



Delivering on migration and border management: Commission reports on progress made under the European Agenda on Migration

Brussels, 28 September 2016

The Commission is today reporting on the progress made on the EU's relocation and resettlement schemes and the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement.

At the same time, it is outlining the steps still needed to be taken by Greece in view of a future resumption of Dublin transfers from other Member States while also reporting on the temporary border controls carried out at internal Schengen borders under the Council recommendation of 12 May 2016.

European Commission First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"The implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement has continued, and the reduction in attempts to cross the Aegean and in deaths at sea has confirmed its core rationale. I also welcome the efforts of Member States to increase relocation and resettlement. However, those who can do more should do so urgently. We can only effectively manage asylum and migration in Europe, and preserve the Schengen area, if we all work together in a spirit of solidarity and responsibility."*

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: *"All our measures on migration are interlinked. The EU-Turkey Statement has led to concrete positive results. The increased efforts made by Member States over the past months on relocation, with more than 1,200 relocations alone in September, demonstrate that relocation can be speeded up if there is political will and a sense of responsibility. The success of our common approach over the last months is essential for the success of everything else, including a gradual return to the Dublin system and a normal functioning of Schengen. Relocation has to succeed."*

Important progress on relocation and resettlement

One year after the entry into force of the relocation schemes, the groundwork needed for making relocation work has been laid and significant progress achieved. September recorded 1,202 relocations, the highest monthly number so far, twice as high as during the previous reporting period. In total, **5,651** persons have been relocated from Greece (**4,455**) and Italy (**1,196**). The efforts by Italy and Greece, the Member States of relocation, EU agencies and international organisations have resulted in close to 100% fingerprinting, strengthened security, and a significant increase in the number of relocation applicants and a substantial acceleration of relocation transfers, particularly in the latest months from Greece. Member States should continue building on these encouraging results. With the increased capacity of the Greek Asylum Service, and if Member States step up their efforts, it should notably be possible to relocate the remaining relocation candidates present in Greece (around 30,000) within the next year.

Member States have continued to increase their efforts on resettlement – offering legal and safe pathways to **10,695** people so far of the agreed 22,504 under the July 2015 scheme. An additional **1,071** Syrian refugees have been resettled from Turkey between June and 27 September, tripling the number of people resettled and bringing the total number from Turkey under the EU-Turkey Statement to **1,614**.

Continued progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement

The sharp and continued **decrease of people crossing irregularly** or losing their lives in the Aegean continues to be proof of the Statement's effectiveness so far. The average daily arrival of 85 persons per day since June, in comparison to over 1,700 per day in the month preceding the implementation of the Statement and 7,000 per day in October 2015, clearly shows that the business model of smugglers can be broken. **Return operations** have continued to be carried out with an additional 116 persons returned since the Second Report, bringing the total number of persons returned under the Statement to 578, and the Greek administration has made further efforts to increase the rate of returns, in full compliance with EU and international law.

The Commission has continued to accelerate the delivery of funding under the **Facility for Refugees in Turkey**, having already allocated a total amount of €2.239 billion of the €3 billion foreseen for 2016-2017 to address the most urgent needs of refugees and host communities in Turkey. The amounts contracted have increased to €1.252 billion. The Commission is making all necessary efforts

to ensure an acceleration of disbursements under the Facility, which have now reached €467 million.

The Commission has continued to encourage Turkey's efforts to complete the delivery of all seven outstanding benchmarks of the **Visa Liberalisation Roadmap** as soon as possible and has agreed with Turkey to continue an engaged dialogue and to find practical solutions for cooperation and progress to secure the legislative and procedural changes needed. The Commission will present its fourth report on the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement in December 2016.

Back to Schengen: towards the return to a Schengen area without internal border controls

The Commission is today reporting on the temporary controls carried out by Austria, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway under Article 29 of the Schengen Borders Code, under the Council recommendation of 12 May 2016. The Commission's Report concludes that the temporary internal border controls by these five Schengen Member States have remained within the conditions set by the Council in its Recommendation. Whereas the continued implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement has resulted in a considerable reduction in the arrival of migrants, the Commission does not see a need for proposing amendments to the Council Recommendation at this stage.

The Commission Report does not in any way prejudge the decision that will be taken at the expiry on 12 November of the six-month period set out in the Recommendation, namely whether to prolong the current temporary internal border controls. The Commission's objective remains the lifting all internal border controls and returning to a normally functioning Schengen area as soon as possible, as stated in the ["Back to Schengen" Roadmap](#).

Dublin: Progress on measures to restore Dublin transfers to Greece

Today the Commission adopted its Third Recommendation on the specific measures that Greece needs to take to have a well-functioning asylum system and fully implement the EU asylum standards that apply to all member States. The objective is to be able, in the future to gradually resume transfers of asylum seekers, on a case by case basis from other Member States under the Dublin Regulation. The Recommendation notes that despite the difficult situation in Greece, there have been continuous efforts and progress by the Greek authorities, assisted by the Commission, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Member States and international organisations to improve its asylum system since the adoption of the first Recommendation in February and the second Recommendation in June.

This progress includes completing a large-scale pre-registration exercise, increasing the overall reception capacity as well as doubling the capacity of the asylum service, establishing new Appeals Committees and legislation on free legal aid and education for school-aged asylum seekers and refugees. However, there is still further progress to be achieved, notably on reception facilities, access to asylum procedures and structures for vulnerable applicants, before a resumption of Dublin transfers to Greece can be considered. A future resumption of transfers to Greece under the Dublin Regulation should also take account of the impact this challenging situation has on the overall functioning of the asylum system, and should therefore start gradually, on a case by case basis. The Commission envisages taking stock of the progress made in this regard and issuing further recommendations before the end of the year.

For more information

- Relocation and resettlement:

[Communication](#): Sixth Report on Relocation and Resettlement

Annex 1: [Relocations from Greece](#)

Annex 2: [Relocations from Italy](#)

Annex 3: [Resettlement State of Play](#)

[FACTSHEET: Relocation and Resettlement](#)

[FACTSHEET: Managing the refugee crisis: EU financial support to Greece](#)

[Frequently asked questions](#): Establishing an EU Resettlement Framework

[The European Agenda on Migration](#)

- EU-Turkey Report

[Communication](#): Third Report on the progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement

[Frequently asked questions](#): Implementing the EU-Turkey Agreement

[FACTSHEET: Facility for Refugees in Turkey](#)

[Presentation: Management of the Migration Crisis in Greece since October 2015/Implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement since 20 March 2016](#)

- Back to Schengen:

[Report](#) on the implementation of the Council Recommendation for temporary border controls in exceptional circumstances

[Frequently asked questions](#): A coordinated EU approach for temporary internal border controls

Press release: [Back to Schengen: Commission proposes Roadmap for restoring fully functioning Schengen system](#)

[FACTSHEET: "The Schengen Rules Explained"](#)

- Dublin recommendation:

[Third recommendation](#) on urgent measures to be taken by Greece in view of the resumption of transfers under the Dublin Regulation

- European Border and Coast Guard

[FACTSHEET: European Border and Coast Guard](#)

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