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PRESS RELEASE

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EU mobilises additional financial support for Lebanese communities hosting Syrian refugees

The European Commission has announced an additional financial assistance package, in total €21 million, for Lebanon to mitigate the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis in the country. This support will, in particular, benefit hosting communities in the regions most affected by the influx of Syrian refugees.

The new EU support will aim to reduce tensions caused by health and environmental hazards (e.g. mitigating consequences of massive concentration of different sort of rubbish, polluted water, etc.) and to revive the local economy and create job opportunities for vulnerable groups. This will be achieved by upgrading solid-waste-management capacities and through improving the productivity of small-scale sustainable agriculture.

Štefan Füle, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy stated: *"The EU clearly understands that it is crucial to support not only Syrian refugees, but also communities hosting them. In its response to mitigate consequences of the Syrian crisis to Lebanon, the new support will contribute to relieve the current pressure by upgrading solid-waste management municipal services and also by boosting local initiatives to create jobs."*

The newly adopted assistance package consists of two programmes: the first one, worth €7 million, will focus on helping local economies in Lebanese hosting communities to recover by providing livelihoods and job opportunities in the agricultural sector through the improvement of the productivity of small-scale sustainable agriculture. Among others the project will support the implementation of agricultural infrastructure projects that will improve irrigation distribution and quality of water and will provide individual farmers with business advisory services. The project will also assist them in designing business plans, preparing cash flow projections and loan applications for a specific Fund.

The second one, worth €14 million, aims to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of Solid Waste Management in the areas of Lebanon most affected by the influx of Syrian refugees. It will increase and improve waste disposal services and enhance the overall management of local administrations in the Solid Waste Management sector.

Background

The financing comes from the Support for Partnership, Reforms and Inclusive Growth (SPRING) programme for 2013. This financial contribution reflects the EU policy towards the Neighbourhood and its key principle of "More for more" ('More for more' means that the more a country progresses in its democratic reforms and institutional building, the more support it can expect from the SPRING programme). SPRING 2013 is financed from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument.

New assistance package brings the total amount of financial assistance provided by the EU to Lebanon in relation to the Syrian crisis to more than €354 million in total (humanitarian and development assistance combined).

Through this assistance the EU will contribute, in line with the priorities of the Government of Lebanon Response Plan to the Syrian Crisis, to alleviate the medium and longer term needs of both refugees from Syria and host communities in areas in Lebanon with high refugee concentrations.

While being the smallest of Syria's neighbouring countries, Lebanon hosts the highest number of Syrian refugees. Based on figures from the UNHCR, at the beginning of April, the total number of Syrian refugees was over 1,000,000 (953,000 refugees registered and 47,000 refugees still awaiting registration).

For more information

[Website of the DG Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid](#)

[Website of EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle](#)

[European Neighbourhood Instrument \(ENI\)](#)

[Website of the EU Delegation to Lebanon](#)

Contacts :

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

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

For the public: **Europe Direct** by phone **00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11** or by [e-mail](#)