



Commission proposes temporary suspension of Sweden's obligations under the EU relocation mechanism

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The European Commission has today proposed to grant Sweden a one-year suspension from its obligations under the EU relocation scheme, in view of the unique strain on its capacities created by the sharp increase in applications for international protection. The number of applications has increased year-on-year by 60%, and monthly applications doubled between August and September 2015, with a further 60% increase in October 2015.

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: "*Our Swedish friends are in a unique situation and we must take into account the exceptional increase in asylum applications that they are facing. The Commission has proposed to the Council to grant Sweden a one-year suspension of its obligations, to allow its asylum and reception system to recover from the exceptional burden it is under.*"

The Relocation Schemes adopted by the Council in September 2015 provide for the possibility for a Member State to request the temporary suspension of its obligations in the case of a sharp shift of migration flows creating an emergency situation and a sudden inflow of third country nationals.

Eurostat figures confirm such a sharp increase of asylum applications in Sweden. From 1 January to 31 October 2014, Sweden received 68,245 applications for international protection, while for the same period in 2015 it received 112,040 applications. The number of monthly applications in August 2015 was 11,735, which more than doubled to 24,261 in September 2015, and increased by a further 61% to 39,055 applications in October 2015. Sweden has the highest number of applicants for international protection per capita in the EU. This situation has practical consequences on the ability of the Swedish asylum system to cope with the applications being received and to guarantee the reception conditions required under the Common European Asylum System.

Under the EU Relocation Scheme, the Council may adopt provisional measures for the benefit of Member States facing an emergency situation, based on a proposal by the Commission, and after consulting the European Parliament. Today's proposal by the Commission falls within this context, with Sweden facing an emergency situation characterised by a sudden inflow of third country nationals creating severe problems for its asylum system.

Background

On 13 May 2015, the European Commission presented its [European Agenda on Migration](#), setting out a comprehensive approach for improving the management of migration in all its aspects.

On 27 May 2015, the European Commission already came forward with a [first package of implementing measures](#) of the European Agenda on Migration, including relocation and resettlement proposals, and an EU Action plan against migrant smugglers.

On 9 September 2015, the Commission proposed [a new set of measures](#), including an emergency relocation mechanism for 120,000 refugees, as well as concrete tools to assist Member States in processing applications, returning economic migrants, and tackling the root causes of the refugee crisis.

On 14 September, Home Affairs Ministers adopted the [Decision](#) to relocate 40,000 people in clear need of international protection from Italy and Greece.

On 22 September, Home Affairs Ministers adopted the [Decision](#) to relocate 120,000 people in clear need of international protection from Italy and Greece and other Member States directly affected by the refugee crisis.

For more information:

[Proposed Decision on temporary suspension of Sweden's relocation obligation](#)

[Relocation Decision Concerning 40,000 people](#)
[Relocation Decision Concerning 120,000 people](#)
[European Agenda on Migration](#)

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