

# EU-TURKEY STATEMENT

## Three years on

March 2019

On 18 March 2016, EU Heads of State or Government and Turkey agreed on the **EU-Turkey Statement** to end irregular migration flows from Turkey to the EU, ensure improved reception conditions for refugees in Turkey and open up organised, safe and legal channels to Europe for Syrian refugees. Three years later, irregular arrivals remain 97% lower than the period before the Statement became operational, while the number of lives lost at sea has decreased substantially. The EU has supported Turkey in its efforts to host refugees with the €6 billion Facility for Refugees in Turkey. The first tranche of €3 billion has been fully contracted and €1.2 billion from the second €3 billion instalment has already been committed.

Turkey has followed up on its commitment to step up measures to fight against migrant smuggling and has been cooperating closely on resettlement and return. The EU-Turkey Statement has consistently delivered tangible results since it was agreed three years ago. While continuous efforts need to be made by all sides and all EU Member States, the EU-Turkey Statement has become an important element of the EU's comprehensive approach on migration.

## THE EU-TURKEY STATEMENT IN ACTION

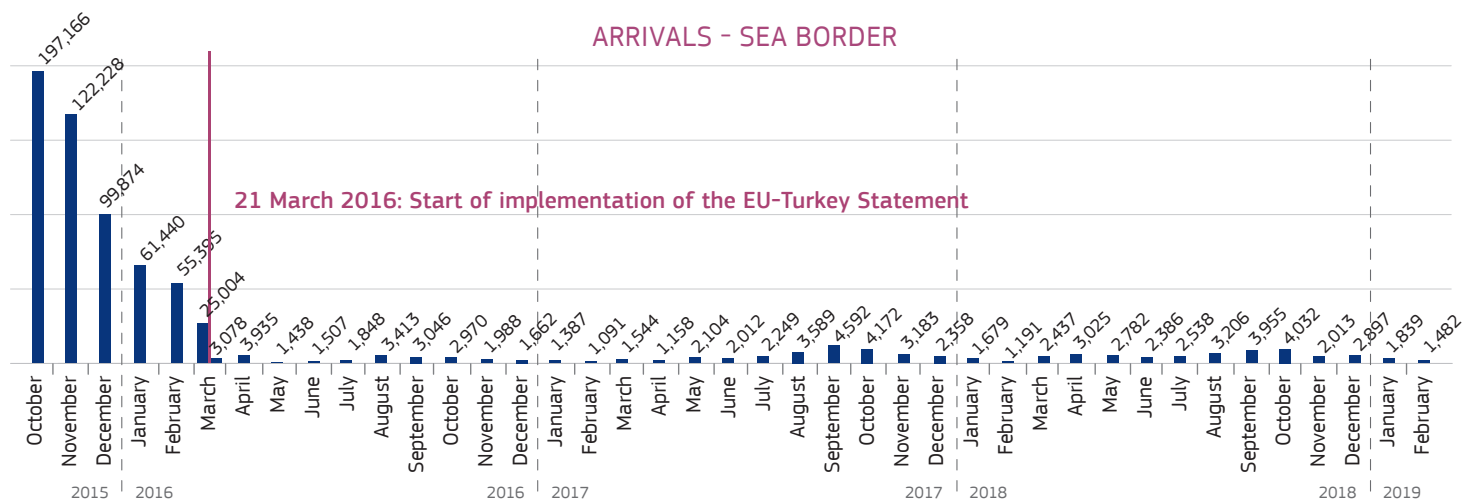
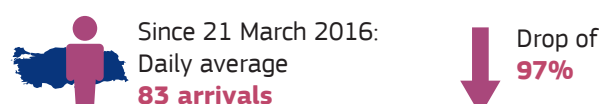
### A GAME CHANGER

The impact of the EU-Turkey Statement had immediate and tangible results. Thanks notably to the cooperation with the Turkish authorities, arrivals decreased significantly – showing clearly that the business model of smugglers exploiting migrants and refugees can be broken. From 10,000 in a single day in October 2015, daily crossings have gone down to an average of 83 today, while the number of deaths in the Aegean decreased from 1,175 in the 20 months before the Statement to 310. That is almost one million people who have not taken dangerous routes to get to the European Union, and more than 1,000 who have not lost their lives trying.

