



MANAGING THE REFUGEE CRISIS

EU-TURKEY JOINT ACTION PLAN: IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

A joint response

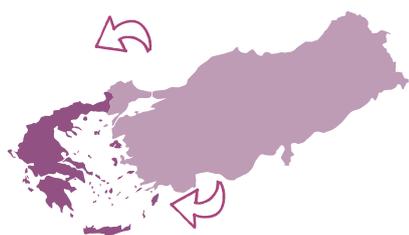
On 29 November 2015, at the EU-Turkey summit, the Joint Action Plan was activated. Its aim is to step up cooperation for the support of Syrian refugees under temporary protection and their host communities in Turkey and to strengthen cooperation to prevent irregular migration flows to the EU. The implementation of the Joint Action Plan should bring order into migratory flows and help to stem irregular migration.

Work on the implementation of the Plan needs to be continued and reinforced, and progress made towards its full and effective implementation. It is important that the impact of the coordinated EU-Turkey efforts are rapidly reflected in results, in particular stemming the influx of irregular migrants.

Irregular arrivals to the EU

880,000 people arrived from Turkey to Greece since the beginning of 2015. The scale is immense and the Commission is working very closely with the Turkish authorities to reduce the scale of irregular crossings of the Aegean Sea.

The EU and Turkey have agreed on a Joint Action Plan to tackle this challenge together.

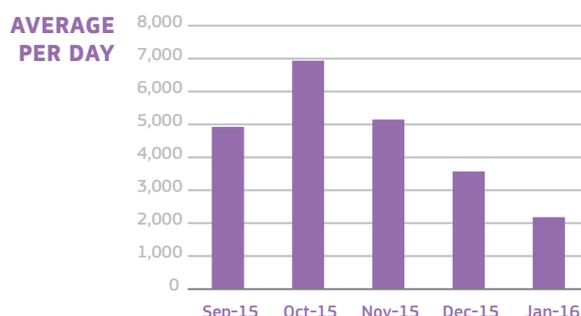
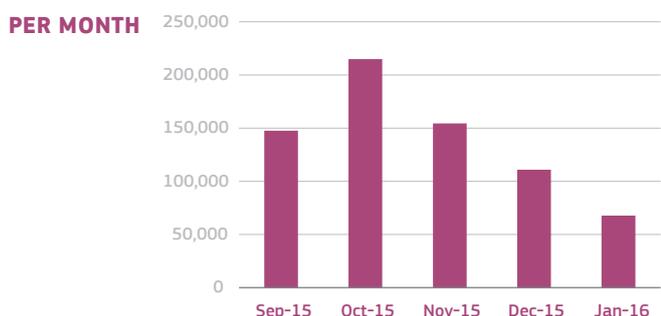


880,000



Reducing Migratory Flows: Arrivals from Turkey to Greece

The number of arrivals has steadily decreased since October, but levels still remain high for winter.



Commitments by Turkey

- Continue to ensure that migrants are registered and provided with appropriate documents on a compulsory basis;
- Continue efforts to facilitate access for Syrians under temporary protection to public services including education, health and employment;
- Ensure that vulnerable people continue to be identified and taken care of;
- Further strengthen the interception capacity of the Turkish Coast Guard;
- Step up cooperation with Bulgarian and Greek authorities to prevent irregular migration across the common land borders;
- Step up cooperation to smoothly readmit irregular migrants who are not in need of international protection and were intercepted coming from the Turkish territory;
- Pursue the progressive alignment of Turkish and EU visa policy, notably for countries representing an important source of illegal migration.

What has been done

- Ongoing and accelerated work on the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Roadmap, including the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement, expected to enter into force for third country nationals as of 1 June 2016;
- Introduction of visa obligation for Syrians travelling to Turkey by air and sea from a third country, with the aim to reduce onward transit towards the EU;
- Permission granted for Syrians under temporary protection to work in Turkey;
- Draft legislation on personal data protection in preparation, to facilitate cooperation with Frontex, Europol, Eurojust and Member States' law enforcement agencies;
- Commitment to improve implementation of the Turkey – Greece Readmission Agreement
- Efforts to prevent irregular departures, arrest smugglers and rescue migrants at sea.

Commitments by the European Union

- Mobilise substantial and concrete new funds to support Turkey in coping with the challenge represented by the presence of Syrians under temporary protection;
- Continue to provide humanitarian assistance via relevant organisations in Turkey;
- Support existing Member State and EU resettlement schemes and programmes;
- Further support Turkey to strengthen its capacity to combat migrant smuggling;
- Support cooperation between EU Member States and Turkey in organising joint return operations towards countries of origin of irregular migrants;
- Enhance the EU capacity to exchange information with Turkey on combating smuggling networks;
- Increase the financial assistance offered to support Turkey in meeting the requirements of the Visa Liberalisation Dialogue.

What has been done

- Provision of immediate assistance via humanitarian organisations in Turkey;
- Tabled and adopted the €3 billion Facility for Refugees in Turkey;
- First meeting of Facility for Refugees Steering Committee due on 17 February to discuss priority actions;
- Preparation of a needs assessment to identify projects for Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey – first analysis due by mid-February, with completion in early spring;
- Work has been undertaken towards activation of the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement as regards third country nationals as of 1 June 2016;
- Adoption by the Commission of a Recommendation for a Voluntary Humanitarian Admission Scheme with Turkey for persons displaced by the conflict in Syria.

Next steps

- Rapidly deploy funding from the €3 billion Facility for Refugees in Turkey to provide assistance to Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey.
- As a matter of urgency, Turkey needs to make significant progress in preventing irregular departures of migrants and refugees from its territory.
- Strengthen efforts against migrant smuggling in coastal areas, including through land based operations; it is important that results are rapidly shown, in particular in stemming the influx of irregular migrants to the EU
- Increase bilateral cooperation on Readmission between Turkey and Greece, and prepare to fully implement the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement for third country nationals