

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001420/24
to the Commission
Thierry Mariani (Pfe)
(24 July 2024)**

Subject: Geographical distribution of EU aid in Lebanon

EU aid to Lebanon is vital for a number of reasons. Located in a region marked by conflicts and tensions, the country has experienced multiple crises in recent years (economic, social and political), exacerbated by the Beirut port explosion of 4 August 2020 and the Syrian migrant crisis. The EU aims to help mitigate these crises through its different development aid programmes.

It has also increased its aid to Lebanon over the last years. However, Lebanon is a complex country, whose national unity has repeatedly proven to be a challenge since it gained independence. The geographical distribution of EU aid for the Lebanese population thus plays an important role in how it is perceived locally and in its strategic impact.

1. Can the Commission specify how the funds used in Lebanon from 2017 to now, and more specifically since 2020, have been geographically distributed?
2. Can it give the criteria used to decide on the geographical distribution of this aid and explain the possible strategic thinking behind how it is used?

Submitted: 24.7.2024

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(3 October 2024)**

The EU's support to Lebanon is not based on a predefined geographical distribution. Instead, it is guided by the needs on the ground, which determine where activities under each program are implemented.

The strategic thinking behind these allocations prioritises supporting long-term stability and reforms, addressing access to services for the vulnerable population, and promoting sustainable development across the country.

For bilateral support, priorities are set out in the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) ⁽¹⁾ for 2021-2027, adopted in November 2022.

This program focuses on three key priority areas: 1. Enhancing good governance and supporting reforms, 2. Strengthening an inclusive and resilient economy, and 3. Promoting a green and sustainable recovery.

The MIP includes an indicative percentage distribution by sector, which can be adjusted if necessary, following consultations with national authorities and other stakeholders.

Regarding the EU's response to the Syrian crisis in Lebanon, the focus is on addressing the most urgent needs-social assistance and access to services-for both Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese.

While there is no predefined geographical distribution of this support, it is concentrated in areas with a higher presence of these populations.

From 2015 to 2020, this support was provided through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (MADAD) ⁽²⁾.

Since 2021, EU support has been delivered via special measures under the Neighbourhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/multi-annual-indicative-programme-european-union-lebanon-2021-2027_en

⁽²⁾ https://trustfund-syria-region.ec.europa.eu/index_en

⁽³⁾ https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-technical-assistance/neighbourhood-development-and-international-cooperation-instrument-global-europe-ndici-global-europe_en