



EUROPEAN UNION

THE EU AND THE CRISIS IN SYRIA

The EU is a full member and active participant in the International Syria Support Group (ISSG). It fully supports the UN-led process, notably the efforts of the UN Special Envoy for Syria. The EU welcomes the agreement announced by the United States and Russia, as co-chairs of the ISSG, on 10 September 2016, reinstating the cessation of hostilities in Syria. All parties to the conflict, other than groups designated as terrorist organisations by the United Nations Security Council must now ensure the effective implementation of cessation of hostilities, enable the lifting of all sieges, and allow sustained, countrywide humanitarian access to those in need. Progress on the issue of detainees and missing persons must also follow.

The resumption of fighting since the initial Cessation of hostilities agreement has again shown that there can be no military solution to the conflict, and that the elimination of Da'esh and other UN-listed terrorist entities in Syria also requires a political solution to the civil war. Stability in Syria will only be restored through a Syrian-led political process leading to a peaceful and inclusive transition, based on the principles of the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012 and in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions notably 2254). The EU is also ready to provide support to stabilisation and reconstruction once political transition has started.

The EU has called for an end to the unacceptable violence in Syria, which continues to cause the suffering of millions of Syrians and immeasurable destruction of infrastructure. Attacks on **cultural heritage are also an unfortunate consequence of the conflict**. The EU continues to condemn in the strongest terms the continuing violence and the widespread and systematic violations of **human rights**.

The European Union has responded decisively to the violent repression of anti-government protests in Syria which began in March 2011, by **suspending its cooperation with the Syrian Government** under the European Neighbourhood Policy and gradually extending **restrictive measures**. The EU supports the opposition delegation to the intra-Syrian talks, through the High Negotiations Committee (HNC), as well as Syrian civil society actors.

The EU's objective is to bring an end to the conflict and enable the Syrian people to live in peace in their own country. The latest EU position is stated in the **Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on Syria and the situation in Aleppo** published on 18 August 2016 and in the **Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of 23 May 2016**.

In response to the conflict in Syria and its consequences both in Syria and in neighbouring countries, a communication was adopted in June 2013 mapping out a **comprehensive EU approach to the Syrian crisis**. This was followed by the implementation by the EU and its Member States' of a comprehensive **EU regional strategy for Syria, Iraq and the Da'esh threat** adopted in March 2015 and reviewed in May 2016.

The EU has also expressed its concerns about the involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria, which is further fuelling the conflict and posing a threat to regional stability. The **Syria and Iraq : Counter Terrorism/Foreign Fighters Strategy** was endorsed at the EU Foreign Affairs Council meeting of 20 October 2014. The EU supports by non-military means the efforts by more than sixty States in the Global Coalition to counter Da'esh.

The EU has been at the forefront of the work done to put Syrian **chemical weapons** under international control, to eventually lead to their destruction.

The **EU Delegation to Syria** scaled down its activities for security reasons in late 2012, but the Delegation expatriate staff continue to operate from Brussels and Beirut, carrying out regular missions to Damascus.

EU RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN CRISIS

The Syrian crisis is the world's worst humanitarian disaster. The EU is the leading donor in the international response to the Syrian crisis, with over **€6.8 billion** from the EU and Member States collectively allocated in humanitarian and development assistance since the start of the conflict.

Since 2011, the European Commission's support in response to the Syrian crisis has exceeded **€3.4 billion**. The Commission provides both immediate *humanitarian assistance*, and *non-humanitarian aid* which responds to medium-term needs.

At the *Supporting Syria and the Region* conference, the EU and the Member States pledged over €3 billion for the year 2016 to assist people inside Syria as well as Syrian refugees and the communities hosting them in neighbouring countries.

The pledge comes on top of the €6.8 billion that the EU and its Member States have already committed.

The European commission pledge for the 2016 amounts to €1.115 billion. The Commission has also given an indicative amount for 2017 of €1.275 billion, bringing the total pledge for the two years to €2.39 billion. These funds will mostly come from humanitarian assistance and the European Neighbourhood Instrument. The remaining part of the 2016 pledge will be delivered by EU Member states.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The Commission has so far provided **€1.4 billion** humanitarian assistance for life-saving emergency response, food, water, sanitation, hygiene and shelter to millions of Syrians inside Syria and in neighbouring countries.

Inside Syria, thanks to lifesaving aid provided by the Commission, some 2 million people have gained access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene items, 850 000 people have received food, 1 million people have received non-food items and shelter, and 350 000 children have been covered by child protection programmes.

The EU's humanitarian aid is impartial and independent and goes to people in need regardless of ethnic or religious considerations. The EU's humanitarian aid is channelled through the United Nations, International Organisations, and international NGO partners.

