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WORKING DOCUMENT

From:	Presidency
To:	MOCADDEM Roundtable

Subject:	Action file on Syria
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In view of the Mocadem Roundtable of 29 May 2026, delegations will find attached the new "Action file – Syria".

Introduction / objectives

The fall of the Assad regime at the end of 2024 and the engagement of Syria in a political transition and socio-economic recovery process have created new openings for support on the ground in Syria and for EU coordinated efforts on all type of returns.

The EU supports a **peaceful and inclusive, Syrian-led transition, as well as socio-economic recovery and reconstruction efforts** to enable Syrians to rebuild their lives. At the same time, the escalation of conflict in the Middle East end of February 2026, in addition to some negative consequences on the economy, is leading to a significant number of people crossing into Syria (Syrian nationals and Lebanese crossing from Lebanon) which is increasing pressure on the capacities of the Syrian transitional authorities and the conditions in the country.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] To this end, the Syrian Transitional Authorities have announced a “*Syria without camps*” policy.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] To this end, coordinated engagement from Member States is necessary. Most people going back to Syria are doing so voluntarily. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

According to UNHCR, between 8 December 2024 and 27 February 2026 (before the escalation of conflict in the Middle East), a total of 1 470 609 persons had gone back to Syria, mainly from neighbouring countries: including from Türkiye (around 710 000, as of 25 February 2026), Lebanon (around 521 000), Jordan (over 184 000), Egypt (asylum closure requests submitted for around 34 000), and Iraq (around 7 212). Reportedly, between December 2024 and 19 March 2026, 1 861 650 internally displaced persons are estimated to have returned to their areas of origin/selected destinations.

[illegible]

[illegible]

2. Supporting on the ground internally displaced persons and Syrians having gone back to Syria	<i>Prioritise support for stability and socio-economic recovery in Syria, working with the Syrian transitional authorities, UNHCR and other partners towards enabling conditions conducive to internally displaced persons going back as well as safe, dignified, voluntary (when applicable) and sustainable returns.</i>	• Commission/EEAS/Member States: ongoing support.	• The EU is <u>supporting local governance</u> in selected locations with high number of returns or great potential for return providing support directly to municipal councils through the Nexus Response Mechanism (NRM) -EUR 31.5 million implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) from January 2026 to December 2028. • The EU is providing <u>support to housing, land and property rights (HLP)</u> and <u>civil documentation</u> with a programme implemented by UN-Habitat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNHCR, IOM, and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). This programme started in January 2023 and will run until the end of 2026 (EUR 12.5 million contract with UN-Habitat). • The EU is <u>supporting vulnerable Syrian refugees</u> under the Special Measure 2024/2025 through the EU Support for Safe Returns and a Stable Future for Syrian Refugees. The programme is implemented by UNHCR, ILO and IOM since November 2025 and until October 2029 (EUR 40 million in Syria and	• Accelerate implementation of the Special Measure 2025 for Syria (EUR 139 million), including: ○ Continue support to housing, land and property rights (HLP) through an allocation of EUR 10 million. ○ Team Europe Initiative Technical Assistance Hub (EUR 14 million) ○ Support to the health sector / rehabilitation of Homs Al-Rustan Hospital (EUR 15 million).
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			EUR 40 million for similar needs in Lebanon -see below). It aims at strengthening <u>governance and institutional capacity</u>, expanding <u>livelihood opportunities</u> and delivering <u>targeted assistance to both internally displaced persons and refugees going back to Syria</u>.	
3. Supporting Syrian refugees and host communities in neighbouring countries	Work with the authorities in partner countries in the region (and in coordination with Syrian transitional authorities and UN partners) to support safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable returns of Syrian refugees who make a well-informed decision to return to the country. At the same time, the EU keeps supporting host countries and communities. Continue to advocate for maintaining the protection space for Syrian refugees and supporting host countries in the region in the delivery of basic services for refugees and	• Commission/EEAS/Member States: ongoing support.	<u>In Türkiye:</u> • Project ‘Supporting Voluntary, Safe and Dignified Return of Syrians to Safe Zones in Syria (Family Based Voluntary Return)’ on <u>voluntary returns</u> with the objective of increasing the effectiveness of the Turkish authorities in facilitating voluntary, safe, dignified and orderly returns to Syria in line with international standards. The project is implemented by UNHCR, it started in 2025 and is running until December 2028 (EUR 95 million). • Programme ‘Supporting International Protection Decision/Temporary Protection Processes of Türkiye’ to <u>strengthen protection and refugee registration processes</u>. It is being implemented by UNHCR and directly linked to the voluntary returns project (above). It started in 2025 and is running until December 2028 (EUR 60 million).	<u>In Türkiye:</u> ■ [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] • These actions are being funded from the EUR 2 billion allocated in February 2024 in assistance to Türkiye. EUR 195 million from the 2027 budget still needs to be programmed and discussions with the Turkish authorities are ongoing. <u>In Lebanon:</u>

