



European Agenda on Migration: Consolidating progress made

Brussels, 15 November 2017

In the run-up to the European Council in December, the Commission and the High Representative are today setting out the work still required to consolidate the positive results achieved over the past years.

With the total number of irregular crossings along the main migratory routes having decreased by 63% in 2017, collective efforts to protect the EU's external borders, cooperate with partner countries to tackle the root causes of irregular migration, improve the protection of migrants and win the fight against smugglers are showing concrete results. Looking ahead, and noting that external and internal engagements on migration are closely interlinked, the Commission and the High Representative are calling for further concerted action by the EU, Member States and partner countries to advance in parallel and to maintain the intensity of the EU's efforts on all fronts and thereby better manage migration together.

First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"Since 2015, we have made real progress through our joint work to manage migration better in a comprehensive way. However, we are not there yet and this issue will stay with us for some time. So we must continue our comprehensive and joint efforts with even more energy and determination to consolidate our achievements and deliver the full European Agenda on Migration. Migration remains the top concern of our citizens and it should also remain our top priority."*

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: *"In the last two years, our energy has been dedicated to tackling, in a humane and effective way, one of the most challenging phenomena of our times. We have been supporting the IOM and UNHCR in helping people in distress and assisting voluntary return. We have put in place the External Investment Plan that will mobilise €40 billion in private investments. We have been working with our African friends in addressing the root causes of migration. Cooperation and partnership have always been and will remain our approach."*

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: *"We are exiting crisis mode gradually and we are now managing migration in a spirit of partnership and shared responsibility, inside and outside the EU. With over 34,400 new resettlement pledges received so far, I welcome the strong commitment shown by Member States to reduce irregular and dangerous routes and enhance safe and legal pathways, showing solidarity with host countries outside the EU."*

Addressing root causes and saving lives

Since September, the EU has continued to step up its support to address the root causes of migration:

- In Turkey, the EU is well on track to contract the €3 billion under the **Facility for Refugees** by the end of 2017. Since October, one million of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees now receive monthly electronic cash transfers.
- Two years after its launch, the **EU Trust Fund for Africa** is increasing stability and resilience by supporting economic development and migration management in countries facing crises of different natures and emergency situations, with programmes worth almost €2 billion having been approved so far.
- Increased focus has been put on improving the often appalling conditions faced by migrants in **Libya**, in close cooperation with the UNHCR, UNICEF and the IOM. Almost 4,000 migrants and more than 2,000 displaced Libyan families have received medical assistance and basic support, while medical help and assistance is being delivered to migrants, including in detention centres.

As well as addressing smuggling and saving lives in the desert and at sea:

- The EU Trust Fund for Africa supports work by the IOM and the Nigerien authorities to carry out **search and rescue missions** in the desert with over 1,100 migrants having been brought to safety after being abandoned by smugglers in 2017.
- Over 15,000 migrants, including over 10,000 from Libya, have already benefitted from **assisted voluntary return**, and projects are in development to step up work with Libya's neighbours to help more migrants return home from Libya.

- With 13 assets deployed, **EU operations Triton and Sophia** have continued to support Member States' actions at sea to save lives and apprehend suspected traffickers and smugglers. In Niger, EU support to the Nigerien authorities has led to the arrest of over 100 suspected traffickers and smugglers.

EU solidarity and support with refugees and host countries

The **EU resettlement scheme** adopted in July 2015 is due to be successfully completed and resettlements under the **EU-Turkey Statement** are continuing at a steady pace – in total, **over 25,700** persons have been resettled since the launch of the schemes. In September, the Commission launched a **new scheme** to resettle at least 50,000 of the most vulnerable refugees, in particular along the Central Mediterranean route, by October 2019. So far, over **34,400 pledges** have been received from 16 Member States.

Two years on, and with only around 750 persons in Greece and 3,100 in Italy left to relocate, the **EU relocation scheme** is successfully coming to an end. **Over 31,500 persons** have been relocated so far. Whilst almost all Member States have respected their legal obligations, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland have so far not taken any measure to address the grievances included in the Commission's reasoned opinion from July – the infringement procedures therefore remain ongoing.

