Lebanon is the neighbouring country most affected by the Syrian crisis. The EU pays tribute to the outstanding efforts the country is making since the outset of the Syrian refugee crisis. The EU remains deeply committed to assisting Lebanon in dealing with the crisis. Overall, the EU is the leading donor in the international response to the Syrian crisis, with over €5.7 billion from the EU and Member States collectively mobilized in humanitarian and development assistance. This support goes both to Syrians in their country, and to refugees and their host communities in neighbouring Jordan, Lebanon, as well as Iraq and Turkey.

At the London conference on "Supporting Syria and the region" at the beginning of February 2016, the EU pledged €1 billion for Lebanon and Jordan for the years 2016 and 2017. Lebanon is expected to receive significant additional support in tackling the refugee crisis.

Lebanon hosts more than 1.1 million refugees, representing about 25% of the country’s population, which is the highest per-capita concentration of refugees worldwide. Within a short period of time, the EU was able to mobilise a 200% increase of funding for Lebanon to effectively address the country’s huge needs from the refugee crisis.

Overall, the European Commission has allocated more than €639 million in assistance to refugees and vulnerable communities in Lebanon. This includes:

- €356.1 million from the humanitarian budget, including €87 million for 2016
- close to €250 million from the European Neighbourhood Instrument
- more than €30 million from the Instrument contributing to Peace and Stability to address longer term resilience needs of affected civilians, both refugees and Lebanese host communities.

This support comes on top of the over €219 million in regular programmed bilateral cooperation for Lebanon under the European Neighbourhood Policy, which brings the overall support to €858 million. The main part of non-humanitarian funding is allocated to the education sector, but also towards health, livelihoods and local infrastructures.

Sources: UNHCR, UNRWA, IOM
DELIVERY OF AID

Since 2015, an increasing part of non-humanitarian aid for Syria’s neighbouring countries to cope with the refugee crisis is channelled through the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the ‘Madad Fund’. The Trust Fund aims to bring a more coherent and integrated EU response to the crisis by merging various EU financial instruments and contributions from Member States and other international donors into one single flexible and quick mechanism. The Trust Fund primarily addresses longer term resilience needs of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq, as well as the hosting communities and their administration. In the future, the Trust Fund may start financing resilience activities inside Syria and could become a funding tool for reconstruction, resettlement and governance support following a political settlement of the crisis. With recent pledges from 20 Member States - amounting to over €63 million - and contributions from various EU instruments, the Fund is now reaching a total volume of more than €700 million. Additional funds will be committed in 2016 and beyond.

The Operational Board of the Trust Fund has already approved actions for a total amount €428 million including €130 million support to Lebanon, with a focus on increasing access for refugees to education and training, as well as livelihoods and health.

HUMANITARIAN AID TO LEBANON

Since 2012, the European Commission has provided €356.1 million in humanitarian funding in Lebanon, focusing on the most vulnerable refugees. This includes the €87 million recently announced for 2016.

EU humanitarian funding has contributed to informal education, cash assistance programmes, secondary healthcare for lifesaving cases, and shelter-including water and sanitation- to improve the living conditions of families. Protection remains a critical sector in terms of counselling and legal assistance and service to survivors of violence. Thanks to its partners, in 2016 the EU’s humanitarian aid to Lebanon reached around 665,000 Syrian refugees.

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS – CHILDREN AND YOUTH

According to UNHCR, close to 417,000 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are aged between 3 and 14 years old. While exact numbers are not available, it is estimated that nearly half of Syrian refugee children do not have access to any form of education, exposing them to physical and/or psychological violence, child labour and exploitation, early marriage, and recruitment by armed groups. At the London conference, the participants committed that by the end of the 2016/2017 school year, all refugee children and vulnerable children in host communities will be in quality education with equal access for girls and boys.

PREVENTING A LOST GENERATION OF SYRIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Since the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, the EU has committed €168 million for education and child protection purposes. These funds are spent on formal and non-formal education, including assisting refugee students to achieve expected competencies in core academic skills through ‘Accelerated Learning Programmes’.

In particular, current EU funds channelled through UNICEF are paying enrolment fees for 66,000 refugee children. EU support is thus contributing to increase the enrolment of Syrian refugees in the public school system and supporting the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education in reaching the target set up at the London conference.

By the end of the 2016/2017 school year, EU assistance programmes will have supported equal access to quality education - for boys and girls - for all refugee children and also for Lebanese children whose living conditions make them particularly vulnerable.