	vulnerable host communities. Exploring other durable solutions to the protracted displacement of Syrian refugees, including resettlement, labour mobility and complementary pathways, notably for refugees who may not be able to return even in case of a relative improvement of the conditions in Syria.		<u>In Lebanon:</u> • The EU is <u>fostering durable solutions for Syrian refugees</u> under the Special Measure 2024/2025 through the EU Support for Safe Returns and a Stable Future for Syrian Refugees. The programme is implemented by UNHCR, ILO and IOM since November 2025 and until October 2029 (EUR 40 million in Syria -see above- and EUR 40 million in Lebanon). Regarding voluntary returns, the support in Lebanon focuses on <u>ensuring that the decision-making of refugees is well-informed</u> and removing obstacles to voluntary returns, <u>facilitating pre-departure orientation and safe and dignified transportation</u> for those who decide to return. The relevant Lebanese institutions, including border authorities, receive support in <u>strengthening their capacities to manage displacement</u>. <u>In Jordan:</u> • The EU is contributing to social assistance and services to Syrian refugees in Jordan (EUR 80 million per year) and to their sustainable skills development with a view to expand access to durable solutions, including voluntary returns (EUR 35 million component out of EUR	• The EUR 500 million package for the period 2024-2025 adopted in August 2024 to support Lebanon's stability, security and reforms includes EUR 368 million for basic services (education, health, water and sanitation, social assistance) and protection of refugees from Syria and vulnerable Lebanese, as well as durable solutions for refugees, including voluntary returns to Syria. <u>In Jordan:</u> • The Commission has allocated grants in response to the Syria crisis
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4. Coordinating return actions concerning Syrian nationals in EU Member States	<i>Address barriers to return, as well as strengthening readmission and reintegration capacity in Syria.</i> <i>Coordinate Member States' engagement, including on the operationalisation of voluntary 'go-and-see visits'.</i> <i>Make a distinction between the situation and framework applicable to beneficiaries of international protection and/or those legally residing in the EU on one hand; and Syrian nationals without a right to stay who have been</i>	• Commission/EEAS/Member States/Frontex: engagement ongoing.	• In October 2025, the Commission published informal guidance through 'questions and answers on voluntary go-and-see visits'¹. In some Member States, Syrian beneficiaries of international protection can visit Syria to determine the viability of a possible permanent and voluntary repatriation, whilst maintaining their international protection status in the EU. Syrians with a valid residence permit in the EU but without international protection status could also undertake such visits. • The Commission and the EEAS have been holding strategic discussions with Member States on a joint EU-coordinated outreach to the Syrian transitional authorities on readmission, including on capacity building.	• The EU will continue to work on the socio-economic recovery and reconstruction of Syria, especially in areas where returns are taking place, addressing barriers to return and supporting community stabilisation. • The EU will keep contributing to the Syrian administrative capacity to absorb and handle returns. The recently established EU Technical Assistance Hub in Damascus can help to deliver support to institutional capacity. • Lessons learnt and best practices in countries neighbouring Syria can inform the development of EU support and the

¹ [f5245470-2596-438d-b6c3-b2286850dca6_en](#).

	issued a return order, on the other hand, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]		• Discussions on returns coordination from the EU to Syria take place in the High-Level Network for Returns. • Frontex is supporting voluntary return operations since March 2025 and has activated the EU Reintegration Programme since June 2025. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] In general, according to Eurostat, the number of Syrian nationals without a right to stay in the EU returned to Syria in 2025 increased significantly compared to 2024 (+442%, 8 265 vs 1 870).	provisions of assistance to beneficiaries of international protection (and Syrians with a valid residence permit in the EU) who wish to go back to Syria voluntarily.
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ANNEX I - Member States actions

Action	Objective	Budget	Timeframe

ANNEX: Common messages

- Welcome the **advancement in the EU-Syria bilateral relations**, including the reciprocal high-level visits, the holding of the EU-Syria High-Level Political Dialogue and the full resumption of the 1978 Cooperation Agreement.
- Express support for a **peaceful and inclusive transition, as well as socio-economic recovery efforts** to enable Syrians to rebuild their lives.
- Welcome the **openness of the Syrian transitional authorities to engage in discussions** on key policy areas with the EU, including migration.
- [REDACTED]
- Express the need to factor in **current developments in the Middle East**, especially regarding Lebanon, as the evolving situation is increasing pressure on the capacities and conditions on the ground in Syria. [REDACTED]
- Reiterate that the EU will remain committed, under a Team Europe approach, to **support stability and socio-economic recovery** inside Syria, working with the Syrian transitional authorities, UNHCR and other partners.
- Support the need to improve conditions in Syria to **achieve safe, dignified and sustainable returns to the country and address barriers to return**, as well as strengthening readmission and reintegration capacity inside Syria.
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]. The EU is supporting the reintegration of Syrian nationals with no right to stay in the EU through the European Reintegration Programme by Frontex, that is implemented in Syria through a local partner.
- Share that the EU promotes a **coherent approach to voluntary returns of refugees from the neighbouring countries and durable solutions at regional level**. This approach should be coordinated with partners, starting with the Syrian transitional authorities and the authorities in host countries as well as UN organisations (especially UNHCR). Actions on the ground should be people-centred and conflict-sensitive.
- Confirm that the EU is working with the authorities in partner countries in the region (and in coordination with Syrian transitional authorities and UN partners) to support safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable returns of Syrian refugees who make a well-informed decision to return to the country. The EU also keeps **supporting host countries and communities** and continues to advocate for maintaining the protection space for Syrian refugees and the delivery of basic services for refugees and vulnerable host communities.
- Reiterate that EU also supports exploring **other durable solutions** to the protracted displacement of Syrian refugees, including resettlement, labour mobility and complementary pathways, notably for refugees who may not be able to return even in case of a relative improvement of the conditions in Syria.