is complex but we must redouble our efforts: The EU is ready to mobilising €1 billion for Turkey and €17 million for **Serbia** and the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** to help our neighbours tackle the migration challenge.
- **Aid for Africa:** The establishment of the Emergency Trust Fund with an initial capital contribution of €1.8 billion has already provided a tangible demonstration of what the EU will contribute and needs to be matched by Member State contributions.

3. Implementing EU law

- Progress is being stalled by the fact that the track record of implementation of EU law in the field of asylum is poor. The European Commission has today taken 40 infringement decisions against 19 Member States (see [IP/15/5699](#)).
- In particular, the Commission will work with the Greek authorities to prioritise a normalisation, within the next six months, of the situation since Dublin transfers were suspended in 2010. **Greece** will notably need to ensure adequate personnel is appointed to the Asylum Service and First Reception service; put in place an effective return system; improve the absorption of EU funds and address the reception needs arising from the increased migratory flows.

4. Looking Forward: A Robust system that will bear the test of time

- **Protecting the EU's borders:** This means strengthening Frontex and enhancing its mandate, and taking ambitious steps towards establishing a European Border and Coast Guard. The Commission will come forward with a proposal in December 2015.
- **A long-term, EU-wide system of resettlement and relocation:** The Commission will table a proposal for a permanent resettlement scheme in March 2016. A proposal for a permanent relocation mechanism is already on the table. The Commission will further reform of the Dublin Regulation in March 2016.
- **A credible and effective return policy:** The full implementation of the measures set out in the Commission's recent action plan on return would restore credibility to the EU's return system. This requires better information-sharing, increased resources at both EU and national level, stepping up the role of Frontex, and a new emphasis on readmission in our relations with third countries.
- Opening **legal channels for migration:** The Commission will table a legal migration package including the revision of the Blue Card in March 2016.

Background

On 23 April 2014, in Malta, Jean-Claude Juncker presented [a five point plan on immigration](#), calling for more solidarity in the EU's migration policy as part of his campaign to become European Commission President.

Upon taking office, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker entrusted a Commissioner with special responsibility for Migration to work on a new policy on migration as one of the 10 priorities of the [Political Guidelines](#), the political programme based on which the European Parliament elected the Commission.

On 13 May 2015, the European Commission presented its [European Agenda on Migration](#), setting out a comprehensive approach for improving the management of migration in all its aspects.

On 27 May 2015, the European Commission already came forward with a [first package of implementing measures](#) of the European Agenda on Migration, including relocation and resettlement proposals, and

an EU Action plan against migrant smugglers.

On 25-26 June 2015, the [European Council](#) agreed to move forward on the proposals made by the European Commission in the European Agenda on Migration, focusing on relocation and resettlement, returns and cooperation with countries of origin and transit.

On 20 July 2015, the [Justice and Home Affairs Council](#) agreed to implement the measures as proposed in the European Agenda on Migration, notably to relocate people in clear need of international protection from Italy and Greece over the next two years, starting with 32,256 in a first step, and to resettle 22,504 displaced persons in clear need of international protection from outside the EU.

On 9 September 2015, the Commission proposed [a new set of measures](#), including an emergency relocation mechanism for 120,000 refugees, as well as concrete tools to assist Member States in processing applications, returning economic migrants, and tackling the root causes of the refugee crisis.

On 14 September 2015, Member States adopted the [Decision](#) to relocate 40,000 refugees in clear need of international protection from Italy and Greece.

On 23 September 2015, [Member States adopted the Decision](#) to relocate 120,000 refugees in clear need of international protection from Italy, Greece and other Member States directly affected by the refugee crisis.

For more information

[European Commission Communication](#): Managing the refugee crisis: Operational and budgetary measures under the European Agenda on Migration

[Annex I: Priority Actions under the European Agenda for Migration to deliver within six months](#)

[Annex II: Migration Management Support Teams working in 'hotspot' areas](#)

[Annex III: The Rapid Border Intervention Teams mechanism \(RABIT\)](#)

[Annex IV: Financial Support to Member States under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund](#)

[Annex V: Member State and Commission Contributions to the World Food Programme](#)

[Annex VI: The EU Regional Trust Fund \("MADAD Trust Fund"\) in response to the Syrian Crisis](#)

[Annex VII: Implementing the Common European Asylum System](#)

[IP/15/5699](#): More Responsibility in managing the refugee crisis: European Commission launches 40 infringement procedures to make European Asylum System work

[Factsheets: the European Agenda on Migration Explained](#)

[Fact sheet on return](#)

[Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs Website](#)

ANNEX I: Priority Actions under the European Agenda for Migration to deliver within six months

Operational measures

The *Commission* and the *EU agencies* will:

- Assist Member States to take all necessary steps to roll out the relocation decisions, organising on-the-spot coordination and putting in place a network of national contact points. Follow up on action points from this week's meeting with Member States on relocation.
- Support the goal of making the Support Teams for the "hotspots" operational this week. The agencies' role will be to provide direct expertise in areas like the correct identification of migrants; the Commission will provide coordination between the different actors.
- Within the next fortnight, bring together Member States and the UNHCR to determine practical arrangements to implement the resettlement scheme.

Member States under pressure should:

- Finalise and start to implement their roadmaps for relocation and for the Support Teams for the "hotspots" this week; identify a network of liaison officers for all relevant local and national government agencies by the end of this week.
- Trigger the Civil Protection Mechanism or request Rapid Border Intervention Teams, to call on immediate practical support of the EU and other EU Member States.

