



European Commission makes progress on Agenda on Migration

Brussels, 27 May 2015

Two weeks after presenting the European Agenda on Migration, the Commission is today adopting the first proposals of its comprehensive approach to improving the management of migration.

Following the terrible loss of life in the Mediterranean last month, European leaders made a firm commitment to solidarity amongst Member States to address the common migratory challenges. With today's proposals, the Commission is turning words into action and setting out immediate and long-term responses to the migration challenges that Europe faces.

First Vice-President **Frans Timmermans** said: *"Today the Commission is matching words with action. Solidarity goes hand in hand with responsibility. This is why our proposals include the strong requirement that asylum rules are properly applied, and that Member States do everything they should to prevent abuse. Everyone who needs sanctuary should find it in Europe. But those who have no justified claim should be quickly identified and returned to their home country. This is essential for migration policies to be well accepted in society."*

High Representative/Vice-President **Federica Mogherini** said: *"Two weeks after adopting our Agenda, we present today concrete proposals for its implementation, with one main aim: quickly save lives and provide protection in the EU for people in need, be they at sea, in the EU or in third countries. For this reason, we are intensifying our cooperation with countries of origin and transit and with countries hosting refugees, not only to support asylum and migration capacities, but also to tackle the root causes that force people to escape and migrate: poverty, wars, persecutions, violations of human rights and natural disasters. I have discussed these objectives yesterday with Ministers of Development, in the context of our reflection on new sustainable Development Goals, and I have exchanged views once more with the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon on the comprehensive steps we want to take."*

Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Commissioner **Dimitris Avramopoulos** said: *"Today, the Commission has shown that it can act quickly and resolutely to better manage migration. The relocation and resettlement schemes, together with the strengthening of Triton and Poseidon and the Action Plan to fight smugglers, respond to the most urgent challenges we are confronted with. At the same time, we are launching the public consultation on the revision of the Blue Card Directive, a consultation that we hope will bring us valuable input for turning this instrument into a true business card for the Union in the global competition for talents and skills."*

Today, the European Commission is presenting several different and concrete measures to respond to the current migration challenges:

- **Relocation: Emergency response mechanism to assist Italy and Greece:** The European Commission is proposing to use the emergency response mechanism under Article 78(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. This provision, which is being activated for the first time, will be used to set up an emergency relocation scheme to assist Italy and Greece. This scheme will apply to **Syrian and Eritrean** nationals in need of international protection that arrived in either Italy or Greece after 15 April 2015 or that arrive after the mechanism is launched. A total of **40 000** persons should be relocated from Italy and Greece to other EU Member States based on a distribution key (see Annex 1 and 2) over the next **2 years** – corresponding to approximately 40% of the total number of asylum seekers in clear need of international protection who entered these countries in 2014. The Commission is ready to do the same if other Member States – such as Malta – also face a sudden influx of migrants. Member States will receive €6,000 for each person relocated on their territory.
- **Resettlement:** The Commission has adopted a Recommendation asking Member States to resettle **20 000** people from outside the EU, in clear need of international protection as identified by the UNHCR, over **2 years**, based on a distribution key (see Annex 3). Member States who participate in the scheme will be entitled to financial support, with the EU making €50 million available in 2015-16.
- **An EU Action plan against migrant smuggling:** The Plan for 2015-2020 sets out concrete

actions to prevent and counter migrant smuggling. Actions include setting up a list of suspicious vessels; dedicated platforms to enhancing cooperation and exchange of information with financial institutions; and cooperating with internet service providers and social media to ensure internet content used by smugglers to advertise their activities is swiftly detected and removed.

- **Guidelines on Fingerprinting:** For the EU's common asylum system to work effectively, migrants need to be systematically fingerprinted upon arrival. The Commission services have published guidelines for Member States setting out a best practices approach for fingerprinting newly arrived applicants for international protection. "Hotspot" teams from EASO, Frontex and Europol will work on the ground to swiftly identify, register and fingerprint incoming migrants and assess those who are in need of protection.
- **A public consultation on the future of the Blue Card Directive:** The Commission wants to improve the existing EU Blue Card scheme, which aims to make it easier for highly skilled people to come and work in the EU but is currently scarcely used. The public consultation invites stakeholders (migrants, employers, governmental organisations, trade unions, NGOs, employment agencies, etc.) to share their views on the EU Blue Card and how it can be improved.