### ARRIVALS ON THE ISLANDS IN 2015

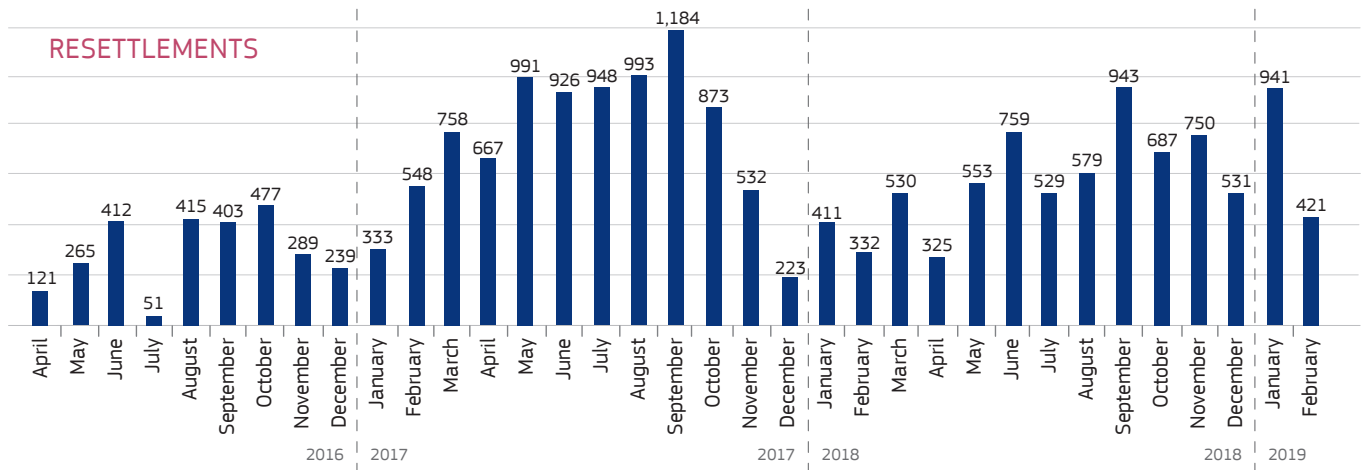


### ARRIVALS ON THE ISLANDS SINCE THE EU-TURKEY STATEMENT



## RESETTLEMENT: EU SOLIDARITY WITH SYRIAN REFUGEES

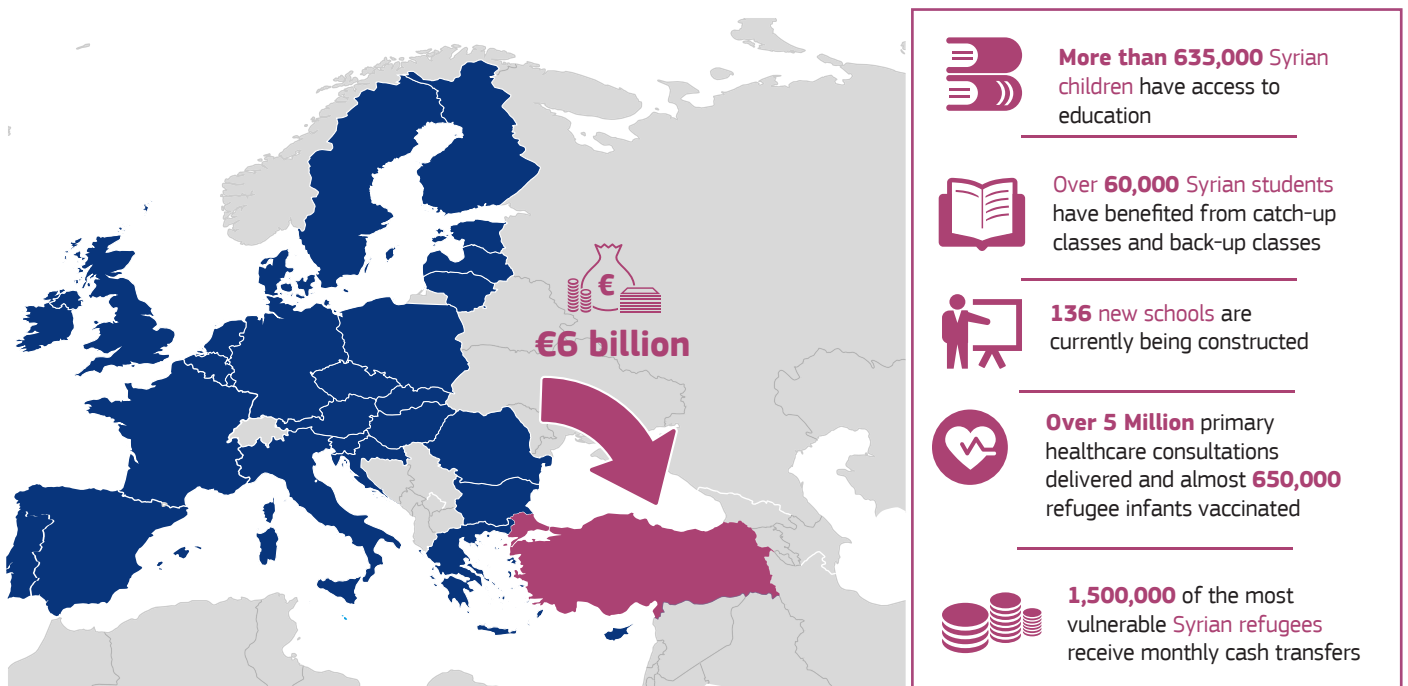
Resettlements under the EU-Turkey Statement are continuing at a steady pace – in total, over 20,292 Syrian refugees have been resettled from Turkey to EU Member States so far.



To support legal admission of Syrians from Turkey, €192 million was allocated under the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

## EU SUPPORT TO SYRIAN REFUGEES IN TURKEY

The EU is supporting refugees in Turkey with €6 billion for 2016-2019 through its Facility for Refugees in Turkey – €3 billion from the EU budget and €3 billion contributed by EU Member States – in two tranches. By the end of 2017, the EU had fully committed and contracted €3 billion under the first tranche with 72 projects rolled out, showing tangible results, with more than €2 billion disbursed. The EU is currently mobilising the second tranche of Facility funding and has already committed €1.2 billion, of which €450 million has been contracted and €150 million disbursed. Facility funding goes to projects to address the needs of refugees and host communities with a focus on humanitarian assistance, education, health, municipal infrastructure and socio-economic support.



## CONTINUED SUPPORT TO GREECE

While the overall responsibility for managing migration flows in Greece rests with the Greek administration, the Commission and EU Member States continue to provide significant support to the Greek authorities in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, to improve migration management and reception conditions in Greece. EU actions focus in particular on helping to alleviate the situation on the Greek islands.



