EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 26.5.2021
COM(2021) 255 final

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

Fifth Annual Report on the Facility for Refugees in Turkey

Contents

1. Introduction 1
1.1. Turkey and the refugee crisis 1
1.2. The EU response to the crisis and the establishment of the Facility 2
2. The functioning of the Facility 5
3. Financial capacity, duration and nature of funding 6
4. Implementation of the Facility 8
5. Monitoring & evaluation 15
6. Audit 17
7. Communication and visibility 17
8. Conclusion and next steps 18

1. Introduction

In accordance with Article 8 (1) of the Commission Decision of 24 November 2015[1] on the coordination of the actions of the Union and of the Member States through a coordination mechanism ("the Decision"), the Commission shall keep the European Parliament and the Council regularly informed about the implementation of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (hereinafter 'the Facility'). Article 8 (2) of the Decision provides that the Commission shall report annually to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the Facility. The first Annual Report on the Facility was published in March 2017[2]. It described the functioning of the Facility, the first actions undertaken in view of its implementation, monitoring, the evaluation system, as well as related communication activities. The second, third and fourth report were published in March 2018[3], April 2019[4], and April 2020[5] respectively. The cut-off date for this report is end-February 2021.

1.1. Turkey and the refugee crisis

Due to its geographic position, Turkey is a prominent reception and transit country for refugees and migrants. As a result of an unprecedented number of people arriving in Turkey, mainly due to the conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, the country has been hosting around four million refugees, the highest number in the world. This includes 3.6 million registered Syrian refugees[6], and 330 000 registered refugees and asylum seekers mainly from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia[7] [8]. This very large number of people has had a significant impact on the host communities. The protracted displacement of Syrian refugees in Turkey is posing increasing challenges on social cohesion between refugees, migrants and host communities, especially in a context characterised by economic downturn and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market.

Turkey continues to make very significant efforts in hosting and addressing the needs of almost four million refugees and migrants. Turkey reiterated its commitment to the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement of March 2016[9] and played a key role in

[1] Commission Decision C(2015) 9500 of 24.11.2015 on the coordination of the actions of the Union and of the Member States through a coordination mechanism – the Refugee Facility for Turkey, as amended by Commission Decision C(2016)855 of 10.2.2016.
[2] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/170302_facility_for_refugees_in_turkey_first_annual_report.pdf
[3] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/14032018_facility_for_refugees_in_turkey_second_annual_report.pdf
[4] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/com_2019_174_f1_communication_from_commission_to_inst_en_v5_p1_1016762.pdf
[5] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/fourth_annual_report_on_the_facility_for_refugees_in_turkey.pdf
[6] https://en.goc.gov.tr/temporary-protection27
[7] https://www.unhcr.org/tr/en/unhcr-turkey-stats
[8] A specificity of the Turkish asylum system is linked to the fact that the country has signed the 1967 New York Protocol of the 1951 Geneva Convention with a reservation. Accordingly, the vast majority of refugees in Turkey cannot apply for fully-fledged refugee status but for "Conditional Refugee" status only, which, if granted, limits the stay in the country until the moment a recognised refugee is "resettled to a third country".
[9] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18-eu-turkey-statement/

ensuring effective management of migratory flows along the Eastern Mediterranean route. Despite a short period of time in February/March 2020 during which Turkey actively encouraged migrants to move towards the Greek land border, the Statement continued to deliver concrete results in 2020 in reducing irregular and dangerous crossings and in saving lives in the Aegean Sea.

In their Joint Communication on the state of play of EU-Turkey political, economic and trade relations[10], the European Commission and the High Representative suggested a more effective and mutually beneficial implementation of key areas of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement, notably on migration management, by resuming without any further delay the process of returns from the Greek islands, starting with the 1450 returnees whose legal appeals are exhausted and conversely by stepping up resettlements from Turkey to the European Union.

The European Council of December 2020[11] confirmed that the EU would be prepared to continue providing financial assistance to Syrian refugees and host communities in Turkey, and the Members of the European Council, in their statement of March 2021[12] invited the Commission to present a proposal for the continuation of financing for Syrian refugees in Turkey, as well as in Jordan, Lebanon and other parts of the region. They also called for cooperation with Turkey on migration management to be strengthened.

1.2. The EU response to the crisis and the establishment of the Facility

In 2015, the European Union and its Member States decided to step up their political and financial engagement to support Turkey in its efforts to host refugees. In answer to the call from EU Member States for significant additional funding to support refugees in Turkey, the Commission established the Facility for Refugees in Turkey by means of the Commission Decision of 24 November 2015, amended on 10 February 2016[13], and again on 14 March and 24 July 2018. The Facility is a mechanism to coordinate the mobilisation of resources made available under both the EU budget and additional contributions from Member States integrated into the EU budget as external assigned revenue. Member States committed politically to provide national contributions in the framework of the Common Understanding between EU Member States and the European Commission, which was adopted by the representatives of the governments of the Member States on 3 February 2016, and updated on the occasion of the agreement on the second tranche of the Facility.[14] The Common Understanding also established a conditionality framework. For the first tranche of the Facility (2016-2017) a total of EUR 3 billion was allocated. The EUR 3 billion was made available in addition to EUR 345 million[15] already allocated by the Commission to Turkey in

