

# EU steps up its assistance for the reconstruction of Iraq

This brings the total EU development assistance mobilised in favour of Iraq in 2018 to €129 million and it is part of the €400 million pledged by the EU at the Iraq Reconstruction Conference held in Kuwait in February 2018.

Iraq is facing enormous challenges to rebuild the areas affected by the conflict and assist people in need. The purpose of the programme adopted today is to contribute to the development of the urban areas of Mosul and Basra, and of the rural areas of Nineveh governorate. This will help returning displaced populations, vulnerable youth and women find income opportunities and obtain services to respond to their essential needs. The assistance will also be used to promote youth entrepreneurship notably via start-up services. By supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth in Iraq, the help is delivering also on the Sustainable Development Goals and the priorities of the Government of Iraq.

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** said: *“The EU is delivering on its commitments made last February at the Iraq Reconstruction Conference in Kuwait. This new support will create opportunities and jobs, helping some of the most vulnerable communities to get back on their feet and rebuild their lives.”*

The measure adopted today also includes a €15 million contribution to the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the central aim of which is to provide a coherent and swift response to the needs arising from the massive displacement and returns caused by both the Syrian and the internal Iraqi crises. This action aims to enhance public service delivery in sectors like education and health. It will enhance access to livelihood opportunities for refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees and their communities. It will also uphold the long-standing Iraqi policy of protection and support of people residing and seeking protection in the country.

Today's measure complements the €72.5 million package adopted last October to foster stabilisation and socio-economic development through support to basic service delivery and improved living conditions in conflict areas. This package included measures to reactivate economic activity and entrepreneurship, assistance to facilitate the clearance of lands previously contaminated by explosives, and support to reforms in the energy sector.

These measures are in line with the [2018 EU strategy for Iraq](#) and the [Council Conclusions of 19 May 2017](#) on Iraq as a pilot country for implementing the [Humanitarian-Development Nexus](#), and reaffirm the EU commitments as stated during the Kuwait Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq. The total EU development assistance to Iraq amounts to €309.8 million since the beginning of the crisis.

## **Background**

The EU has a long history of cooperation with Iraq, working together in fields ranging from political reform and security to education, energy and migration. In the past years, the EU has stood by Iraq as a reliable partner committed to the stability and reconstruction of the country and the region, while at the same time promoting human rights and globally respected values such as democracy and rule of law.

The EU has led the international humanitarian, reconstruction and development efforts for the Iraq crisis, responding to the humanitarian emergency and supporting the stability and development of the country.

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