

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002027/24
to the Commission
Nikos Papandreou (S&D), Yannis Maniatis (S&D)
(11 October 2024)**

Subject: Fighting in Lebanon risks creating a new refugee crisis

Fighting in Lebanon and Palestine has already caused thousands of people to become displaced. Once again, the region finds itself confronted with a humanitarian and refugee crisis that could prompt thousands of people to seek out Europe's security. The expansion of the war is changing the status quo, requiring an organised European response. Given the specific circumstances, this response should also entail the creation of safeguards to prevent the possible movement of members of extremist groups.

In any case, supporting relief efforts is an immediate priority. There is also the possibility of an increased number of refugees seeking security in Cyprus and Greece. The intensity of this influx will probably render necessary the implementation of solidarity mechanisms such as those set out in the new Pact on Migration and Asylum prior to its entry into application.

In light of the above:

1. How is the Commission monitoring the evolving situation in Lebanon and the wider region with regard to supporting displaced people?
2. What measures and plans has the Commission put in place to address a possible increase in the number of refugees arriving in Cyprus and Greece?
3. Is it coordinating with the national authorities of the Member States, especially those of Cyprus and Greece, in order to manage a possible influx effectively? What initiatives does the EU intend to take to provide practical support to these two Member States?

Submitted: 11.10.2024

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(4 February 2025)**

1. The Commission is continuously monitoring the situation in Lebanon and the Middle East, including within the framework of the EU Migration Preparedness and Crisis Blueprint ⁽¹⁾, ensuring common situational awareness and information sharing with the Member States, the European External Action Service and EU Agencies to monitor and anticipate migration movements, and to ensure preparedness and operational support as needed.
2. The Commission stands ready to further support Member States, including Greece and Cyprus with whom there are regular contacts, in managing upcoming migration management challenges, by continuing its financial and operational support, with the support of EU Agencies ⁽²⁾. The Commission remains committed to the implementation of the action plan for the Eastern Mediterranean ⁽³⁾. In the context of the ongoing implementation process for the Pact on Migration and Asylum ⁽⁴⁾, the Commission supports Member States in addressing shortcomings and completing reforms to ensure the establishment of a well-prepared migration management system by 2026, including measures to ensure preparedness, contingency planning and crisis response.
3. To support Member States in addressing needs with regards to migration management and border management, the Commission provides support through the Home Affairs Funds ⁽⁵⁾. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) ⁽⁶⁾ allows Member States and UCPM participating states to request assistance, including from the Commission's emergency stockpiles (rescEU) ⁽⁷⁾, to provide relief materials to countries in need of extra resources. The Mechanism already delivered shelter materials to Cyprus in October 2023, in preparation for a potential arrival of a large number of people from the Middle East.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/1366 of 23 September 2020 on an EU mechanism for preparedness and management of crises related to migration.

⁽²⁾ EU Asylum Agency (EUAA), Frontex, Europol.

⁽³⁾ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-action-plan-eastern-mediterranean-migration-2023-10-18_en

⁽⁴⁾ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/pact-migration-and-asylum_en

⁽⁵⁾ The 2021-2027 Home Affairs Funds programmes of Greece amount to more than EUR 1.5 billion while under the programmes of Cyprus more than EUR 188 million have been made available.

⁽⁶⁾ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en

⁽⁷⁾ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/resceu_en