[10] https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/10101/2021/EN/JOIN-2021-8-F2-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF
[11] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47296/1011-12-20-euco-conclusions-en.pdf
[12] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/48976/250321-vtc-euco-statement-en.pdf
[13] Commission Decision C(2016) 60/03 of 10.02.2016 on the Facility for Refugees in Turkey amending Commission Decision C(2015) 9500 of 24 November 2015.
[14] https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11329-2018-INIT/en/pdf
[15] Funding mobilised in the years 2013-2015 under the different external financing instruments, namely the Humanitarian Aid Instrument (HUMA), the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) and the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), including a number of actions implemented by the EU Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF).

response to the Syrian refugee crisis before the start of the Facility and was additional to Member States' bilateral aid[16]. An additional EUR 3 billion was made available for the second tranche of the Facility (2018-2019) taking the Facility total to EUR 6 billion. The Facility became operational on 17 February 2016 with the first meeting of the Facility Steering Committee. Following this meeting, the Commission moved rapidly to contract the first projects under the Facility. By 31 December 2020, the Commission had contracted the full operational envelope of the Facility. Out of a total of EUR 6 billion, nearly EUR 4.1 billion had been disbursed. In addition, EUR 585 million[17] was allocated in 2020 to support humanitarian actions in Turkey outside the Facility, including EUR 100 million to continue assistance in the areas of protection, health and education, and EUR 485 million under an Amending Budget to continue the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) and the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE).

On 18 March 2016, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union and Turkey reconfirmed their commitment to the implementation of their Joint Action Plan and agreed further measures aimed at deepening Turkey-EU relations and addressing the migration crisis[18]. Turkey and the European Union recognised that further, swift and determined efforts were needed. More specifically, the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016 (hereafter 'the Statement') called *inter alia* for putting an end to the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU by breaking the business model of the smugglers and offering migrants an alternative to putting their lives at risk, and for the speeding up of the implementation of the Facility.

The implementation of the Statement continued to play a key role in the course of 2020 in ensuring that migration challenges were addressed effectively and jointly by the EU and Turkey. Following the events at the border between Greece and Turkey in February 2020, on 9 March European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen met with the President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan. They agreed to review the implementation of the 2016 EU-Turkey Statement of which the Facility is a key component. Discussions continued until the summer under the auspices of the EU High Representative and Commission Vice President Josep Borrell and Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusoglu.

The total number of arrivals from Turkey into the EU in 2020 was 18 736 compared to 75 974 in 2019 (75% decrease). 13 979 arrivals were recorded to Greece in comparison to 73 627 in 2019 (81% decrease); 4 191 to Italy compared to 1 854 in 2019 (126% increase); 232 to Bulgaria and 334 by boat directly to the government-controlled areas of Cyprus, compared to 199 and 294 respectively in 2019. At the same time, the Cypriot authorities registered increasing arrivals from Turkey through crossings of the Green Line. Overall, 5 900 irregular migrants arrived to Cyprus either directly from Turkey or via the areas not

[16] Since the beginning of the crisis, the EU has mobilised all political and humanitarian tools at its disposal in support of the Syrian people, with EUR 24.9 billion of humanitarian, stabilisation and resilience assistance collectively mobilised since the onset of the crisis in 2011 https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/93313/node/93313_en.

[17] The total amount reflects both operational costs i.e. EUR 581.7 million and administrative costs i.e. EUR 3.3 million.

[18] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18-eu-turkey-statement/

under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus in 2020. This figure stood at 7 800 in 2019.

Turkey continued to face migratory pressure, albeit considerably lower than in 2019. The substantial drop of arrivals from Turkey in 2020 was due to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. While arrivals from Turkey to Greece in January and February 2020 were 49% and 22% higher compared to 2019, the measures taken as of March both inside Turkey and on its external borders had a clear impact on movements and travel.

Although Turkey reiterated its commitment to the effective implementation of the Statement, on 28 February 2020 the Turkish government announced it would cease controlling its land and sea borders with Europe and open the passage for migrants wishing to cross. This led to the setting up of an informal camp along the land border with Greece, which ended up hosting close to 25 000 migrants and refugees. Starting on 30 March, the Turkish authorities organised transport for the migrants and refugees out of the border area and closed the border with Greece and Bulgaria except for commercial traffic because of COVID-19. The Turkish authorities indicated that they acted within the framework of the public health precautions in place, and that this move did not mean a change in Turkey's policy to allow irregular migrants' exit over its borders. Migrants would be free to approach the Greek border once the COVID-19 precautions were lifted, as the Turkish government had no intention of preventing anyone wishing to do so from leaving Turkey.

Implementation of the 'One-for-One' resettlement scheme under the Statement continued. Between April 2016 and February 2021, 28 621 Syrian refugees were resettled from Turkey to the EU. Although resettlement operations worldwide were suspended temporarily between April and June 2020 due to the COVID-19 health crisis, 2 422 people were resettled in 2020 (around half of them after the resumption of operations, i.e. between July and December).

Since 2016, under the Statement, 2 140 migrants have been returned from the Greek islands to Turkey, while only 139 migrants were returned in 2020. On 16 March 2020, the Turkish authorities suspended return operations under the Statement due to the COVID-19 pandemic until further notice. Although resettlements from Turkey resumed as of July 2020, returns from Greece remain suspended to date. Responding to repeated requests from the Greek authorities and the European Commission regarding the resumption of return operations, Turkey has stressed that conditions for the resumption of operations have not been met.

