

# EU announces additional emergency aid to help refugees in Serbia

The new contracts come as Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management **Christos Stylianides** is currently on his fourth visit to the country where he is assessing the humanitarian situation on the ground and discussing the EU's humanitarian support for refugees with government officials. The new projects finance food distribution in reception centres, the protection of the most vulnerable affected populations in particular during the upcoming winter and education-related activities.

*“Serbia has been a reliable partner to the European Union, and our partnership has allowed an effective response to the refugee crisis. The EU has been a leading provider of humanitarian aid to the hosting of refugees in Serbia since 2015. We have helped improve conditions in many reception centres, contributed to food provision in camps, provided education in emergencies to children and helped providing health services. The additional projects announced today will address the needs of the most vulnerable population especially during the upcoming winter season”,* said Commissioner **Stylianides**.

Since 2015, the EU has been the largest contributor of emergency aid to Serbia. The Commission's humanitarian aid now stands at €25 million, and has enabled the provision of emergency assistance (food, water, hygiene, essential items, health and protection) at transit and reception points, including borders and waiting areas. A total of more than €80 million has been provided to the country in EU migration related funding since 2015.

## **Background**

EU humanitarian assistance includes direct support to refugees through the Commission's humanitarian partners, and also capacity-building to enable the authorities to respond more effectively. The most significant efforts have been made to improve conditions at the government run reception centres, where the EU has been the main and sometimes only donor. As a result, the authorities are able to accommodate up to 6,000 people.

Since 2015 more than €80million have been financed, through different EU financial mechanisms, helping Serbia to ensure the accommodation of migrants and refugees in accommodation centres; to support the delivery of health and other primary services to refugees, migrants and host communities; and to reinforce its border control capabilities.

Serbia has also benefitted from support via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in 2015, when 10 EU Member states provided a total of over 246,000 relief items for the refugee crisis such as blankets, beds and warm clothing.

As of mid-September 2017, over 4 000 refugees and asylum-seekers are registered in Serbia – roughly the same number as a year ago.

**For more information**

[Factsheet on Serbia: Response to the Refugee Crisis](#)

[Factsheet: EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis](#)