



Commission proposes new Emergency Assistance instrument for faster crisis response within the EU

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As the refugee crisis continues to put pressure on many European Member States, the Commission proposes a faster way for support to be provided to tackle wide-ranging humanitarian crises within the EU.

Today the European Commission has proposed an Emergency Assistance instrument to be used within the European Union to provide a faster, more targeted response to major crises, including helping Member States cope with large numbers of refugees.

The initiative comes as the refugee crisis reaches an unprecedented scale with the need to provide immediate emergency support in several Member States hosting large amounts of refugees on their territories.

From the outset the Commission has been committed to supporting its Member States through all means possible and the proposal is a direct follow up to the European Council of 18-19 February, when governments called on the Commission to develop the capacity to provide emergency assistance internally.

European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** said: "*With this proposal, we will be able to deliver emergency assistance for crises much faster than before, inside the European Union. Right now, there's no doubt that this will be particularly needed to support refugees. No time can be lost in deploying all means possible to prevent humanitarian suffering within our own borders. Today's proposal will make €700 million available to provide help where it is most needed. I now look to European governments and the European Parliament to quickly back the proposal.*"

Member States whose own response capacities are overwhelmed by urgent and exceptional circumstances, such as the sudden influx of refugees or other major disruptions could benefit from this new instrument. The provision of emergency assistance will be based on Article 122(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. This will allow for support to be provided in the fastest and broadest possible way, in a spirit of solidarity between Member States.

Emergency assistance would be provided in close coordination with Member States and organisations such as UN agencies, non-governmental organisations and international organisations, and include the provision of basic necessities such as food, shelter and medicine to the large numbers of children, women and men currently arriving in EU countries.

The Commission will urgently propose, to the European Parliament and to the Council as the budgetary authorities, an amending budget for 2016 to create the budget line for the instrument. The estimated needs for 2016 are €300 million with a further €200 million each for use in 2017 and 2018, respectively.

Funding would therefore not be diverted from existing external humanitarian aid programmes outside the EU. The EU remains committed to continue leading the international humanitarian response to the Syria crisis, amongst other global emergencies worldwide where EU humanitarian aid saves lives.

Background

The Commission already announced on 10 February its intention to develop the EU's capacity to provide humanitarian assistance internally and the European Council conclusions of 19 February supported this intention. Building on the experience of the EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department, humanitarian assistance would be directed at covering the great humanitarian needs of refugees and migrants within EU Member States

In response to the refugee crisis within the EU, so far a number of other instruments, such as the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) the Internal Security Fund (ISF) or the European Fund for the Most Deprived (FEAD) have already been providing significant financial resources for assistance within Europe. These instruments have proven their use, but they were not designed to address large

humanitarian-scale needs.

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism (EUCPM) has been used for mobilising material support such as shelter, hygiene material and medical supplies as well as expertise to support Hungary, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia in coping with the increased numbers of arrival. This solidarity mechanism, however, was designed for situations where one Member State is in need – it does not provide funding and relies on voluntary offers from Member States whose own support capacities may be overstretched at this time.

The Proposal for emergency support therefore aims at filling a gap - to have a more appropriate instrument available at Union level for addressing humanitarian needs within the territory of the EU.

For More Information

[MEMO/16/483](#): Addressing humanitarian crises within the European Union

[Proposal for a Council Regulation on the provision of emergency support within the Union](#)

[Communication of the Commission](#)

[Visual factsheet](#)

[The European Agenda on Migration](#)

Website of Christos Stylianides, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Management:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/stylianides_en

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