The Voluntary Humanitarian Admissions Scheme which is expected to be activated once irregular crossings between Turkey and the EU end or at least have been substantially and sustainably reduced, has not yet been activated by the Member States.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a significant impact in Turkey. At the outbreak of the crisis in Turkey in March 2020, the Commission contacted the Turkish authorities to inquire whether any specific support to their response was required. They confirmed their intention to continue with the projects under the Facility and regular bilateral IPA assistance as originally programmed. In close consultation with the Turkish authorities, the Commission agreed to the mobilisation of Facility savings for COVID-19 related purposes in the form of top-ups to existing projects rather than new projects. The Commission also contacted Facility implementing partners for their assessment of the COVID-19 fall-out for Facility projects. Further to this consultation, the implementation period for projects under the 2016 EUR 1.6 billion Special Measure was extended to June 2023, which should allow for all projects concerned to reach their stated objectives.

By end-2020, some EUR 65 million had been redirected to health care interventions and socio-economic support measures to mitigate the COVID-19 impact under the Facility for Refugees (out of the total COVID-19 interventions under the EU's financial instruments, which amounts to EUR 105 million). Actions included the activation of a EUR 4.7 million contingency reserve of the SIHHAT I project to equip Migrant Health Centres with protective equipment and disinfectants. Furthermore, under the humanitarian leg of the Facility, over EUR 50 million was reallocated to provide humanitarian response following COVID-19 throughout a range of projects. In particular, both the ESSN and the CCTE provided top-up cash support for their beneficiaries. Under the ESSN, two top-ups of 500 Turkish Lira (TL) each were provided in the month of June and July 2020 for more than 1.7 million individual refugees (810 000 households), for a total of over EUR 47 million. Under the CCTE education project, a top up of 85 TL was provided to all CCTE eligible beneficiaries regardless of age and grade as a one-off payment on 30 November 2020. In total, 535 000 children benefited from this extra top up. In addition, cash assistance to 20 000 non-ESSN beneficiary households was also provided through a nationwide operation implemented by UNHCR together with the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM), with a EUR 8 million contribution from humanitarian funding outside the Facility. Under the EU Trust Fund in Response to the Syria Crisis, COVID-19 assistance focused on procurement of personal protective equipment, online and distance learning, job-placements

2. The functioning of the Facility

The Facility is a coordination mechanism that allows for the swift, effective and efficient mobilisation of EU assistance to refugees in Turkey. The Facility ensures the optimal mobilisation of existing EU financing instruments, as humanitarian and/or development assistance, to address the needs of refugees and host communities in a comprehensive and coordinated manner[19].

[19] Commission Decision C(2015) 9500 of 24.11.2015, Article 2 – Objectives of the Facility.

The Steering Committee of the Facility provides strategic guidance on the priorities, the type of actions to be supported, the amounts to be allocated and the financing instruments to be mobilised - and when appropriate, on the conditions relating to the implementation of Turkey's commitments under the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan of 29 November 2015 (hereafter the 'Joint Action Plan').[20] In 2020, the fifth year of implementation of the Facility, one Steering Committee meeting took place, on 5 November 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held virtually.

The key principles guiding the Facility's implementation are speed, efficiency and effectiveness, while ensuring sound financial management. Sustainability of Facility interventions and co-ownership by the Turkish authorities are also important. The identification of priority areas for assistance was based on a comprehensive and independent needs assessment [21], paying particular attention to vulnerable groups. The needs assessment was updated in 2018[22].

The Facility coordinates financing from the following external financing instruments[23]: humanitarian aid[24], the European Neighbourhood Instrument[25], the Development Cooperation Instrument[26], the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)[27] and the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace[28]. Measures financed by the Union's budget are implemented in accordance with its financial rules and regulations applicable to both direct and indirect management.

Implementation of assistance is conditional upon strict compliance by Turkey with the undertakings of the Joint Action Plan and the Statement.

3. Financial capacity, duration and nature of funding

The total budget coordinated by the Facility is EUR 6 billion, mobilised in two tranches. Projects under the first tranche run until mid-2021 at the latest and under the second tranche until mid-2025 at the latest (most projects will finish earlier). As of end-2020, all operational funds have been committed and contracted under both tranches.

[20] See Article 5 (1) of Commission Decision C(2015) 9500, as amended by Commission Decision C(2016)855.
[21] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/2016_needs_assessment_.pdf
[22] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/updated_needs_assessment.pdf
[23] The European Neighbourhood Instrument and the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) contributions were respectively transferred to and implemented under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance and the EU Trust Fund. In principle, all Facility contributions to the EUTF (from IPA and to a minor extent from DCI) were implemented as non-humanitarian assistance.
[24] Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 concerning humanitarian aid, OJ L163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.
[25] Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument, OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 27.
[26] Regulation (EU) No 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation, OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 44.
[27] Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 11.
[28] Regulation (EU) No 230/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an instrument contributing to stability and peace, OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 1.

Exceptionally, due to the COVID-19 crisis, the implementation period for projects under the 2016 EUR 1.6 billion Special Measure was extended until June 2023, allowing for all projects concerned to reach their stated objectives.

The first tranche amounted to EUR 3 billion, of which EUR 1 billion was mobilised from the EU budget and EUR 2 billion in bilateral contributions from the Member States[29]. Likewise, the second tranche amounted to EUR 3 billion, of which the EU budget provided EUR 2 billion and the Member States EUR 1 billion[30].

As concerns EU budget resources, of the EUR 1 billion from the EU budget for 2016-2017, EUR 250 million was mobilised in 2016 and EUR 750 million in 2017. Of the EUR 2 billion from the EU budget for 2018-2019, EUR 550 million was mobilised in 2018, with the balance mobilised in 2019.

