

## **JUSTICE and HOME AFFAIRS COUNCIL**

### **Monday 14 September in Brussels**

The meeting will be chaired by **Jean ASSELBORN**, Luxembourg Minister of Immigration and Asylum.

Starting at 15.00, Home affairs ministers will be debriefed by a number of EU and United Nations agencies (Frontex, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Europol, UNHCR and International Organisation for Migration) on the latest information on migratory flows and the situation on the ground. The Council will hold a discussion on the basis of this information.

Ministers will also be informed about the progress made in implementing the most recent EU measures and are expected to establish a further course of action for dealing with the current migration crisis.

The Council will also hear a presentation by the European Commission on its new proposals on migration.

Representatives of the associate countries Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland will also be present in the meeting.

A press conference will take place at the end of the meeting +/- 19.00

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*Press conferences and public events by video streaming: <http://video.consilium.europa.eu>*

*Video coverage in broadcast quality (MPEG4) and photo gallery on: [www.eucouncil.tv](http://www.eucouncil.tv)*

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<sup>1</sup> This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

# HOME AFFAIRS

## Migration

The situation of migration phenomena outside and inside the European Union has recently taken unprecedented proportions. In order to assess the situation on the ground, the political actions underway and to discuss the next steps in order to strengthen the European response, the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU decided to convene an extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council on 14 September 2015.

Home affairs ministers will be debriefed by a number of EU and United Nations agencies (Frontex, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Europol, UNHCR and International Organisation for Migration) on the latest information on migratory flows and the situation on the ground. The Council will hold a discussion on the basis of this information.

Ministers will also be informed about the progress made in implementing the most recent EU measures. On the basis of a note prepared by the Luxembourg Presidency on EU action and the state of play, the Council is expected to establish a further course of action in the short and medium term for dealing with the current migration crisis in the following areas: asylum policies; border management; return and readmission policies; international cooperation; smuggling and trafficking of human beings; legal migration; free movements of persons and the Schengen area; information exchange and funding.

The Council will also hear a presentation by the European Commission on the package of concrete measures that were adopted on 9 September to respond to the current refugee crisis and to prepare for future challenges.

Following the tragic incidents in the Mediterranean sea which caused the loss of hundreds of lives last April, the President of the European Council convened a special meeting on migration that was held on 23 April 2015. The objective of the summit was to discuss, at the highest level, what member states and the EU institutions together could and should do in particular to alleviate the serious situation in the Mediterranean sea.

In its statement, the European Council committed to consider options for organising emergency relocation between all member states and to set up a pilot project on resettlement across the EU, offering places to persons qualifying for international protection.

Leaders also indicated that they looked forward to the Commission Communication on a European Agenda on Migration, which should develop a more systematic and geographically comprehensive approach to migration.

The Agenda was presented by the Commission on 13 May. Its first part defines immediate measures to prevent human tragedies and to reinforce mechanisms to deal with emergencies. This will be done by strengthening EU presence at sea to save lives, targeting criminal smuggling networks, responding to high volumes of arrivals within the EU with a distribution mechanism for asylum-seekers (relocation), bringing an increased number of refugees from third countries (resettlement) safely and legally to the EU, and using the EU's operational and financial tools to help frontline member states.

On 27 May the Commission presented a first implementation package including, among other proposals, the following:

- a proposal for a Council decision to trigger an emergency relocation of 40 000 persons in clear need of international protection from Italy and Greece based on Article 78(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) <sup>2</sup>.
- a recommendation proposing an EU-wide resettlement scheme to offer 20 000 places to people in clear need of international protection outside of the EU.

On 25 June 2015, the European Council agreed to the rapid adoption of such temporary and exceptional relocation mechanism and called on the rapid adoption of the Council decision to that effect. It also concluded that member states should agree by consensus on the distribution of such persons, reflecting the specific situations of member states. Leaders also agreed on an EU resettlement scheme in which all members states will participate through multilateral and national schemes, and reflecting the specific situations of member states.

On 20 July 2015, Home affairs ministers agreed on the draft decision establishing a temporary and exceptional relocation mechanism from Italy and Greece to other member states of persons in clear need of international protection. The member states, meeting within the Council, agreed by consensus on the distribution of 32 256 persons to be relocated and adopted a resolution to this end. Ministers committed to agree on the distribution of the remaining 7 744 persons by the end of 2015. On 14 September the Council is expected to formally adopt this decision, after the European Parliament gave its opinion on 9 September 2015.

Furthermore on 20 July, the member states adopted conclusions on resettling through multilateral and national schemes 22 504 displaced persons from outside the EU who are in clear need of international protection and welcomed the readiness of associated states to participate in the resettling efforts.

On 9 September the European Commission presented a second package of concrete measures to respond to the current refugee crisis and to prepare for future challenges including, among other proposals, the following:

- an emergency relocation proposal for 120 000 refugees from Greece, Hungary and Italy to other EU member states. This number will be on top of the 40 000 already proposed and that will be adopted on the 14 September;
- a permanent relocation mechanism for all member states which can be triggered any time by the Commission to help any EU-member state experiencing a crisis situation;
- a common European list of safe countries of origin to help those member states faced with a growing number of asylum applications by enabling a swifter processing of asylum applications;
- a common Return Handbook and an EU Action Plan on Return;
- a €1.8 billion Trust Fund for Africa to improve stability and address root causes of irregular migration flows;

For more information:

[Council website: EU response to migratory pressures](#)

[European Commission proposals](#)

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<sup>2</sup> Article 78(3) TFUE: "In the event of one or more member states being confronted by an emergency situation characterised by a sudden inflow of nationals of third countries, the Council, on a proposal from the Commission, may adopt provisional measures for the benefit of the member state(s) concerned. It shall act after consulting the European Parliament."