

## **UNHCR calls on Greece's future members of European Parliament to strengthen refugee protection**

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is today urging Greece's candidates for the next European Parliament to adopt seven key calls to strengthen refugee protection within and beyond the borders of the European Union. Members of the next European Parliament have a unique and important opportunity to better protect refugees in the EU and globally.

An unprecedented 68.5 million people around the world have now been forced to flee conflict, violence and persecution and thousands continue to flee every day. Among them are nearly 25.4 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18. The vast majority of refugees are hosted in developing countries and not in the European Union where refugee arrivals have fallen to pre-2015 levels.

"Urgent responses are needed to the unending displacement around the world, at a time when toxicity in language about refugees and migrants is on the rise in Europe and elsewhere," said UNHCR Representative in Greece Philippe Leclerc. "The next European Parliament must mobilize the EU around a strong and fair response for forcibly displaced people globally and in the region. This includes demonstrating solidarity across the EU for refugees and countries hosting them, such as Greece," he added.

The European Union more than ever needs a bold, imaginative and workable approach to overcome fragmentation and manage refugee movements effectively in a secure, humane and orderly way that works for both refugees and states. By supporting countries outside of Europe and by increasing safe and legal pathways, the EU can reduce dangerous journeys and help find long-term opportunities for refugees to thrive and not just survive. If pursued and implemented, UNHCR's seven key calls to European Parliament candidates will substantially strengthen this common EU response.

UNHCR remains ready to continue providing support to the European Parliament, the EU and its Member States, to ensure a functioning, fair and accessible European asylum system, and leadership at the global level.

UNHCR's seven key calls to European Parliament candidates are available at a designated webpage in [English](#) and [Greek](#).

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*For further information, please contact:*

*Boris Cheshirkov, Associate Comm/Public Information Officer, +306951854661, e-mail: [cheshirk@unhcr.org](mailto:cheshirk@unhcr.org)*

*Stella Nanou, Assistant Comm/Public Information Officer, +306944586037, e-mail: [nanou@unhcr.org](mailto:nanou@unhcr.org)*



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