As for Member States' contributions, for the first tranche, Member States contributed EUR 677 million to the Facility in 2016, EUR 847 million in 2017, EUR 396 million in 2018 and EUR 80 million in 2019. For the second tranche, Member States contributed EUR 68 million in 2018, EUR 202 million in 2019 and EUR 265 million in 2020, with the remaining payments planned until 2023. Member States' contributions are made directly to the EU Budget in the form of external assigned revenue pursuant to Article 21(2)(a)(ii) of the Financial Regulation and assigned to the budget lines of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance and of the Humanitarian Aid.

A satisfactory match between the rate of Member States' payments of their contributions *into* the Facility and the rate of disbursements financed by those contributions *from* the Facility continues.

Under the humanitarian strand of the Facility, EUR 19.50 million was earmarked as buffer capacity for possible funding of responses to the influx of new refugees from Syria in 2019. Since the buffer was not used in 2019, this amount was contracted in 2020 to cover health and protection actions, completing the programming exercise for the second tranche.

The Commission has continued humanitarian assistance also beyond the funding allocated under the Facility. In total to date, EUR 585 million[31] was allocated to support humanitarian actions in Turkey outside the Facility. This includes an initial EUR 50 million in humanitarian assistance allocated in April 2020 by the Commission from the yearly humanitarian budget to continue assistance in the areas of protection, health and education in emergencies, and an additional EUR 50 million allocated in November 2020 for the continuation of the aforamentioned projects. Also, in July 2020, the budgetary authority approved and allocated another EUR 485 million under an Amending Budget to continue two

[29] The total distribution of Member States' contribution is available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/02/03/refugee-facility-for-turkey/.

[30] https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/06/29/facility-for-refugees-in-turkey-member-states-agree-details-of-additional-funding/

[31] The total amount reflects both operational costs i.e. EUR 581.7 million and administrative costs i.e. EUR 3.3 million.

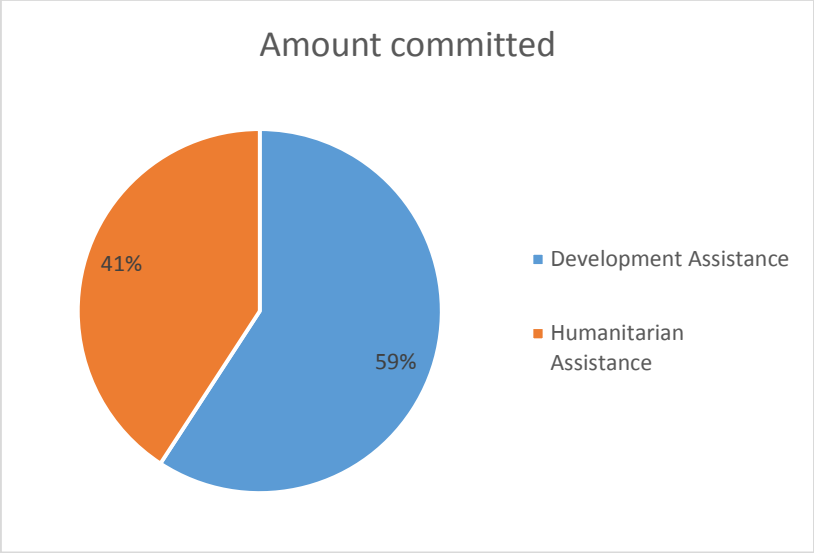
Facility flagship projects i.e. the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) and the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE).

By 31 December 2020, the Commission had contracted the full operational envelope of the Facility. Out of a total of EUR 6 billion, more than EUR 4 billion had been disbursed.

4. Implementation of the Facility

The Facility is implemented as humanitarian and development assistance. Under the first tranche roughly EUR 1.4 billion and EUR 1.6 billion were allocated to the respective strands. Given the protracted nature of the Syria crisis, interventions under the second tranche increasingly focus on socio-economic support activities and the creation of livelihood opportunities. Under the second tranche, EUR 1.04 billion has been allocated to humanitarian assistance, and EUR 1.9 billion to development assistance.[32]

For the Facility overall, the breakdown of humanitarian and development assistance is as follows:



Full details can be obtained from the online projects table[33].

Programming of the Facility was completed in December 2019, and as of end-2020 the full operational envelope of EUR 6 billion had been contracted, out of which EUR 4.072 billion had been disbursed.

It is important to note that assistance provided within the framework of the Facility is project-based. Disbursements depend on progress in the implementation of Facility interventions.

Particular attention is paid to non-Syrian refugees and asylum seekers. Facility interventions always aim to involve the local communities hosting refugees.

[32] The balance of EUR 60 million is allocated to administrative and operational support to Facility implementation

[33] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/facility_table.pdf

Humanitarian assistance supports the most vulnerable refugees through the provision of predictable and dignified support addressing basic needs and protection. It also addresses gaps in service provision through specialised agencies and partners in health and education in emergencies. EU humanitarian aid is guided by the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid of 2007[34], which stipulates that the EU as a humanitarian actor adheres to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, as set out in Article 214 of the TFEU and in the Humanitarian Aid Regulation (No. 1257/96)[35,36].

Under the humanitarian strand of the Facility, a total of 65 projects have been implemented through 21 partners under both the first and the second tranche. These projects aim to cover the response to basic needs, protection, education, and health for the most vulnerable refugees in Turkey. Under the first tranche around EUR 1.4 billion was allocated and contracted in humanitarian assistance and EUR 1.3 billion was disbursed, while for the second tranche, EUR 1.04 billion has been contracted and by 31 January 2021, EUR 964 million was disbursed.