**Over €2.07 billion** in EU funding has been allocated to Greece to support migration management since the start of 2015, **including €816.4 million** in emergency assistance and **over €643.6 million** for projects under the EU Emergency Support Instrument.

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the European Asylum Support Office deploy staff on the ground in Greece to support the Greek authorities. The Commission has also deployed a team in Athens and ensured permanent presence on the hotspots islands. Since 2016 a permanent Commission representative is stationed on both Samos and Lesbos supporting the Greek and international partners on the ground.

Urgent and coordinated actions by the Greek authorities are still necessary to ensure faster processing of asylum requests, increased returns, full protection of unaccompanied minors and adequate reception capacity. Greece should put in place an effective and sustainable national strategy on migration management, addressing the remaining shortcomings.

## MORE PROGRESS ON RETURNS TO TURKEY NEEDED

The pace of returns to Turkey from the Greek islands under the Statement continues to be very slow, especially concerning Syrians, with only 2,441 migrants returned since March 2016. Despite the changes in the Greek law, further actions are still required to address the pre-return processes and, therefore, increase returns.

In addition, 3,421 migrants have returned voluntarily from the islands since June 2016, supported by the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme (AVRR). Since the beginning of 2016 a total of 14,924 migrants have returned voluntarily from both the Greek islands and mainland through the programme.