



EU-TURKEY STATEMENT

Two years on

April 2018

On 18 March 2016, EU Heads of State or Government and Turkey agreed on the **EU-Turkey Statement** to end irregular migration flows from Turkey to the EU, ensure improved reception conditions for refugees in Turkey and open up organised, safe and legal channels to Europe for Syrian refugees. Two years later, irregular arrivals remain 97% lower than the period before the Statement became operational, while the number of lives lost at sea has decreased substantially. The EU has supported Turkey in its efforts to host refugees and had by the end of 2017 fully contracted the first tranche of the €3 billion from its Facility for Refugees in Turkey.

Turkey has followed up on its commitment to step up measures against people smuggling and has been cooperating closely on resettlement and return. The EU-Turkey Statement has consistently delivered tangible results since it was agreed two years ago. While continuous efforts need to be made by all sides and all EU Member States, the EU-Turkey Statement has become an important element of the EU's comprehensive approach on migration.

THE EU-TURKEY STATEMENT IN ACTION

A GAME CHANGER

The effects of the EU-Turkey Statement were immediate. Thanks notably to the cooperation with the Turkish authorities, arrivals decreased significantly – showing clearly that the business model of smugglers exploiting migrants and refugees can be broken. From 10,000 in a single day in October 2015, daily crossings have gone down to an average of around 80 today, while the number of deaths in the Aegean decreased from 1,175 in the 20 months before the Statement to 130. That is almost one million people who have not taken dangerous routes to get to the European Union, and more than 1,000 who have not lost their lives trying.

ARRIVALS ON THE ISLANDS IN 2015

October 2015:
Daily average
6,360 arrivals

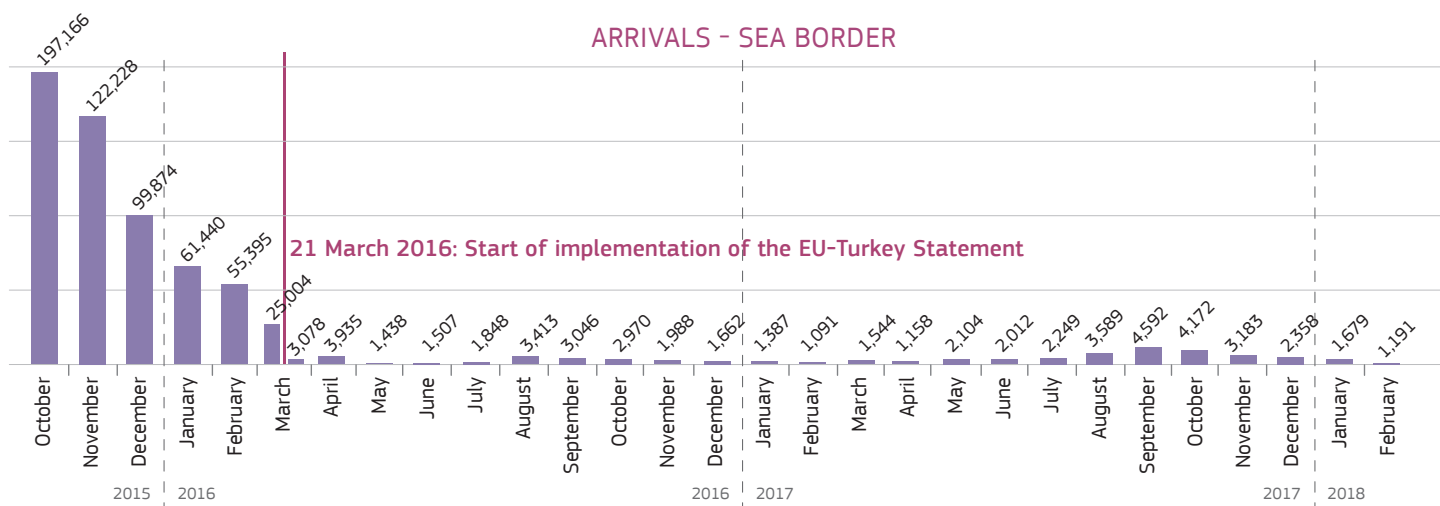
December 2015:
Daily average
3,222 arrivals