Development assistance supports the longer-term needs in the fields of health, education and socio-economic development of refugees, notably in terms of access to public services and livelihood opportunities, and municipal infrastructure. It also focuses on vulnerable groups and includes a gender dimension in its interventions, e.g. protection of women and girls against sexual and gender based violence and improving access to sexual and reproductive health care.

Under the development strand of the Facility, the implementation of 26 projects contracted under the first tranche continued to show good progress. Of these projects, 15 were implemented under the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF) for a total of EUR 293 million, in addition to the allocation managed directly through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance[37].

Disbursements to implementing partners reached EUR 1.75 billion out of a total of EUR 3.5 billion allocated to development assistance under both tranches of the Facility[38]. Under the second tranche, the allocated EUR 1.9 billion was fully contracted in December 2020, out of which EUR 418 million had been disbursed by end-February. Under the development strand of the Facility there are 16 new contracts.

Facility interventions per priority area

[34] Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States.
[35] Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid.
[36] The European Commission's humanitarian aid is based on annual country-specific Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs). The framework for cooperation between the Commission and its partners in the area of humanitarian aid is established by the Commission's Financial and Administrative Framework Agreements with international organisations and Framework Partnership Agreements with non-governmental organisations.
[37] Funds from the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance under the Facility are managed in accordance with the rules for external action contained in Title IV of part two of the Financial Regulation and its Rules of Application.
[38] This figure includes also disbursements under projects implemented by the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, but not yet charged to the EU budget.

Progress per priority area in the programming and implementation of assistance financed under both tranches of the Facility is as follows:

Education

The Facility has allocated more than EUR 1.5 billion to the priority area of education, including EUR 545 million[39] for educational infrastructure.

Under the humanitarian strand of the Facility, more than EUR 181 million was allocated to education. The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) continues to be successfully implemented, and supports school enrolment and attendance of refugee children through the provision of monthly payments to refugee families, on the condition that pupils attend school regularly. Facility support for the CCTE ended in October 2020. However the CCTE programme can continue until early 2022 following the EUR 85 million top-up provided under the Amending Budget agreed by the EU budgetary authority in July 2020. As of December 2020, nearly 670,000 children had benefited at least once from the CCTE programme, and 90% of all refugee children enrolled in education benefit from the CCTE. Humanitarian funding has also supported non-formal education (Accelerated Learning Programmes) and school enrolment for out-of-school under the first and second tranches of the Facility.

As concerns Facility development assistance, a follow-up direct grant (known as PIKTES[40]) to the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) of EUR 400 million started implementation towards the end of the second quarter of 2019 in support of efforts by the Ministry to increase the integration and access to high-quality education for Syrian children. By the end of June 2020, 686,581 Syrian children were enrolled in education for the 2019-2020 school year under PIKTES. Substantial progress has been made in rolling out Early Childhood Education (ECE), with a total of 115,133 children supported, with a roughly equal number of Syrian refugee and host community children. The number of Syrian children and youth who completed back-up (remedial) and catch-up classes increased from 80,243 to 90,233. In terms of support to the education system's teaching capacity, a total of 3,954 educational personnel have been supported through salaries or other financial incentives and 177,019 education staff had received training to enable them to respond to the particular needs of refugee children. During the second quarter of 2020, teacher trainings have been focusing on remote teaching, providing psycho-social support to Syrian children and enhancing communication with children and families during the pandemic period. In June 2020, 3,886 PIKTES teachers received online in-service trainings focusing on distance education supporting children's well-being during the pandemic and on how to conduct the EBA[41] live classes.

The Accelerated Learning programme (ALP), jointly implemented by UNICEF and MoNE under humanitarian funding, has shown good progress, with 19,881 learners enrolled by January 2020. The provision of scholarships to attend higher education support has also made progress. Up to 1,332 scholarships to attend higher education institutions had been provided

[39] This includes a EUR 40 million clean energy project under the EUTF (FRIT 1).
[40] Promoting Integration of Syrian Kids into the Education System (PIKTES)
[41] Educational Informatics Network

to refugees by June 2020, out of which 19 for refugee children with disabilities. The Facility has continued to support educational infrastructure development and reduce school overcrowding. Over 3,900 educational facilities (including ECE centres) were upgraded by June 2020. The majority of the upgrades consisted of the provision of refurbishment and/or equipment to 2,120 pre-schools. The number of new schools constructed increased from 40 to 102 by the end of December 2020. The construction of around 260 schools continues. In addition, a EUR 40 million clean energy project contracted under the first tranche provides energy via two solar farms and rooftop panels to 120 schools. Roof top installation for three schools have been completed. The negative impact of COVID-19-related measures on the construction sector necessitated an extension of the implementation period until mid-2023.

Protection

A total of some EUR 211 million has been allocated to protection under the Facility, mainly via projects under the humanitarian strand.

The humanitarian strand of the Facility has supported the registration and verification of refugees to regularise their status in Turkey and facilitate their access to services. In addition to standalone protection interventions aimed to fill gaps and respond to specific needs and individuals at risk, protection has also been mainstreamed into the other pillars of the humanitarian response strategy (basic needs, health and education). The overall aim is to better address refugees' vulnerabilities, regularise their status and link them to a wider network of public and UN/NGO services. In addition, projects financed through the EU Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis included assistance to the reception of refugees in community centres and further referrals for vulnerable refugees to adequate services.

Under the Special Measure of July 2019, a direct grant to the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services for an amount of EUR 20 million was contracted at the end of 2020. The project aims to improve the provision of preventive and protective social services to the most vulnerable refugees and host community members. It builds on humanitarian support provided under the Facility to date, bridging humanitarian and development cooperation as set out by the strategic orientations of the Facility under the second tranche.

