



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 20 December 2012

Increasing support for Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries

The European Commission has today adopted the second special measure for Syrian refugees, to step up its response to the needs of increasing numbers of displaced Syrians who fled to Lebanon and Jordan. To complement the humanitarian assistance already provided, the special measure worth almost €21 million will help respond to the medium and long term needs of refugees and their host communities in the areas in Lebanon and Jordan most affected by the influx of refugees.

"Since the start of the civil unrest in Syria, the EU has stood by the Syrian people. Today's decision will provide additional support to those families that are fleeing the violence in Syria and to the communities that are hosting them, helping children and young people to maintain a sense of hope and purpose to build a better future," Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, Štefan Füle, said.

Actions under this special measure will focus on making basic education and related services accessible to children of refugees and host communities alike, as well as psychosocial support and children-related services. The programme will also provide assistance to a broader group of beneficiaries through vocational training and livelihood development (for example, in Lebanon, providing skills training and grants to start small businesses for women victims or those at risk of gender based violence). Special attention will be given to children, young people and other vulnerable groups.

Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response Kristalina Georgieva recalled the important role the neighbouring countries play in helping the Syrian refugees: *"I have just returned from Lebanon and Jordan, where I saw at first-hand the rapidly rising tide of Syrian refugees. Their numbers have risen to more than half a million and I have no doubt that within a few months, unless the conflict ends, that figure will double. I want to thank all the governments and peoples of Syria's neighbouring countries for their generosity. I appeal to them to keep their borders open at this time of crisis. We can, must and will do more to help these innocent victims of violence and I urge everyone to be generous in this hour of need."*

After more than 20 months of civil unrest and increasing violence, more than 400 000 Syrians have found refuge in the neighbouring countries and this number keeps growing. Almost 60% of them have fled to Jordan and Lebanon and more than half of them are under the age of 18. The vast majority of refugees are based in host communities, although increasing numbers of Syrians in Jordan live in camps. As the influx of refugees continues to increase, already limited resources and infrastructure in the host communities are stretched. By ensuring that its activities also benefit the host communities, this EU special measure aims to prevent potential sources of tension between refugees and their hosts.

In view of the deteriorating situation on the ground, the EU remains committed to supporting the Syrian population to the best of its abilities. The special measure amounts to a total of €20.85 million and is financed from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

Out of the overall financing €10 million will be available to Lebanon and €10.85 million to Jordan.

Background

In **Lebanon**, the overall objective of the measure is to mitigate the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon. More precisely, the action will seek to address the medium and longer term needs of both Syrian refugees and host communities in areas with high Syrian refugee concentration. To this aim, the EU will continue its close co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as other local implementing partners, in order to help children of the targeted areas to access quality education and other services.

The Lebanese institutions concerned, as well as local communities, will also be strengthened in their capacity to address the refugee influx and high impact projects will be supported to effectively address the medium to long term needs of the refugees and host communities.

This measure increases up to €41.5 million the EU funding allocated to Lebanon targeting the needs of Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities.

Moreover, this new €10 million envelope is a concrete contribution to the priorities identified in the Government's Response Plan to the Syrian Crisis presented on 3 December 2012.

The EU is currently formulating with the Government and UN agencies an additional contribution for Lebanon to be presented in the beginning of 2013. This additional funding will respond to the needs identified by both the Government of Lebanon and the UN Regional Response Plan launched in Geneva on 19 December 2012.

In **Jordan**, the overall objective will be to provide vulnerable Syrian children and children in host communities with access to free formal education and other relevant skills development and mentoring services. The activities will also be carried out with UN organisations active in the education and vocational training sector to allow vulnerable school-aged children and young people to access school or alternative learning activities in the community and in the camp(s). Young people and women will be offered learning opportunities to provide them with better chances of future economic and social integration or reintegration. The services provided will also benefit the host communities, thus alleviating the potential for tensions locally, and the strain on national and local resources and infrastructures.

This measure increases up to €20.85 million the EU funding allocated to Jordan targeting the needs of Syrian refugees.

All actions in this special measure will be implemented in close coordination with EU humanitarian assistance; linking relief, rehabilitation and development, and avoiding any overlap with humanitarian assistance or with other donors' contributions which are addressing other urgent priorities.

For more information

EU-Syria relations:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/syria/syria_en.htm

On the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP):

http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index_en.htm

Contacts :

[Peter Stano](#) (+32 2 295 74 84)

[Anca Paduraru](#) (+32 2 296 64 30)

[David Sharrock](#) (+32 2 296 89 09)