NON-HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE



The Commission has mobilised **€2 billion** in non-humanitarian aid, including:

- 🎯 €584 million through the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) to address the medium term needs of the Syrian refugees living in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan (education, livelihoods, health, access to basic services);
- 🎯 €180 million through Macro-financial Assistance (MFA) to Jordan to assist with the influx of Syrian refugees;
- 🎯 €189 million through the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace for assistance programmes in opposition-controlled areas in Syria, mediation efforts, transitional justice preparation and measures to reduce tensions between refugees and host communities in the region, as well as to support the destruction of Syrian chemical stockpiles and chemical threat prevention;
- 🎯 €242 million through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) to Turkey;
- 🎯 €26 million through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights;
- 🎯 €48 million through the Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI)
- 🎯 €736 million channelled through the EU regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (including from the above mentioned instruments ENI, IPA and DCI)

Since its establishment in December 2014, most non-humanitarian aid for Syria's neighbouring countries is channelled through the **EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the "Madad Fund" (EUTF Madad)**. The EUTF aims to bring a more coherent and integrated EU response to the crisis by merging various EU financial instruments and contributions from Member States into one single flexible mechanism for quick disbursement. 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 administrations.

The mandate of the Trust Fund has been extended so that it can also operate in the Western Balkans where relevant to the flow of Syrian refugees. In the future the Trust Fund may also 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 22 Member States, amounting to over €72 million, and contributions from various EU instruments, the Fund is now reaching a **total volume of €736 million**. Projects focusing on education, livelihoods, health have already been approved to a total of €628.

Since the on-set of the Syrian crisis, substantial non-humanitarian assistance inside Syria has also been provided by the Commission through the European Neighbourhood Instrument, targeting in particular education, livelihoods and civil society support.

Thanks to this financial support, 2.3 million children have had improved access to education at primary and secondary school level (over 4,000 schools reached). Furthermore, more than 11,367 emergency job-opportunities for Syrians have been created (including 4,000 job opportunities for women) and numerous micro-grants for small-size businesses have been provided. More than 85,000 Syrians inside Syria have benefitted from improved community-based activities thanks to the strengthening of grassroots civil society activities.

In addition, Commission funds from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights have also supported the protection of Human Rights Defenders as well as capacity-building of Syrian journalists.

ASSISTANCE TO NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

With Syrians fleeing the conflict to neighbouring countries since the start of the crisis, these countries are now hosting an unprecedented number of refugees. The European Union is strongly supporting Syrian refugees and their host communities in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq.

Jordan

In Jordan there are over 655 000 Syrian registered refugees, half of which are children. EU leaders have met Jordan representatives and visited the country many times throughout the last five years. At the Supporting Syria and the Region conference which took place in London on 4 February the EU reiterated the solidarity to Jordan pledging an increased support.

Since the beginning of the crisis, the European Commission has allocated more than **€754 million** in assistance to refugees and vulnerable communities. This includes more than €251 million from the humanitarian budget, €180 million from the Macro Financial Assistance (MFA) Instrument, over €170 million from the ENI/ European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, €118 million from the EU Trust Fund for the Syrian crisis and more than €30 million from the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace.

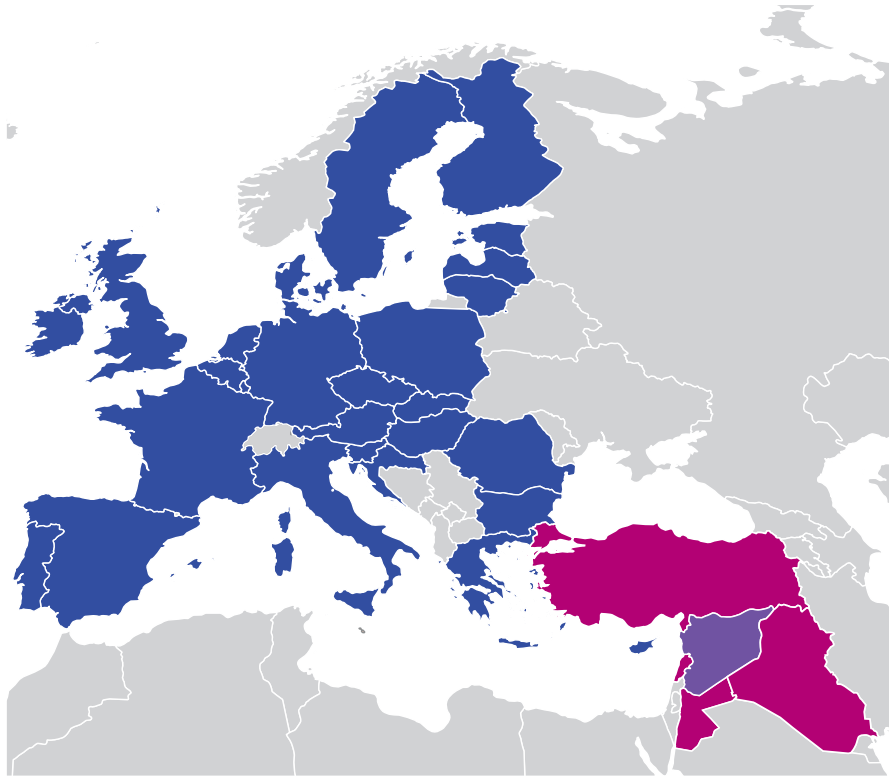
The Commission's humanitarian aid has helped more than 350 000 Syrian refugees in Jordan. With 83% of the refugees in Jordan living in urban settings, the Commission supports the most vulnerable refugees through cash assistance as it is considered the most cost-efficient and dignified modality. Specific programmes support women and children's needs, since approximately 52% of these refugees are children and 51 % are women. Another priority in 2015 has been to respond to the emergency needs of asylum seekers at the border between Syria and Jordan where today more than 50 000 people remain stranded, awaiting access to Jordan.

