European Commission - Press release

EU launches Humanitarian Air Bridge operation for Syria to deliver emergency supplies and boosts humanitarian funding

Brussels, 13 December 2024

The European Commission is launching a new Humanitarian Air Bridge operation for those most in need in Syria, to deliver emergency healthcare and other essential supplies, as well as increasing its humanitarian funding.

President of the European Commission, Ursula **von der Leyen**, said: *"The collapse of the Assad regime offers new hope for the Syrian people. But this moment of change also carries risks and brings hardship. With the situation on the ground so volatile, our help to the people of Syria is ever more important. This is why we have increased our humanitarian funding for this year, to more than €160 million. We are also launching a humanitarian air bridge carrying vital supplies, such as food, medicines and shelter items. I will be further discussing the delivery of humanitarian aid in my meeting with President Erdogan on Tuesday. We stand with the people of Syria."*

EU funded aid flights will bring a total of 50 tonnes of health supplies from EU stockpiles in Dubai, to be transported to Adana, in Türkiye for distribution across the border in the coming days. A further 46 tonnes of health, education and shelter items from another EU stockpile in Denmark will be trucked to Adana and provided to Unicef and the World Health Organisation for distribution within Syria.

The Commission has also mobilised an additional €4 million to address the most urgent humanitarian needs of people, bringing total humanitarian support to €163 million in 2024.

This new funding aims to scale up humanitarian assistance channelled through EU humanitarian partners already operating in Syria to ensure critical aid is provided swiftly. This includes the provision of trauma kits, support of critical gaps in healthcare facilities, emergency shelter kits and sanitation support. It also includes funding for the distribution of food parcels to 61,500 people in northern Syria.

Over the past 13 years, the EU and its Member States mobilised more than €33.3 billion in humanitarian, development, economic and stabilisation assistance, supporting Syrians both inside the country and across the region.

Background

Fourteen years of war left people in Syria facing mass displacement, widespread food insecurity, crumbling infrastructure, economic decline, and preventable diseases, with some 16.7 million people in urgent need of assistance. Escalating hostilities in Lebanon also worsened the situation, pushing over 560,000 individuals to cross into Syria to flee conflict. The impact on civilians due to the latest political developments includes displacement, deaths, and injuries. The situation remains fluid, as hostilities are ongoing in the northeast of the country and humanitarian needs multiply.

Despite many challenges, including the rapid changes in humanitarian access, the EU continues to provide impartial humanitarian aid to those in need across Syria.

For More Information

Syria country page

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Quote(s):

"The collapse of the Assad regime offers new hope for the Syrian people. But this moment of change also carries risks and brings hardship. With the situation on the ground so volatile, our help to the people of Syria is ever more important. This is why we have increased our humanitarian funding for this year, to more than €160 million. We are also launching a humanitarian air bridge carrying vital supplies, such as food, medicines and shelter items. I will be further discussing the delivery of humanitarian aid in my meeting with President Erdogan on Tuesday. We stand with the people of Syria."
Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission - 13/12/2024

"We are scaling up our humanitarian assistance with concrete support for those forcibly displaced and affected by the difficult situation in Syria. Our new Air Bridge flights will deliver aid to save lives. As we witness a historic change that might offer opportunities to finally reach peace and stability for people in Syria, we must not lose sight of the humanitarian consequences of intensifying hostilities and conflict on civilians."
Hadja Lahbib, Commissioner for Equality, Preparedness and Crisis Management - 13/12/2024

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