



European Commission Statement following the decision at the Extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council to relocate 120,000 refugees

Brussels, 22 September 2015

Today, European Home Affairs Ministers have taken an important decision to relocate 120,000 refugees from Greece, Italy and other Member States directly affected by the refugee crisis, less than 3 weeks after the Commission came forward with its proposal. The Commission welcomes the efforts undertaken by all Member States to reach this result, and salutes in particular the tireless work of the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council.

Following this decision, the EU is now in a position to relocate a total of 160,000 people in clear need of international protection in the coming two years. The Commission and the EU agencies will organise together with the Member States the necessary coordination to implement the mechanism on the ground.

The European Commission has been consistently and continuously working for a coordinated European response on the refugees and migration front. Relocation is part of a comprehensive approach to deal with the ongoing refugee crisis. Interior Ministers are now expected to move forward on the other proposals made by the Commission, including the EU List of Safe Countries of Origin and the further reform of the Dublin system, at the next Justice and Home Affairs Council on 8 October. At the same time, the root causes of the refugee crisis must be addressed. That is why tomorrow Heads of State and Government will discuss the immediate priority actions which are necessary to address the instability in our vicinity, and the refugee pressures on neighbouring countries.

The Commission will continue to work in close cooperation with the European Parliament, the Council and the 28 EU Member States, as well as with key third countries such as Serbia and Turkey.

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 25-26 June 2015, the [European Council](#) agreed to move forward on the proposals made by the European Commission in the European Agenda on Migration, focusing on relocation and resettlement, returns and cooperation with countries of origin and transit.

On 20 July 2015, the [Justice and Home Affairs Council](#) agreed to implement the measures as proposed in the European Agenda on Migration, notably to relocate people in clear need of international protection from Italy and Greece over the next two years, starting with 32,256 in a first step, and to resettle 22,504 displaced persons in clear need of international protection from outside the EU.

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 17 September, the European Parliament [voted](#) in support of the Commission's proposal to relocate 120,000 refugees, which was [welcomed](#) by the Commission.

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.

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