



Relocation and Resettlement: Member States need to sustain efforts to deliver on commitments

Brussels, 9 November 2016

With an additional 1,157 persons resettled since the last report, Member States have continued to deliver on their commitment to provide legal channels for people in need of protection, bringing the total up to 11,852 – more than half of the agreed 22,504 under the July 2015 scheme. Regarding relocation, the overall positive trend over the past few months is confirmed with an additional 1,212 relocations taking place during the reporting period. However, despite being a short-term drop due to specific circumstances, the exceptional decrease compared to the high number of relocations in September demonstrates that further efforts are still needed from Member States to sustain the positive trend reached until now.

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: *"After the positive trends we have seen on both relocation and resettlement following summer, now is the moment to sustain them. I welcome the work done by Member States in their collective efforts on relocation and resettlement so far. I would like to see a stable number of pledges, swift procedures and a stable number of relocations every week. More needs to be done, and swiftly, to address the increasing arrivals in Italy and the many thousands stuck in Greece. After one year into the schemes, we expect Member States to step up their efforts to deliver on their commitment and to fully comply with their obligations."*

Relocation

After the record 1,372 transfers which took place in September, October proved to be a transitional month with a slower pace of relocation than during previous reporting periods. From 28 September until 8 November, 1212 people were relocated, with 921 from Greece and 291 from Italy. The lower number of transfers in October (779, of which 549 from Greece and 230 from Italy) reflects in particular the low number of pledges made during the month of August, which has had a knock on effect in terms of lower transfer rates. Nevertheless, the number of relocations planned and carried out so far in November indicates that this downturn should be an exception – a dip rather than a long-term drop. However, this temporary setback in an otherwise positive trend confirms that further efforts are needed to increase the number of transfers per month and to sustain a steady relocation pace. In addition, although the relocation of unaccompanied minors has begun to increase, more needs to be done to ensure that all unaccompanied minors eligible for relocation are swiftly transferred.

There are currently around 24,000 people of nationalities eligible for relocation in Greece and around 20,400 of nationalities eligible for relocation who have arrived in Italy since January 2016. If relocation efforts are stepped up, it should be possible to relocate all those eligible within the relocating period (until September 2017).

With the ongoing arrival of migrants in Italy, now at 29,844 persons since 26 September, and the still challenging humanitarian situation in Greece which currently hosts over 61,700 migrants, relocation remains crucial to alleviating the pressure in these countries. The Commission reiterates its call to Member States that have not made any pledges or have not relocated any asylum seeker to do so without delay.

Furthermore, the Commission is calling on Member States that have already participated in the relocation scheme to continue pledging and relocating on a regular basis and in accordance with the size of their allocation, to accelerate response times to relocation requests, to share information regarding reasons for rejections via the secured channel offered by Europol and to increase their reception capacities to accommodate relocation applicants.

The Commission is also inviting Greece and Italy to continue increasing their processing capacity. Specifically, the Commission is encouraging Greece to establish its remaining relocation centres and Italy to implement the arrangements agreed with Europol as well as the first relocation transfers of unaccompanied minors.

Resettlement

Implementation continues to be on track under the EU resettlement scheme of July 2015, with more than half of the agreed 22,504 resettled so far. Based on the information received from the participating States, by 7 November 11,852 people had been resettled under the resettlement scheme to 21 resettling States (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom). Sweden, the United Kingdom and Finland as well as associated states Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Iceland have already fulfilled their pledges.

The number of resettlements from Turkey under the EU-Turkey Statement, included in the overall figure of resettlements, has continued to increase as Member States proceed with their assessment of files referred to them by Turkey via the UNHCR. Since 4 April 2016, 2,217 Syrians have been resettled from Turkey to the EU, including 603 since the previous report. The pace of resettlement has been maintained, and in addition to Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden resettlement has also taken place to Norway. Member States should continue delivering on their resettlement commitments, including as part of the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement.

Background

The temporary emergency relocation scheme was established in two Council Decisions in September 2015, in which Member States committed to relocate up to 160,000 people from Italy and Greece (and if relevant from other Member States) by September 2017.

On 8 June 2015, the Commission adopted a proposal on a European Resettlement Scheme, which was followed by an agreement among the Member States on 20 July 2015 to resettle 22,504 persons in clear need of international protection.

Following the EU Leaders' Summit with Turkey on 29 November 2015, the [EU-Turkey Action Plan](#) was adopted. The voluntary admission scheme proposed by the Commission on 15 December 2015 is a key element of the Plan, aimed at supporting Turkey in managing refugees and offering a safe and legal channel for persons in need of protection.

The [European Council on 7 March](#) 2016 called for an acceleration of the implementation of relocation, in order to alleviate the humanitarian situation in Greece. In its [conclusions of 20 and 21 October](#), the European Council reiterated its call for further action to accelerate the implementation of the relocation and resettlement schemes in light of the urgent need to provide support to Greece and Italy. Today's report responds to the Council's Conclusions, and to the Commission's commitment under the ["Back to Schengen"](#) Roadmap.

The EU Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016 provides that for every Syrian being returned from Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU. This principle applies as of 4 April 2016. Priority is given to migrants who have not previously entered or tried to enter the EU irregularly.

Following the EU-Turkey Statement, the Council adopted an amendment to the 2nd Council Decision on relocation on 29 September to make 54,000 places not yet allocated out of the of the 160,000 places foreseen for relocation available for the purpose of legally admitting Syrians from Turkey to the EU.

The Commission on 13 July proposed a permanent [EU Resettlement Framework](#) to establish a common set of standard procedures for the selection of resettlement candidates and a common protection status for persons resettled to the EU to streamline and better focus European resettlement efforts in the future.

The Commission adopted on [16 March](#) 2016 the First Report on Relocation and Resettlement. The Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Reports were adopted respectively on [12 April](#), [18 May](#), [15 June](#), [13 July](#) and [28 September](#) 2016.

For more Information

[Communication](#): Seventh 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](#)

[Council Decision on the relocation of 40,000 people from Italy and Greece](#)

[Council Decision on the relocation of 120,000 people from Italy and Greece](#)

[Council Decision \(EU\) 2016/1754 of 29 September 2016 amending Decision \(EU\) 2015/1601 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece](#)

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

Press release: [A Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme with Turkey for refugees from Syria](#)

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

[EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016](#)

IP/16/3614

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