



## Commission presents Recommendation for a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme with Turkey for refugees from Syria

Strasbourg, 15 December 2015

Ahead of the European Council, the European Commission has today presented a Recommendation for a voluntary humanitarian admission scheme to create a system of solidarity and responsibility sharing with Turkey for the protection of persons displaced by the conflict in Syria to Turkey.

The scheme should be flexible to take into account the sustainable reduction of numbers of persons irregularly crossing the border from Turkey into the European Union as a result of Turkey's actions. Member States are invited to participate in the scheme on a voluntary basis taking into account their capacities. The scheme presented today will only apply to persons who have been registered by Turkish authorities before the EU-Turkey meeting on 29 November.

European Commission President Jean-Claude **Juncker** said: *"Being a great continent comes with great responsibilities. Today we are recommending that our Member States offer temporary protection to vulnerable people fleeing violent conflict in Syria, in line with their individual capacities. This scheme will help establish a fair sharing of the responsibility for the protection of displaced Syrian refugees in Turkey. Turkey is a key partner in our efforts to support these unfortunate people in a dignified way. Many of these people are already being given protection by Turkey, and some will now be protected by the European Union. We agreed with Turkey to reduce together the human misery which comes with irregular migration and to bring order into migratory flows to the European Union."*

If the irregular flows into Europe through Turkey are successfully reduced, Member States are invited to admit from Turkey persons in need of international protection who have been displaced by the conflict in Syria. Schengen associated states are also invited to participate. Given the unpredictability of the migration flows within the region, the number of persons to be admitted will be regularly determined taking into account the processing capacity of the UNHCR, the overall numbers of displaced persons staying in Turkey, including the impact on these numbers of the sustainable reduction of irregular border crossings from Turkey into the EU. A review clause and monitoring mechanism provides for the suspension or adaptation of the scheme if there is no substantial reduction in irregular border crossings from Turkey to the EU.

Distribution among participating States should be based on absorption, reception and integration capacities, as well as population size, GDP, past asylum efforts and national unemployment rates. The persons benefiting from this scheme should be granted subsidiary protection or an equivalent temporary status, for no less than one year.

The Commission is proposing an expedited process where Member States would admit persons in need of international protection based on a recommendation by the UNHCR following a referral by Turkey. Identity, security and health checks will be carried out, and candidates' vulnerability and existing family ties will also be assessed. A standardised admission procedure should take place prior to the admission, and should be a collaborative effort between Member States, Turkey, the UNHCR, and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO). While individual Member States should take the final decision on admission, participating States should cooperate through common processing centres and mobile teams working in Turkey. The admission procedure should be concluded as soon as possible, at the latest within six months.

To prevent secondary movements within the European Union, candidates will be informed of their rights and obligations before admission and will receive cultural orientation support before they leave Turkey. Participating States would also commit to take back persons they have granted protection on their territory, in the case of secondary movements by these persons.

In addition to Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon are the other two major refugee hosting countries in the region. It is essential that a comprehensive approach is taken which should also include further specific measures of support for Jordan and Lebanon. The Commission will work with the Member States, the authorities in Jordan and Lebanon and the UNHCR to develop innovative partnerships,

including with the private sector, to address the needs of refugees in the region. The implementation of this scheme should form part of this comprehensive approach and once started would allow the existing resettlement efforts to focus on Jordan and Lebanon.

## Background

Turkey is currently hosting more than two million persons displaced by the conflict in Syria. Over 750,000 asylum seekers and economic migrants have crossed into the EU from Turkey in 2015.

Humanitarian Admission is an expedited process by which countries admit displaced persons, based on a limited set of criteria, from third countries to provide them with protection. It is an alternative approach to resettlement which is a more resource intense process which usually takes around 12 months to complete.

When today's proposals for a voluntary admission scheme with Turkey take effect, the resettlement efforts under the July Recommendation may be focused primarily on Jordan and Lebanon.

On 15 October the Commission presented to the European Council a [Joint Action Plan](#) negotiated with Turkey by First Vice-President Timmermans to jointly manage the Syrian refugee crisis. The Council endorsed this Action Plan, and convened an [EU-Turkey Summit](#) on 29 November which activated the Action Plan and re-energised the EU-Turkey relationship. The European Union has committed to increasing political engagement with Turkey, providing Turkey with significant financial support, accelerating the fulfilment of the visa liberalisation roadmap and re-energising the accession process with Turkey. The proposed humanitarian admission scheme is an important flanking measure of the mutual commitments contained in the Joint Action Plan with Turkey.

On 24 November the Commission proposed a legal framework – a [Refugee Facility for Turkey](#) – to coordinate and streamline financial actions to deliver support to Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey and their host communities.

## For more information

[Commission Recommendation for a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme for Refugees from Syria staying in Turkey](#)

[Council Conclusions on Resettlement of 20,000 persons in need of international protection](#)

[EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan](#)

[EU-Turkey Summit Joint Statement](#)

[Refugee Facility for Turkey](#)

FACTSHEET: [EU Support to Lebanon and Jordan since the Onset of Syria Crisis](#)

[The European Agenda on Migration](#)

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### Related documents

[Irregular Border Crossings into Greece from Turkey graph.pdf](#)