



TODAYS
News

Tuesday, 03 November, 2015

Click on [blue](#) link to view full Press

Commissioner Avramopoulos and Minister Asselborn in Athens: First Relocation Flight from Greece

On Wednesday 4 November, Migration and Home Affairs Commissioner Dimitris **Avramopoulos** and Luxembourg Minister for Foreign Affairs Jean Asselborn will travel to Greece. Together with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, European Parliament President Martin Schulz and Greek Alternate Minister of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction responsible for Migration Policy Ioannis Mouzalas they will meet with the first group of asylum seekers to benefit from the EU's relocation scheme from Greece. Thirty asylum seekers will travel by plane from the Athens International Airport to have their applications processed in Luxembourg. Migration and Home Affairs Commissioner **Avramopoulos** said: *"Tomorrow the first flight will leave Greece under the EU's relocation scheme. More than 600,000 people have entered the EU through Greece so far this year. Today's relocation is a symbolic moment, but it is also a crucial first step in a process that has to become systematic. It is now time to step up a gear, to have all hotspots fully functioning, and to make relocation a regular occurrence. We commend Luxembourg for being the first Member State to relocate people from Greece, as well as for their political efforts as Council Presidency to get this scheme started. We are counting on all Member States to take the necessary steps so that more relocations can follow swiftly from Greece and Italy."* A full press release is available [here](#).

Western Balkans Migration Route: European Commission supports UNHCR with resources for 200,000 refugees

The European Commission today unlocks additional financial support for the UN's Refugee agency, UNHCR, providing €2 million to meet the basic needs of vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers currently in the Western Balkans. This humanitarian aid will enable the UNHCR to provide 200,000 refugees with warm clothes for the winter and temporary shelter and protection at reception sites in the region. *"With winter looming, the most vulnerable need our help and solidarity more than ever. They need basic supplies such as food, shelter, hygiene items as well as emergency health care. We are providing humanitarian support to do just that"*, said EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides**. In 2015, the Commission is providing humanitarian aid amounting to over €8.74 million in the Western Balkans. This funding for the UNHCR is part of the €17 million [aid package](#) announced on 3 October to help Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia cope with the refugee influx. Following [progress made](#) after the first video conference of the Western Balkans Route contact points, appointed after the 25 October Leaders' Meeting, the next video conference will take place on 4 November. The video conference will be an opportunity to take stock of the state of play of the operational measures adopted in the past week.

European Commission steps up humanitarian aid to Syria

The European Commission will give €62 million in humanitarian aid to support Syrians displaced by the conflict inside the country. The funding allocation was announced today by European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos **Stylianides**, who is concluding his visit to Jordan and Lebanon. The new funding comes at a critical moment with a worsening security situation in the country and will help cover winterisation and basic needs of refugees and host communities, such as health care, clean water, shelter, rent and education. Commissioner **Stylianides** said: *"We must continue to get humanitarian aid to Syrians in need as the coming winter will bring additional hardship to the most vulnerable. That's why the European Commission is taking action, getting lifesaving humanitarian aid to displaced Syrians inside the country and refugees in neighbouring countries. Over recent days in Jordan and Lebanon I've met entire families who have fled Syria. I've seen first hand how our humanitarian aid is making and will make a difference, yet peace is the only solution that can end the refugee crisis, a humanitarian crisis."* The new funding for Syria follows the recent announcements of [€43 million for Lebanon](#) and [€28 million to Jordan](#), made by the Commissioner to the respective national authorities over 1-3 November. All in all €133 million in additional humanitarian aid in 2015 will go to the three respective countries. A [press release](#) is available here as well as [audiovisual material](#).

MEX/15/5973



Find out [here](#) what will be discussed next week in the European Commission, European Council and the European Parliament.