The direct grant is in the inception phase. The selection of the technical assistance team, the setting-up of the project office and the fine-tuning of the project documentation package are ongoing. The EU Delegation and ECHO's field office staff started to hold regular meetings in order to bridge the transition from the first to the second tranche of the Facility.

Health

Under the Facility EUR 800 million has been allocated to the priority area of health.

The main pillar of Facility support is the SIHHAT 1 project, a EUR 300 million direct grant with the Turkish Ministry of Health (MoH), which supports the Ministry in its efforts to provide free and equitable access to health care to 3.6 million refugees. The number of functional Migrant Health Centres (MHCs) has reached 177 and 3,420 healthcare personnel of Syrian origin are currently on the payroll of the project. The pace of project implementation continues to be satisfactory with tangible results in the field. The contingency reserve of EUR 4.7 million to address COVID-19-related needs was released in April 2020.

A two months no-cost extension was required until 31 January 2021 to fully implement some important activities. In parallel, a World Health Organization (WHO) project previously funded under the humanitarian strand, was continued under the EUTF and includes support to migrant health training centres, training for Syrian medical personnel and certification of Syrian doctors and nurses to work in the Migrant Health Centres.

The follow-up project SIHHAT 2 (EUR 210 million) - "Supporting Migrant Health Services in Turkey" - was signed with the MoH in December 2020 to ensure synchronisation with the end of SIHHAT 1 and the continuation of refugee health care services until end-2023. A EUR 90 million contract to procure complementary small-scale health infrastructure and equipment was signed with the Council of Europe's Development Bank (CEB) in December 2020. The duration of contracts for the construction of two Facility-funded hospitals (total EUR 90 million, with Agence Française de Développement - AFD - and the CEB) in the provinces of Kilis and Hatay funded under the first tranche are being extended to reflect implementation time lost due to COVID-19.

Humanitarian partners still operate a limited number of static and mobile services to respond to urgent and unmet health care needs, especially in the field of physiotherapy and physical rehabilitation. Some specialised health services such as mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) were integrated into the SIHHAT 1 as of December 2020, while most of the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) activities had already been integrated into SIHHAT 1 in October 2019, in line with the Facility transition strategy.

Concerns persist with regard to access to health services of refugees outside of their original province of registration or those on the move, which is limited to vaccinations and emergency services. This negatively affects refugees on the move, seasonal workers and refugees who settled in other provinces. The Commission closely follows the policy changes and aims to reach the refugee population affected via mobile healthcare activities under the SIHHAT projects.

Municipal infrastructure

EUR 380 million was allocated to this priority area under the second tranche of the Facility.

Following the Call for expression of interest launched in December 2018, a number of projects were provisionally selected for financing under the second tranche. Negotiations with AFD for a first contract were concluded successfully in December 2019 and an addendum was signed in December 2020. A second contract with the World Bank was signed in September 2020. These projects include actions to improve access to and the quality of municipal services in the areas of water supply, wastewater and solid waste management in areas most affected by the refugee influx. In addition, negotiations were concluded with Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and a contract of EUR 25 million for recreational infrastructure in support of social cohesion was signed in July 2020. The construction of one mechanical biological waste treatment facility in Gaziantep continues under a EUTF project implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Basic needs and socio-economic support

More than EUR 2.83 billion has been allocated to basic needs and socio-economic support under the Facility.

Interventions in this priority area aim to ensure that the basic needs of the most vulnerable refugees are met, and that refugee resilience and self-reliance are strengthened. This should allow for a gradual transition from dependence on social assistance to increased self-reliance and livelihood opportunities.

Under the Facility's basic needs assistance more than 2.6 million refugees have received support allowing them to live in dignity. Most support is provided through the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), a humanitarian social assistance programme that delivers monthly, unrestricted, multi-purpose cash via a debit card system, now with more than 1.8 million vulnerable refugee beneficiaries. Under the recent agreement with the International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent for ESSN 3, EUR 500 million in Facility funding was allocated to this flagship programme at the end of 2019. Current basic needs support for refugees in Turkey under the ESSN 3 is scheduled to end in March 2021. With a top-up of EUR 400 million outside the Facility approved by the budgetary authority in July 2020 as part of the Amending Budget referred to earlier, the continuation of ESSN support is ensured until at least end-2021.[42]

In line with the Facility transition strategy and given the protracted nature of the Syria crisis, Facility interventions under the development strand have increasingly focused on socio-economic support activities and the creation of livelihood opportunities. In order to continue supporting basic needs of the most vulnerable, in December 2020 the Commission signed a contract for a EUR 245 million direct grant with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services to allow for the provision of monthly financial support comparable with social assistance provided to vulnerable individuals under the Turkish social security system. Following a preparatory phase, payments to beneficiaries should start in July 2021. The project should run in parallel with the ESSN and provide support to households with single parents, the elderly, and disabled and severely disabled individuals. The selection of the project management team has almost been completed, and the setting-up of the project office and fine-tuning of the project documentation package are ongoing. The EU Delegation and ECHO's field office staff have started regular meetings in order to coordinate the parallel implementation of the ESSN and the direct grant.

Additional socio-economic support continues to be provided to refugees with a profile that would enable them to access the labour market. This support aims to increase refugee employability and provides for vocational and skills training, language training, job counselling, on-the-job training programmes and the simplification of the work permits process to support both Syrian refugees and host communities. Small grants to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship training are provided to both Syrian refugee and host community start-ups and existing entrepreneurs in cooperation with the Small and Medium-sized Industry Development Organisation of Turkey (KOSGEB). A further project currently implemented

[42] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20200706IPR82727/meps-approve-EU585-million-to-support-syrian-refugees-in-neighbouring-countries

by the World Bank supports the development and implementation of a female-led social entrepreneurship model to provide a sustainable income generating activity for both vulnerable Syrian refugees and Turkish women. Projects should run until mid-2025 at the latest.

