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2.5 Resettlement at the EU level

In the global context, resettlement refers to the selection and transfer of refugees from a state in which they have sought protection to a third state which has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status.[ix] In the EU context, resettlement is initiated by a request from UNHCR based on a person's need for international protection and the third country national is transferred from a third country and established in a Member State, where they are permitted to reside with one of the following statuses: refugee status, subsidiary protection status or any other status which offers similar rights and benefits under national and EU laws.[1][56]

Providing for safe and legal pathways for persons in need of protection is a key priority for the European Commission, enabling the most vulnerable refugees to reach Europe without becoming victims to smuggling networks or undertaking dangerous journeys. The first European Resettlement Programme was launched in July 2015 and, by December 2019, two successful resettlement programmes have assisted more than 65 000 people.[157] Responding to a call by the European Commission, Member States pledged almost 29 500 resettlement places for 2020.

Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan (in decreasing order) account for the highest number of refugees who have been resettled into Europe, while developments have also taken place in countries of the Central Mediterranean route, notably Chad, Egypt, Libya and Niger.[158] The EU provides financial support to UNHCR in operating emergency evacuations from Libya to Niger and Rwanda for the purpose of onward resettlement or other solutions. By December 2019, approximately 4 600 persons in need of protection were evacuated from Libya, and over 2 000 were resettled from Niger, mostly in Europe.[159] Pending adoption, the Union Resettlement Framework will define a unified resettlement procedure and common criteria.[160]

As an integral component of the collective efforts by the EU to provide protection to those who need it, resettlement remained high on the asylum policy agenda during 2019. The Programme of the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union placed emphasis on resettlement and the establishment of the Union Resettlement Framework, as effective ways to help the most vulnerable in migration crises, while creating a more controlled way to ease migration pressures and demonstrate solidarity towards countries receiving high numbers of migrants.[161] A specific task in the mission letter of the new Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, was to ensure legal pathways to the EU, including through resettlement.[162]

During 2019, EASO continued to assist EU Member States in their resettlement efforts by facilitating practical cooperation. Within the mandate of the EU-Frank project, EASO and project partners (UNHCR, the IOM, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and the

Migration Policy Institute (MPI)) developed new tools, provided training and launched a pilot Resettlement Support Facility currently in operation in Istanbul, Turkey. *(See Section 7.14 for information on resettlement-related developments at the national level.)*

[ix] Definition provided in the EMN Glossary: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary_search/resettlement_en

[156] EU: Regulation (EU) No 516/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, amending Council Decision 2008/381/EC and repealing Decisions No 573/2007/EC and No 575/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Decision 2007/435/EC. http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2014/516/oj

[157] European Commission. (2019). *Delivering on Resettlement*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/201912_delivering-on-resettlement.pdf

[158] European Commission. (2019). *COM(2019) 481 Final: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council: Progress Report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20191016_com-2019-481-report_en.pdf

[159] European Commission. (2019). *Delivering on Resettlement*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/201912_delivering-on-resettlement.pdf

[160] European Commission. (2019). *Delivering on Resettlement*. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/201912_delivering-on-resettlement.pdf

[161] Finland's Presidency of the European Union. (2019). *Sustainable Europe—Sustainable Future: Finland's Presidency Programme; Presidency of the Council of the European Union 1 July – 31 December 2019*. https://eu2019.fi/documents/11707387/14346258/EU2019FI-EU-puheenjohtajakauden-ohjelma-en.pdf/3556b7f1-16df-148c-6f59-2b2816611b36/EU2019FI-EU-puheenjohtajakauden-ohjelma-en.pdf.pdf

[162] European Commission. (2019). *Mission Letter: Ylva Johansson Commissioner-designate for Home Affairs*. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/mission-letter-ylva-johansson_en.pdf

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