All *Member States* should

- Identify national contact points for relocation this week to allow candidates to be swiftly identified and transferred; send a liaison officer to Italy and Greece to support on-the-spot screening; identify the reception capacity to be used for relocated people.
- Notify to Frontex and the European Asylum Support Office, within a week of the finalisation of national roadmaps for Support Teams for the "hotspots", what national expertise will be made available.
- Identify and notify to Frontex by the end of September an emergency reserve of border assets which could be used in Rapid Border Intervention Teams triggered this year.
- Notify to the Commission by the end of September civil protection assets which will be held ready to deploy under the civil protection mechanism if called upon this year.
- Put in place a system of contingency planning for possible increases in asylum applications this year.
- Confirm continuing support to the Frontex joint operation TRITON and respond urgently to the call for assets for operation POSEIDON.
- Apply to Frontex for the coordination and financial support available still this year for joint return flights and pre-return assistance.

Stepping up budgetary support

The *Commission* will present the necessary proposals next week to the *European Parliament and the Council*. The institutions are invited to adopt the proposals for 2015 in a fast-track procedure:

- Increase the Emergency Fund of the Asylum, Integration and Migration Fund by €80m and the Internal Security Fund-Borders €20m. This will be used for urgent needs to increase reception capacity, boost the administrative capacity to process asylum claims, and support the capacity to respond to pressure at the external border.
- Increase as from 2015, the capacity of the three key EU agencies with 120 additional posts: 60 posts for Frontex, 30 for EASO and 30 for Europol for 2015.
- Increase the funds for humanitarian aid by €200 million to provide immediate resources to respond to demands from UNHCR and the World Food Programme and other relevant organisations in order to help refugees immediately.
- Increase the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) in 2015 by €300 million to allow an increase of the *EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (Madad Fund)* and provide assistance to third countries hosting refugees from Syria. Together with a further reorientation of funds from the Instrument for Pre-Accession, this will allow the total EU funding for the Trust Fund in this phase to reach more than €500 million.

The *Commission* will propose to the *European Parliament and the Council* in the coming weeks the following changes to the proposed 2016 budget:

- A new package of €600 million to increase the emergency funding budget of the Asylum, Integration and Migration Fund and the Internal Security Fund-Borders and to finance increased funding for Frontex, EASO and Europol in order to be ready to respond to immediate needs for migration management, reception, return and border controls.
- Increase humanitarian aid by €300 million to be ready to help refugees' essential needs like food and shelter.

The EU should overhaul the allocation of EU funds for Turkey, such that a total of €1 billion could be available for refugee-related actions in 2015-16.

Member States should immediately commit to:

- Restore funding for food aid via the World Food Programme to 2014 levels to stabilise the supply of food to Syrian refugees.
- Match the EU budget contribution to the *EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (Madad Fund)*, to support Syrian refugees (in any country outside the EU) to reach at least €1 billion in total.
- Match the €1.8 billion of EU funding to the *Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa*.
- Make immediate use of the pre-financing resources (over €300 million) now being transferred to Member States to implement national programmes under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund-Borders.

- Examine the use of their current Structural Funds programmes in terms of supporting migration-related measures, with a view to proposing changes to the Commission.

Implementation of EU law on Asylum

Member States should commit to take urgent steps to transpose, implement and fully apply EU legislation covering the European Asylum System, including on reception conditions, asylum procedures, and who qualifies for asylum.

Next Legislative Steps

- The *European Parliament* and the *Council* should fast-track the following Commission proposals on the table:
- Safe Countries of Origin, including Turkey
- The amendment to the Dublin Regulation to introduce a crisis relocation mechanism

The *Commission* will bring forward the following new proposals:

- Establishment of a European Border and Coast Guard and extension of the Frontex mandate (December 2015)
- Legal migration package including revision of Blue Card (March 2016)
- Further reform of the Dublin Regulation (March 2016)
- Proposal for a structured system on resettlement (March 2016)

ANNEX 2: Financial Support to Member States

Annex 3: Member State and Commission Contributions to the World Food Programme

€ in thousands	31/12/2014	13/09/2015	Average 5 years
Austria	946	0	653
Belgium	20.436	9.253	19.223
Bulgaria	111	101	73
Cyprus	8	4	4
Croatia	0	0	6
Czech Republic	121	90	169
Denmark	54.770	40.428	41.684
Estonia	151	0	104
Finland	27.892	17.345	22.232
France	18.392	14.164	20.588
Germany	240.947	117.315	158.172
Greece	30	0	51
Hungary	41	0	30
Ireland	17.069	13.869	16.766
Italy	25.311	19.734	18.458
Latvia	0	0	4
Lithuania	32	10	16
Luxembourg	9.709	8.487	8.806
Malta	0	0	0
Netherlands	70.969	75.099	61.637
Poland	0	0	219
Portugal	8	0	18
Romania	0	0	6
Slovakia	12	0	10
Slovenia	33	28	48
Spain	6.174	3.653	14.790
Sweden	74.770	3.775	60.800
UK	327.453	230.733	231.297
TOTAL	895.386	554.087	675.863
EU	297.340	157.190	238.933

EU + Member States	1.192.726	711.277	914.796
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(2014 and 2015, until 13/09) [source: WFP website]

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Attachments

[ANNEX 2 and 3.pdf](#)

Photos & Videos

