

Beat: Politics

Meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council

European Council

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USPA NEWS - Extraordinary meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council, 28 March 2022

Ministers met to discuss further coordination of the reception of refugees from Ukraine. Since 24 February 2022, around 3.8 million people, mainly women and children, have arrived in the European Union after fleeing from the war in Ukraine.

Ministers took stock of the means of material and financial support deployed with regard to both their level and their flexibility. They discussed possible additional financial needs as well as potential gaps in the support provided by the agencies. Discussions on medium and long-term needs for assistance will now continue at expert level.

Ministers also addressed the implementation of the decision on temporary protection and expressed their support for further coordination of guidance and travel within the EU. In particular, they called on the Commission, with the assistance of eu-LISA, to act as quickly as possible to seek an IT solution that would allow for a centralised Europe-wide approach to the registration of Ukrainian refugees. Such consolidation at EU level of registration in national databases will make it easier to protect refugees, and in particular unaccompanied minors, and facilitate their travel within the EU. Ministers also took account of the ideas and pilot projects on the coordination between member states of rail and bus transport.

Ministers took note of the commitments made with regard to the reception of refugees from Moldova, with 14 500 places already proposed. They also welcomed the operational procedures approved by the Commission for the implementation of those evacuation operations.

Finally, ministers reiterated the need for the continued strict application of external border controls. They also supported the mobilisation of the EU network to fight organised and serious crime (EMPACT) in order to avoid the exploitation of the situation by criminals, including via human trafficking, online fraud and embezzlement of funds destined to support refugees or arms trafficking.

In the margins of the Council meeting, ministers had an opportunity to speak to the Ukrainian Minister for the Interior by video conference.

Following the meeting, the Commission presented a ten-point joint action plan, coordinated with the French Presidency of the Council of the EU, to provide operational responses to the situation.

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