ARRIVALS ON THE ISLANDS SINCE THE EU-TURKEY STATEMENT

Since 21 March 2016:
Daily average
80 arrivals

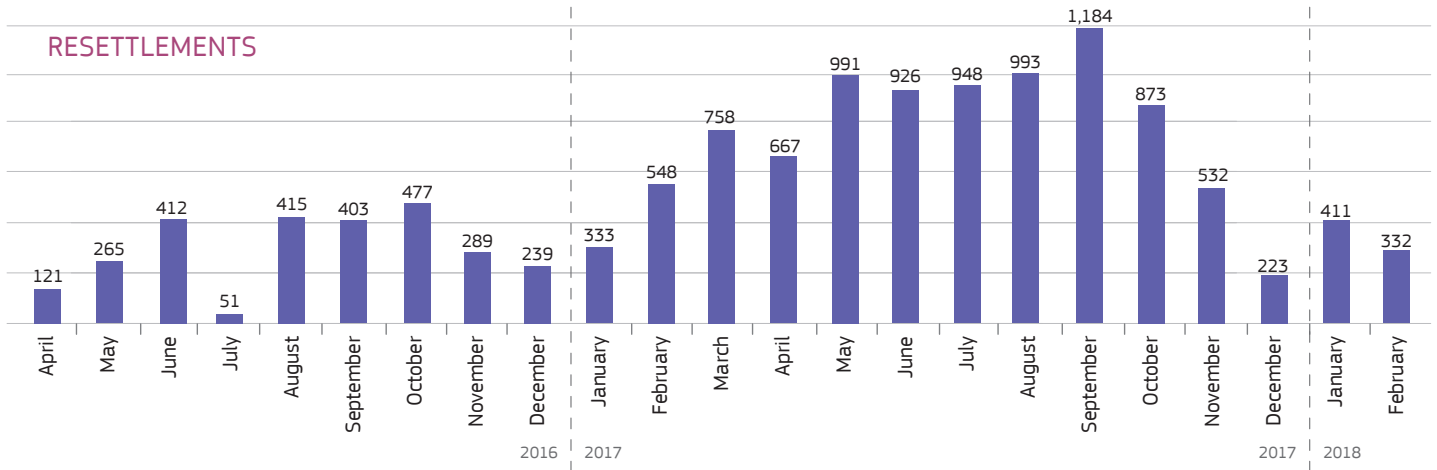
Drop of
97%

ARRIVALS - SEA BORDER



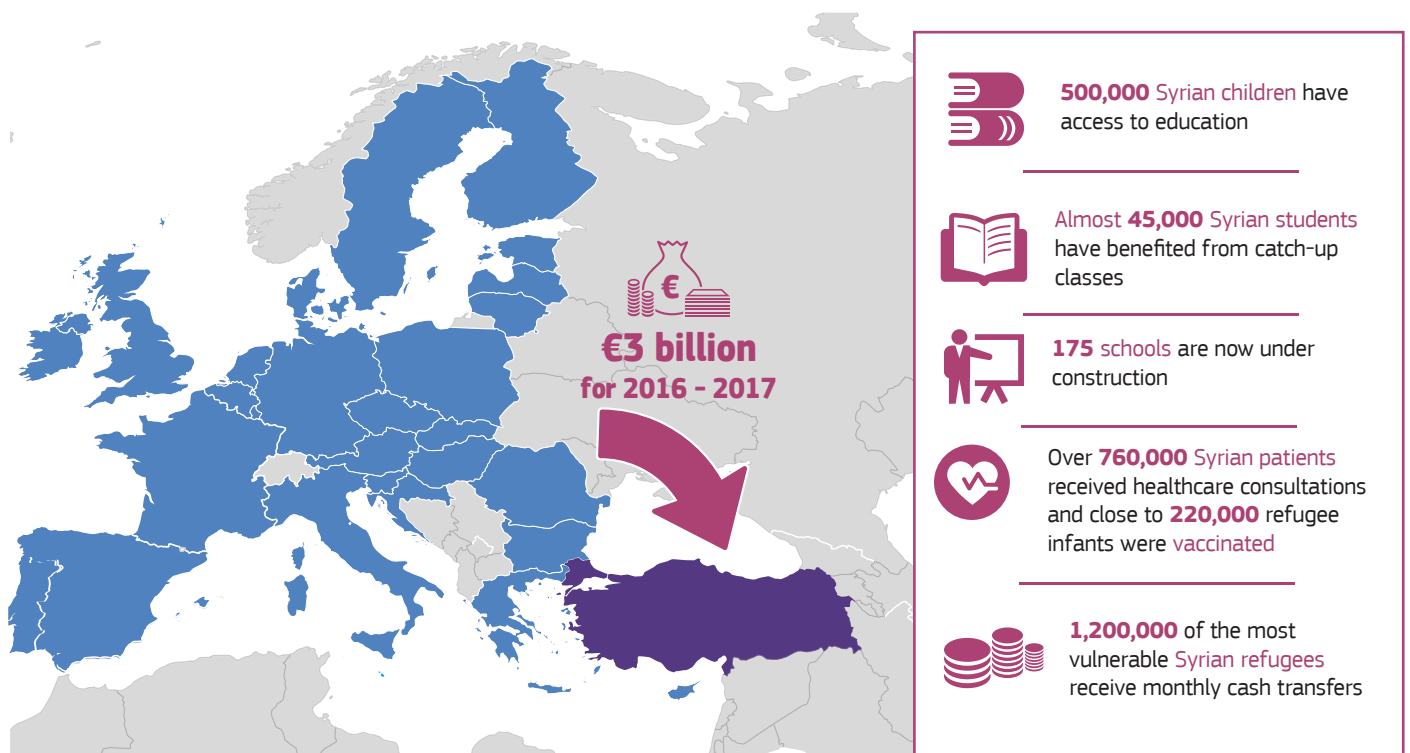
RESETTLEMENT: EU SOLIDARITY WITH SYRIAN REFUGEES

Resettlements under the EU-Turkey Statement are continuing at a steady pace – in total, over 12,476 Syrian refugees have been resettled from Turkey to EU Member States so far.



EU SUPPORT TO SYRIAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY

The EU is supporting Syrian refugees in Turkey with €3 billion for 2016 and 2017 through its Facility for Refugees in Turkey – €1 billion from the EU budget and €2 billion contributed by EU Member States. By the end of 2017, the EU had fully committed and contracted the €3 billion under the Facility – €1.85 billion has already been paid out so far. The money goes to projects to address the needs of refugees and host communities with a focus on humanitarian assistance, education, health, municipal infrastructure and socio-economic support. Following through on its commitment, the Commission is mobilising the second €3 billion tranche of the Facility, with €1 billion from the EU budget. The Commission calls on Member States to follow suit quickly and contribute their share of €2 billion, so that the successful and effective work of the Facility can continue uninterrupted.



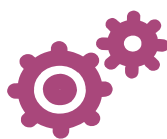
CONTINUED SUPPORT TO GREECE

The Commission and the EU Member States are providing significant support to the Greek authorities in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, to improve migration management and reception conditions in Greece. EU actions focus in particular on helping to alleviate the situation on the Greek islands.

	The year before the EU Turkey Statement	Two years after the EU Turkey Statement
Registration rate at hotspots	8% in October 2015	100%
