



PRESS RELEASE

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EC increases humanitarian assistance in Lebanon as winter approaches

The European Commission is increasing its humanitarian assistance to help Syrian refugees in Lebanon by an additional €12 million.

The bulk of the extra funding - €10 million - will be allocated to help the most vulnerable refugees as winter approaches, when temperatures can fall to below zero. Another €2 million will be allocated for secondary health care projects, to ensure families continue to receive medical services in hospitals for life saving treatment.

The additional funding will deliver vital assistance via unconditional cash grants to help tens of thousands of refugees in Lebanon and to identify some of the most vulnerable families who are not currently receiving any help. The target is to increase the total number of families receiving assistance over the winter. Some of the most vulnerable Lebanese families will also benefit.

Some of the funding will be targeted in projects to help around half a million refugees improve and rehabilitate substandard and unfinished buildings ahead of the winter season.

"Winter in Lebanon, particularly in high-altitude areas, can be a particularly cruel time for families who do not have proper shelter, who are living in tents or unfinished buildings without windows and proper insulation", said Bruno Rotival, Head of office for the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) in Lebanon.

"Providing extra help at this time of year literally can be a life-saver. We are trying to ensure that the most vulnerable do receive help over the winter – even though resources are very stretched", he added.

The European Commission funding will be allocated to key humanitarian partner organisations in Lebanon to bring vital assistance to populations in need. Assistance is being distributed by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and international non-governmental organisations, including CARE, Save the Children, Medair, Solidarités and GVC (Gruppo di Volontariato Civile).

Background

The European Union continues to spearhead the international response to the Syria crisis with around €2.9 billion of total budget, mobilised by the Commission and Member States collectively in humanitarian, development, economic and stabilisation assistance.

At the UN General Assembly in September 2014, the European Commission announced an extra €50 million in humanitarian funding to respond to the needs of the people caught up in the Syrian crisis. This allocation brings the total humanitarian contribution since the beginning of the conflict to €665 million. The funding is aimed at addressing some of the most urgent needs of the most vulnerable affected persons in Syria and neighbouring countries, most notably for the expansion of healthcare and water supply services.

This year, ECHO has allocated €39 million in funding for Lebanon (including the €12 million newly-announced allocation).

For more information

The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department:
http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm

Factsheet on Syria crisis
http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/syria_en.pdf

Emergency Response Coordination Centre:
http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/ERC_en.pdf

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