Further to the 2018 Call for expressions of interest to implementing partners, two contracts were signed in December 2019 with Expertise France and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). These contracts aim to provide support to start-ups and micro and small businesses in the form of micro-grants and entrepreneurial coaching and mentoring, and vocational training and apprenticeships. In September 2020, the Commission signed four additional contracts with the World Bank for activities that aim to increase employability and skills development of refugees and host communities, improve services provided in relation to vocational education and training and market supply and demand matching, and create a conducive environment for business growth, registration and expansion as well as support the employment creation in the agricultural sector. Activities target both refugees and host communities in an effort to spur social cohesion and fight stereotypes leading to social tension. The signature of the four contracts took place after the timely conclusion of a new Framework Agreement between the European Commission and the World Bank governing all EU financed operations. In addition, the signature of two additional contracts with KfW took place in November and December 2020 respectively, and a small top-up to the ICMPD project funded with savings from the Call was also negotiated in 2020.

Migration management

The Facility has funded two projects in this priority area under the first tranche for a total of EUR 80 million.

A first project provided EU support to strengthen the capacity of the Turkish Coast Guard to carry out search and rescue operations. The second project aimed to support the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) in its management of returns from the EU. Both projects have been completed, with the second project coming to an end in December 2019.

Gender aspects within projects under the Facility

The Commission is committed to implement the EU Gender Action Plan II (GAP) "Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020" and EU Gender Action Plan III "Together towards a gender equal world 2021-2025" on strengthening gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action. In this context, the promotion, protection and fulfilment of human rights for women and girls, gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment are overarching EU priorities and objectives, which guide Facility interventions.

More specifically, the humanitarian strand of the Facility is governed by ECHO's 2013 gender policy 'Gender in Humanitarian Aid: different needs, adapted response'. This implies calls on partners to conduct gender analysis at the onset of a programme, to adapt programme

design and implementation according to the differential risks and opportunities facing gender groups, and report on results with gender-disaggregated data.

As a result, gender-related issues are taken into account for all Facility projects and are mainstreamed. Facility interventions are designed to promote the provision of equal opportunities for men and women, boys and girls. Gender disaggregated data are collected for monitoring purposes. Gender mainstreaming is combined with dedicated actions that have been developed to ensure progress in this area. The Facility works with implementing partners that have solid experience with this approach and have the capacity to engage in dialogue with the Turkish authorities. These include the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Women and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

5. Monitoring & evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation system of the Facility was designed to be gradually rolled out and continuously improved.

Results Framework

The Facility Results Framework reflects the strategic framework of the Facility itself as well as the concrete actions implemented under the umbrella of the Facility and their logical frameworks. The first version of the Results Framework was developed between August 2016 and March 2017 in consultation with key stakeholders, including the Facility Steering Committee, relevant Turkish authorities and the relevant Commission services. A first draft was shared with the Steering Committee in March 2017 and a revised version in November 2018.

In April 2019, the Facility Secretariat launched the revision process of the Facility Results Framework to update and align it with the revised Facilty strategy and the priority areas financed under the second tranche. The aim was to verify the consistency and variation of Results indicators under the two tranches and to enable performance and results reporting, both at output and outcome level for the Facility as a whole. The final draft of the revised Results Framework, developed in consultation with implementing partners, including the relevant Turkish authorities, was shared with the Steering Committee. Reporting against the revised Results Framework started in July 2020.

Facility-level monitoring and reporting

Facility-level monitoring was launched in spring 2017. Monitoring data are generated at output level by the implementing partners, as per their obligation under each contract. A first request for monitoring data was issued in May 2017, followed by three reporting cycles in 2017. Reporting cycles continued in 2018, 2019 and 2020. Based on this, Facility Monitoring Reports were released on a bi-annual basis with the most recent monitoring report covering the period until June 2020.[43] Reporting against the revised Results Framework started as from 1 July 2020 and two monitoring and reporting cycles were launched in 2020. The next bi-annual report should be presented at the June 2021 Steering Committee.

[43] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/201022_fmr.pdf

Technical Assistance for monitoring

The Commission adopted a first Commission Implementing Decision establishing a Support Measure on monitoring, evaluation, audit and communication of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey in May 2017. This enabled the procurement of technical assistance in support of Facility monitoring, both at action/contract and Facility level. The technical assistance contract for monitoring was signed in January 2018 and is being implemented. The assignment has two distinct parts. The first consists of the support to monitoring and reporting at the Facility level. This comprises a periodic review of the Results Framework, the review of baseline and target values and the indicator calculation methods and related guidelines. The technical assistance team is also in charge of supporting the Facility Secretariat in deriving first-level analysis of the monitoring data collected quarterly and in preparing the bi-annual Facility Monitoring Reports. The second part of the assignment consists of support to the EU Delegation to monitor Facility-funded actions/contracts under the development strand, including verification of data through regular or ad hoc monitoring missions. Due to the size of some Facility interventions and the geographical spread of the activities the Delegation needs support for on-the-spot checks.