This support comes on top of the over €500 million in regular bilateral cooperation for Jordan under the European Neighbourhood policy, which brings the **overall amount to €1.25 billion**.

Lebanon

The EU pays tribute to the outstanding efforts Lebanon is making since the outset of the conflict. The country is hosting more than 1.1 million refugees representing 1/4 of the Lebanese population, which is the highest per-capita concentration of refugees worldwide. At the Supporting Syria and the Region conference, the EU Commission pledged increased its support to invest in resilience and sustainability of Lebanon.

For Lebanon, since the beginning of the crisis, the European Commission has allocated **close to €800 million**. This includes more than €356 million in humanitarian aid and close to €450 million for development and stabilisation support. This support is mainly financed by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (close to €250 million), more than €140 million through the EU Madad Fund, and €42 million from the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace to address longer term resilience needs of affected civilians. In Lebanon, through its partners, the EU's humanitarian aid reaches around 665 000 people.



This support comes on top of €219 million in regular bilateral cooperation for Lebanon under the European Neighbourhood Policy, which bring **the overall support to more than €1 billion**. This shows that the EU was able to quickly mobilise a 200% increase of funding for Lebanon to effectively address the country's huge needs resulting from the refugee crisis.

Turkey

In Turkey there are over 2.5 million registered Syrian refugees, making Turkey the largest host of refugees in the world.

The total funding provided by the EU to Turkey in response to the Syria Crisis amounts to **€352 million**. This includes humanitarian aid and longer-term assistance. In humanitarian aid, the European Commission has contributed €71 million since 2011 to primarily assist Syrian refugees and also Iraqi refugees and other populations of concern in Turkey. EU humanitarian aid is funding the provisions of food, non-food items (including winterisation assistance), health assistance and protection through humanitarian partners. Altogether, the Commission is currently providing food assistance in Turkey to about 230,000 people and health assistance to about 130,000 people. Through the EU Children of Peace initiative, the Commission has funded emergency education, which provides Syrian children living in Turkey with access to schools.

In November 2015, the EU also announced that it is setting up a legal framework – **the Refugee Facility for Turkey** – **with €3 billion** to deliver efficient and complementary support to Syrian refugees and host communities in Turkey. Priority will be given to actions providing immediate humanitarian, development and other assistance to refugees and host communities, national and local authorities in managing and addressing the consequences of the inflows of refugees. 2.239 million has been already allocated, for both humanitarian and non-humanitarian assistance. Of this, €652 million has been contracted, including €348 million for the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), which is the largest ever humanitarian programme using direct cash-transfers to cover the everyday needs of the most vulnerable refugee families in Turkey. By the end of September we expect to reach an overall amount of €1 billion contracted by signing a contract with the Turkish Ministry of Education worth €300 million to contribute to the educational activities concerning refugees”.

Iraq

Closely linked to the Syria crisis is the crisis in Iraq. The Iraq crisis is a UN Level 3 emergency with over 10 million people in need of humanitarian aid, in a country of 36 million. This includes 3.2 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and 250 000 refugees from Syria.

The European Commission's humanitarian budget for Iraq substantially increased in 2015 to respond to increasing needs, reaching **€104.65 million**. The EU provides protection and relief to Iraqi displaced persons and Syrian refugees inside and outside camps in Iraq, as well as other vulnerable populations affected by the conflict. Funding ensures food assistance, basic health care, water and sanitation, protection, shelter and the distribution of essential household items.