

EU provides €1.5 million in humanitarian assistance to refugees and migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina

This brings Commission humanitarian funding to €30.5 million to address the needs in Western Balkans since the start of the refugee crisis.

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** said: *“The number of refugees and migrants arriving in Bosnia and Herzegovina has increased and we must act swiftly. We are committed to help Bosnia and Herzegovina deal with this situation and deliver assistance to the most vulnerable refugees and migrants. Our funding will support their basic needs and provide emergency shelter, food and health assistance, as well as protection.”*

EU humanitarian aid will be provided in locations such as Sarajevo, Bihać and Velika Kladusa in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The funding aims to strengthen the provision of assistance, the protective environment and enhancing the capacity of organisations already providing first-line emergency response.

Background

Since the beginning of the refugee crisis in Western Balkans the European Commission has allocated more than €25 million in humanitarian aid to assist refugees and migrants in Serbia, and over €4 million to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. EU humanitarian aid helps the most vulnerable refugees and migrants to meet basic needs and preserve their dignity.

In addition to humanitarian assistance, the European Commission provides Western Balkans partners with significant financial and technical support for activities related to migration and refugee crisis. This is done primarily through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance. Since 2007 the Commission has been providing assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the area of migration and border management through the Instrument of pre-accession amounting to €24.6 million. From January 2016 Bosnia and Herzegovina also benefits from the regional programme ‘Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management’ worth €8 million.

Around 4.900 refugees and migrants entered Bosnia and Herzegovina since early January 2018, according to government estimates. Approximately 2.500 refugees and migrants in need of assistance are currently stranded in the country. The EU will provide its assistance through humanitarian partner organisations already present in the country.