By the end of December 2020, 161 monitoring missions had been completed: six results oriented (ROM) monitoring missions have been performed by ROM experts, 51 missions by the technical assistance team (SUMAF), and 104 on-the-spot checks/monitoring missions by the relevant EUD programme managers. 68% of all these monitoring missions were targeting the contracts under direct management of IPA and EUTF funds.[44]

In November 2019, the Commission adopted a second Support Measure to complement, continue and build on the results achieved under the first Support Measure. The humanitarian pillar of the Facility is monitored in compliance with relevant provisions. Monitoring of all actions financed under the Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs) was undertaken by DG ECHO field staff in Turkey and by the regional DG ECHO office in Amman as well as by monitoring visits from HQ staff. Compared to 2019 the number of monitoring missions was reduced, due to COVID-19 restrictions. By the end of February 2021, 52 project-level monitoring missions had been completed. However, out of these 52 monitoring missions, 30 were performed remotely via online platforms, while 22 were conducted through in-person field visits.

Evaluation

The evaluation of Facility interventions is taking place at three different levels; action-level evaluations, Facility portfolio-type evaluations and other Facility-related evaluations. Five Facility action and portfolio-level evaluations and six Facility-related evaluations have either been completed or are ongoing. In December 2018, the Commission launched the strategic mid-term evaluation of the Facility, which started in March 2019. The evaluation is to assess the Facility's contribution to the priority areas of education, health, socio-economic support and migration management over the period of 2016-2019/20. It should provide relevant

[44] Cumulative figures, from 2017.

Commission services, the Facility Steering Committee, other interested stakeholders and the wider public with an overall independent assessment of the Facility's performance, paying particular attention to its intermediate results measured against its objectives. The evaluation also aims to capture lessons learned and provide actionable recommendations to improve current and possible future actions. The final evaluation report sholud be presented at the June 2021 Steering Committee.

6. Audit

Following the release of the Special Report on the Facility of the European Court of Auditors (ECA)[45] issued in November 2018, the Commission continues to implement its recommendations. Good progress has been made on all recommendations, in particular as concerns the development of a transition strategy, the complementarity of instruments mobilised under the Facility and the reduction of indirect support costs.

7. Communication and visibility

From the very beginning of the Facility, visibility and communication have been key priorities. The Facility is central to conveying the message of the EU's continued strong support to refugees and host communities in Turkey. The 2017 communication strategy remains the overall framework for communication activities, aimed to enhance the visibility of Facility-funded actions.

Events and ceremonies

In 2020 and due to COVID-19, most physical events and ceremonies were moved to online mediums and webinars. These included festivals, graduation ceremonies, project opening events, seminars, conferences, moved to online medium and converted into webinars, which all took place virtually. Several high level visits took place in 2020 to Gaziantep, Kilis and Kayseri. A project opening by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Izmir in October brought together farmers with EU representatives. The year ended with a signature ceremony of the final eight contracts under the Facility, which included several implementing partners as well as the Turkish Vice-President's Office.[46] The EU's humanitarian partners implemented several digital communication activities across Europe, informing European citizens about the EU's support to refugees in Turkey.

In March 2020, the World Food Programme launched an exhibit in the European Parliament entitled Colours of Hope. For reasons to do with COVID-19, the exhibit was available only for those with access to the European Parliament, but the artwork was also promoted on social media. In December 2020, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and DG ECHO launched a digital communication campaign 'Power To Be'[47] on the ESSN. By January 2021, the campaign had reached over 16 million people in Austria, France, Romania, Spain and Turkey. The campaign should continue in the first

[45] https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR18_27/SR_TRF_EN.pdf
[46] https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/pr/eu-completes-contracting-under-eur-6-billion-package-support-refugees-and-host-communities
[47] https://powertobe.ifrc.org/

quarter of 2021. A digital campaign run by UNICEF, 'I choose education', promoted the CCTE in six EU countries and reached a total of over 24 million people.

Media presence

The Facility's humanitarian assistance featured in over 80 major international print and audio/visual reports in 2020. The Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management visited Turkey in March 2020 together with the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep Borrell. Commissioner Lenarčič visited humanitarian aid projects in Gaziantep and Kilis. A press point in Gaziantep resulted in reports in five national dailies and press agencies as well as in some 80 digital outlets.

The use of audiovisual material to showcase Facility activities has been an important part of the overall communication strategy. However, COVID-19 has severely impacted the Commission's and implementing partners' communication plans, which required adaptation. Implementing partners were encouraged to produce videos on the achievements of their projects through human interest stories. Between January 2020 and February 2021, over 40 videos were produced on activities implemented under the Facility. The information and communication teams of the EU Delegation and DG ECHO Turkey Office regularly promote Facility projects. These projects received wide coverage by major international broadcasters including TRT World, Fox TV, Anadolu Agency and others.

8. Conclusion and next steps

Important progress in the mobilisation of the Facility was made in 2020. The full operational envelope of the Facility was contracted and more than EUR 4 billion disbursed. The Facility continued to provide much needed assistance to refugees and host communities in Turkey.

The European Council of December 2020 confirmed that the EU would be prepared to continue providing financial assistance to Syrian refugees and host communities in Turkey, and the March 2021 European Council invited the Commission to present a proposal for the continuation of financing for Syrian refugees in Turkey, as well as in Jordan, Lebanon and other parts of the region.

The next steps include:

- *Continuing effective implementation of all projects to benefit refugees and host communities, in line with the principles of sound financial management*
- *Finalise mid-term evaluation, and follow up and implement its recommendations*
- *Continuing the roll-out of Facility-related communication activities*
- *Organising Facility Steering Committees in the spring and autumn of 2021*
- *Considering options for further support to refugees and host communities in Turkey*