

EU opens new chapter in its relations with Syria

NEWS ARTICLE

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European Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** and President of the European Council Antonio Costa visited Damascus today to discuss the renewed bilateral relations with Syria. They met with Syrian President Ahmed al-Shaara to discuss this **new chapter in bilateral relations**, focused around three pillars:

- A new political partnership supporting a peaceful and inclusive transition and reconciliation within Syria, and the country's regional re-integration;
- Enhanced trade and economic cooperation, including through Syria's involvement in initiatives under the Pact for the Mediterranean, backed by a substantial financial package for 2026 and 2027 to enable socio-economic recovery, reconstruction and facilitation of private investment;
- Financial support package of around €620 million for 2026 and 2027, which includes humanitarian aid, early recovery support and bilateral support.

President **von der Leyen** said: *“Over one year ago, decades of fear, silence, and state violence finally began to give way to hope, opportunity, and the possibility of renewal. We know that the path to reconciliation and recovery is challenging. Because healing, rebuilding lives and creating trust in institutions takes time. We are here today to work for Syria and for all Syrians. To deliver on the goal of a new peaceful, inclusive, and safe Syria.”*

The President acknowledged the significant steps taken by the interim authorities in spite of the remaining challenges. The path to sustainable reconciliation and reconstruction needs to be underpinned by effective reforms, which the EU will continue to support.

Stepping up related efforts and Syria's involvement in initiatives under the Pact for the Mediterranean is a key element for a successful inclusive transition and its future integration into the regional and global economy.

Background

The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 opened the doors for a new Syria and for renewed bilateral relations. The EU reaffirmed its commitment to **stand with the Syrian people** and to support a peaceful and inclusive, Syrian-led and Syrian-owned transition to help **build a better future for all Syrians**.

Since 2011, EU support has been reliable and unwavering, providing both political and financial assistance amounting to over €38 billion. In March 2025, the transitional authorities attended for the first time the Ninth Brussels Conference, where the pledges raised amounted to €5.8 billion for Syria and its neighbours. The EU pledged €2.5 billion for 2025 and 2026.

In 2025, the EU lifted all economic sanctions on Syria and successfully co-organised with the authorities the Day of Dialogue in Damascus, gathering over 300 representatives from Syria's civil society. The event served to build trust, enhance dialogue and reinforce the foundations for an inclusive future for all Syrians.

The EU has also mobilised more than €424 million for Syria, including a €175 million package to support Syria's socio-economic recovery and institution-building, as well as to promote transitional justice, accountability and human rights.

Beyond needs inside Syria, the Commission continues supporting and addressing the needs of refugees from Syria and their host communities in the region.

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Quote(s)

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Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

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