Delivering on return and readmission

With the conclusion of an agreement on **Standard Operating Procedures** on return with **Bangladesh** in September, progress has been made on a key element of the EU's approach to better managing migration. The EU will continue pursuing **structured practical cooperation** with other key countries under this new approach. Engagement with Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Mali will be stepped up, and the ongoing readmission negotiations with Nigeria and Tunisia should be finalised as soon as possible.

By November, new operational steps to support Member States on return operations will be put forward by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, which will be serving as a focal point on return at EU level.

Next steps towards a stronger, more effective and fairer EU migration and asylum policy

For the **Africa Trust Fund** to continue supporting programmes, in particular in Libya and North Africa, Member States need to increase their financial contributions.

On **resettlement**, Member States should continue pledging to reach the target of at least 50,000 places in order to start the planning of concrete resettlement processes, including supporting the evacuation mechanism from Libya in cooperation with UNHCR, and endorse the Standard Operating Procedures for the Voluntary Humanitarian Admissions Scheme, finalised by the Commission and Turkey.

With **return** rates at EU level remaining unsatisfactory, this is an area which requires the commitment of all to ensure concrete progress is made. For their part, Member States are asked to collect and provide better data on returns to enable a better assessment of the effectiveness of returns and where the assistance of the of the European Border and Coast Guard could usefully contribute. The EU should also continue collectively exploring the mobilisation of all incentives and leverages to achieve progress on return, as endorsed by the European Council.

Under the **EU-Turkey Statement**, the Greek authorities need to step up the efforts and provide adequate resources to ensure effective returns to Turkey and deliver on this key element of the Statement. Only 1,969 returns have been carried out so far since March 2016.

Background

Upon taking office, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker entrusted a Commissioner with special responsibility for Migration, Dimitris Avramopoulos, to work together with the other Commissioners, under the coordination of First Vice-President Frans Timmermans, on a new policy on migration as one of the [10 priorities of the Political Guidelines](#) of the Juncker Commission.

On 13 May 2015, the European Commission proposed a far-reaching strategy, through the [European Agenda on Migration](#), to tackle the immediate challenges of the ongoing crisis, as well as to equip the EU with the tools to better manage migration in the medium and long term, in the areas of irregular migration, borders, asylum and legal migration.

Today's Communication presents the developments since early September and identifies key current issues requiring particular attention. It brings together, for the first time, the different work streams of the progress reports on the EU-Turkey Statement, Relocation and Resettlement, the European Border

and Coast Guard Agency and the Partnership Framework with third countries into a in a single report reflecting the comprehensive nature of the work to deliver the European Agenda on Migration,

For More Information

[Progress Report on the European Agenda on Migration](#)

[Annex 1: EU Trust Fund for Africa](#)

[Annex 2: Joint Action Plan on the Implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement](#)

[Annex 3: Facility for Refugees in Turkey](#)

[Annex 4: European Border and Coast Guard](#)

[Annex 5: Returns](#)

[Annex 6: Relocation](#)

[Annex 7: Resettlement](#)

[Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council - Progress report on the European Agenda on Migration](#)

[Factsheet: Resettlement – Ensuring safe and legal access to protection for refugees](#)

[Factsheet: Relocation – EU solidarity between Member States](#)

[Factsheet: Central Mediterranean Route](#)

[Factsheet: The European Border and Coast Guard Agency](#)

[Factsheet: Towards a more efficient and credible EU return policy](#)

[Factsheet: Financial support to Greece](#)

[Factsheet: Financial support to Italy](#)

[Factsheet: EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#)

[Factsheet: The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey](#)

[#MigrationEU](#)

IP/17/4484

Press contacts:

[Natasha BERTAUD](#) (+32 2 296 74 56)

[Tove ERNST](#) (+32 2 298 67 64)

[Catherine RAY](#) (+32 2 296 99 21)

[Esther OSORIO](#) (+32 2 296 20 76)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)