The Commission also takes note of a new Operational Plan for Operation Triton. The new Operational Plan for the reinforced Joint Operation Triton sets out the new number of assets: 10 maritime, 33 land and 8 air assets, and 121 human resources. The Operational Plan also extends the geographical area of Triton southwards to the borders of the Maltese search and rescue zone to cover the area of the former Italian Mare Nostrum operation.

Background

On 23 April 2014, in Malta, Jean-Claude Juncker presented [a five point plan on immigration](#), calling for more solidarity in the EU's migration policy as part of his campaign to become European Commission President.

Upon taking office, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker entrusted a Commissioner with special responsibility for Migration to work, in coordination with First Vice-President Timmermans, on a new policy on migration as one of the 10 priorities of the [Political Guidelines](#), the political programme based on which the European Parliament elected the Commission.

Based on a [proposal by the European Commission](#), in a [European Council statement](#) of 23 April 2015, Member States committed to taking rapid action to save lives and to step up EU action in the field of migration. A [European Parliament Resolution](#) followed a few days later.

On 13 May 2015, the European Commission presented its [European Agenda on Migration](#), which sets out a comprehensive approach that will improve the management of migration in all its aspects.

For More Information

[Detailed Questions & Answers on today's proposals](#)

[Proposal for a Council decision on provisional relocation measures for Italy and Greece](#) + [Annex Recommendation on a European Resettlement Scheme](#)

[EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling](#)

[Guidelines on the implementation of EU rules on the obligation to take fingerprints](#)

[Public Consultation on the EU Blue Card](#)

[Full Press pack on the European Agenda on Migration of 13 May 2015](#)

[Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs Website](#)

[Website of First Vice-President Frans Timmermans](#)

[Website of High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini](#)

[Website of Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos](#)

ANNEX 1: Relocation: Distribution key for Italy

	Overall key	Allocation per Member State (24 000 applicants relocated)
Austria	3,03%	728
Belgium	3,41%	818
Bulgaria	1,43%	343
Croatia	1,87%	448
Cyprus	0,43%	104

Czech Republic	3,32%	797
Estonia	1,85%	443
Finland	1,98%	475
France	16,88%	4 051
Germany	21,91%	5 258
Hungary	2,07%	496
Latvia	1,29%	310
Lithuania	1,26%	302
Luxembourg	0,92%	221
Malta	0,73%	175
Netherlands	5,12%	1 228
Poland	6,65%	1 595
Portugal	4,25%	1 021
Romania	4,26%	1 023
Slovakia	1,96%	471
Slovenia	1,24%	297
Spain	10,72%	2 573
Sweden	3,42%	821

Annex 2: Relocation: Distribution key for Greece

	Overall key	Allocation per Member State (16 000 applicants relocated)
Austria	3,03%	485
Belgium	3,41%	546
Bulgaria	1,43%	229
Croatia	1,87%	299
Cyprus	0,43%	69
Czech Republic	3,32%	531
Estonia	1,85%	295
Finland	1,98%	317
France	16,88%	2 701
Germany	21,91%	3 505
Hungary	2,07%	331
Latvia	1,29%	207
Lithuania	1,26%	201
Luxembourg	0,92%	147
Malta	0,73%	117
Netherlands	5,12%	819
Poland	6,65%	1 064
Portugal	4,25%	680
Romania	4,26%	682
Slovakia	1,96%	314
Slovenia	1,24%	198
Spain	10,72%	1 715
Sweden	3,42%	548

Annex 3: Resettlement: Distribution key

	Overall Key	Allocation per Member State (20 000 applicants resettled)
Austria	2,22%	444
Belgium	2,45%	490

Bulgaria	1,08%	216
Croatia	1,58%	315
Cyprus	0,34%	69
Czech Republic	2,63%	525
Denmark	1,73%	345
Estonia	1,63%	326
Finland	1,46%	293
France	11,87%	2 375
Germany	15,43%	3 086
Greece	1,61%	323
Hungary	1,53%	307
Ireland	1,36%	272
Italy	9,94%	1 989
Latvia	1,10%	220
Lithuania	1,03%	207
Luxembourg	0,74%	147
Malta	0,60%	121
Netherlands	3,66%	732
Poland	4,81%	962
Portugal	3,52%	704
Romania	3,29%	657
Slovakia	1,60%	319
Slovenia	1,03%	207
Spain	7,75%	1 549
Sweden	2,46%	491
United Kingdom	11,54%	2 309

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