Reception capacity in Greece (on the islands)	2000 in October 2015	49,349 (of which 9,163 in the hotspots and other structures)
Capacity of Greek asylum service staff on the islands	16	Total asylum service staff on the islands: 365 (including 110 EASO experts)
First instance decisions on asylum applications on the islands	0	40,008
Returns of irregular migrants to Turkey	627	2,164
Relocations	569	21,847
Arrivals	988,703	57,450
Loss of lives	1,145	130
EU Agency support for Greece		EASO experts: 135 European Border and Coast Guard officers: 801



Over €1,3 billion in EU funding has been allocated to Greece to support migration management since the start of 2015, including €393 million in emergency assistance and over €440 million for projects under the EU Emergency Support Instrument.



To secure the progress achieved through the EU-Turkey Statement and to ensure full implementation of the EU actions to alleviate the pressure on the Greek islands, the EU Coordinator for the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement Maarten Verwey elaborated a Joint Action Plan with the Greek authorities to further accelerate asylum processes, increase the number of migrants returning from the Greek islands to Turkey, establish appropriate security measures in the hotspots and to accelerate relocation.

MORE PROGRESS ON RETURNS TO TURKEY NEEDED

The pace of returns to Turkey from the Greek islands under the Statement remains very slow, with only 2,164 migrants returned since March 2016. Significant additional efforts are still needed to reduce the backlog of asylum applications, address the insufficient pre-return processing and detention capacity in Greece to improve returns.

In addition, 2,401 migrants have returned voluntarily from the islands since June 2016, supported by the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme (AVRR). Since the beginning of 2016 a total of 12,569 migrants have returned voluntarily from both the Greek islands and mainland through the programme.