

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002442/24
to the Commission
Thierry Mariani (PFE)
(6 November 2024)**

Subject: Provision of assistance to Syria in 2024 under the NDICI-Global Europe programme

Under the NDICI-Global Europe programme, the Commission has earmarked a budget of EUR 36 million to support the Syrian people in 2024.

However, it is clear from the document provided by the Commission that, in view of the suspension of bilateral cooperation, no role is foreseen for the Syrian authorities in the organisational set-up for the action.

This political choice as regards implementing the action plan appears inconsistent, to say the least, with the development of relations between Syria, led by Bashar al-Assad, and the European Union ⁽¹⁾, which is preparing to appoint a special envoy for Syria.

1. In the light of renewed relations with Syria, can the Commission explain how it intends to help all Syrians by excluding such a key actor as the Syrian authorities from the process of implementing this action plan?
2. Can the Commission clearly identify the ‘Syrian civil society’ actors whose involvement in the action plan is deemed ‘appropriate’ and state whether they are able to meet the needs of the entire Syrian population and of all the territories?

Submitted: 6.11.2024

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(28 January 2025)**

The Commission’s programming of 2024 non-humanitarian assistance aligned with the Council conclusions of 16 April 2018 ⁽¹⁾, emphasising that EU aid must benefit Syrian population without benefits accruing to the Syrian regime.

The fall of the regime reshaped the situation, making a Syrian-led, inclusive political process in the spirit of the United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 2254 ⁽²⁾ a priority for an inclusive and peaceful political transition.

The EU support initiatives pipeline is guided by commitment to inclusiveness, respect of human rights, including women’s rights, protection of religious and ethnic minorities and fostering peaceful transition.

On 13 December 2024, the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations announced ⁽³⁾ that the Commission mobilised EUR 4 million in additional aid to address the most urgent humanitarian needs of people, bringing total support to EUR 163 million in 2024.

The special measure for 2024 ⁽⁴⁾ allocates EUR 36 million to critical areas like health, education, civil documentation, housing, property rights, civil society and justice.

Assistance targets areas with acute needs and significant numbers of returning refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as on the creation of conditions for safe, voluntary and dignified returns of Syrian refugees, as defined by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

The EU collaborates with UN agencies, Member State agencies, Syrian-led and international non-governmental organisations, maintaining regular dialogue with civil society across Syria and in the diaspora.

As the situation evolves, the EU will adjust its approach, if needed, in response to the actions and policies of the new authorities, with the overarching aim of supporting the Syrian people and ensuring an inclusive transition and sustainable peace and stability.

¹ 128/10/24 (Agence Europe) — ‘On Monday 28 October, the European Commission confirmed that the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy is considering “appointing a special envoy for Syria”. This choice comes against a backdrop of Syrians returning to Syria from Lebanon, fleeing the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. A document obtained by Politico talks about development assistance in a war-torn country. There is talk of renewing relations with Syria, 13 years after diplomatic relations with Bashar al-Assad’s regime were severed in 2011. As a reminder, in May 2024, eight EU Member States said they were prepared to return Syrian refugees to safe areas in Syria.’

⁽¹⁾ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7956-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

⁽²⁾ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/814715?v=pdf>

⁽³⁾ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/news/eu-launches-humanitarian-air-bridge-operation-syria-deliver-emergency-supplies-and-boosts-2024-12-13_en

⁽⁴⁾ https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/commission-implementing-decision-29112024-financing-special-measure-favour-syria-2024_en?prefLang=pt