

International protection: provisional measures for the benefit of Italy and Greece

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The Commission presents a 2nd report on **relocation and resettlement**. The latter follows the first report presented on 16 March 2016, summarising the challenges identified and lessons learned in the first months of the implementation of the **relocation and resettlement programmes** and proposing recommendations and actions in the short term to improve their implementation.

This report on relocation and resettlement provides an update on the state of play and assesses the actions undertaken from 16 March 2016 until 11 April (the reporting period) in order to deliver on the recommendations made to accelerate the implementation of the relocation and resettlement schemes.

The report notes that since 16 March 2016, 9,928 persons have arrived in Greece. With the closure of the border between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, between 50,000 and 56,000 persons are stranded in Greece and, according to first estimations by the United Nations High Command for Refugees (UNHCR), 65% to 70% of those belong to one of the nationalities eligible for relocation. Furthermore, since mid-March, more than 8,564 migrants arrived in Italy.

On 18 March 2016, **the European Union and Turkey** agreed on steps to be taken to end the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU and agreed on a series of action points. The EU-Turkey statement envisages that all those that arrived in Greece irregularly after 20 March may be readmitted to Turkey, and it lays down the basis for the 1:1 mechanism, according to which, for every Syrian being returned to Turkey from Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU.

Progress since the first report: overall, progress since the first report on relocation and resettlement **has been unsatisfactory**.

- **Regarding relocation**, the Commission set a target to relocate **at least 6,000 persons** by the time of the 2nd report. This target has not been met. **Only 208 additional persons have been relocated** during the reporting period and relocation efforts were made by only a few Member States and associated States. The implementation of the relocation obligations therefore remains a priority to alleviate the pressure on Greece and Italy.
- **As regards resettlement**, **5,677 people of the 22,504 agreed have been resettled so far**. In the short time since the application of the agreement set out in the EU-Turkey Statement on 4 April, **79 persons have been resettled from Turkey to the EU** under the 1:1 mechanism. The speeding up and increasing of resettlement efforts has become even more of a priority as a result of this mechanism.

Next steps: based on the latest available information, between 35,000 and 40,000 persons in Greece would be eligible for relocation, while migration flows are increasing also in Italy. Member States of relocation need to fully implement their obligations under the Council Decisions on relocation with a view to alleviate the pressure on the frontline Member States. The Commission therefore urges the Member States of relocation to increase dramatically their efforts to reply to the urgent humanitarian situation in Greece and prevent the deterioration of the situation in Italy.

The European Council Conclusions have systematically called for an acceleration of relocation. The calls made by the Heads of State or Government must be matched with determined action by the competent national services on the ground.

The Commission will continue monitoring the implementation of the recommendations and targets included in the first report on relocation and resettlement and **it reserves the right to take action where Member States are not complying with their obligations.**

In parallel, Member States need to deliver on their resettlement commitments. In particular, it is imperative to lend timely support to the implementation of the EU-Turkey agreement. On 20 April, the Commission will report on the implementation of the agreement, including the resettlement efforts carried out as part of it.