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The meeting of EU heads of state or government held with Turkey and devoted to the refugee crisis on 7 March 2016 in Brussels.



MIGRANT CRISIS: EU AND TURKEY DELAY DECISION AS SUMMIT ENDS

BBC.COM

The EU and Turkey have ended a summit in Brussels and delayed a decision on how to ease the migration crisis.

Leaders have been discussing an offer by Turkey to do more to stop illegal migration in return for more EU aid and accelerated EU membership talks for Turkey.

They said they had agreed on the broad principles of a plan but needed more time to work on the details of a deal.

Talks will continue ahead of a long-scheduled EU meeting on 17-18 March. Europe is facing its biggest refugee crisis since World War Two, with most migrants coming via Turkey.

Turkey is currently sheltering more than 2.7 million refugees from the civil war in neighbouring Syria. The EU wants Turkey to take back migrants who do not qualify for asylum and do more to patrol its own waters.

For every migrant sent back, Turkey wants the EU to accept one Syrian refugee from Turkish soil through a resettlement scheme.

The Turkish government is asking for a doubling of EU aid aimed at helping Turkey deal with the crisis, to €6bn as well as a faster path towards EU membership and the speeding up of plans to allow Turks visa-free travel in Europe.

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MERKEL SCUPPERS EU PLAN TO CLOSE BALKAN REFUGEE ROUTE

THELOCAL.DE



Chancellor Angela Merkel refused on Monday to put her name to a joint EU statement that would have declared the Balkan route closed to refugees, as tens of thousands of asylum seekers remain stranded in Greece. Along with European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker, Merkel insisted on Monday that a mention of the route closure be dropped from the proposed closing statement of the summit in Brussels

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NATO EXPANDS ANTI-TRAFFICKING MISSION INTO TURKISH, GREEK WATERS

DW.DE



NATO ships have moved into Turkish and Greek territorial waters as part of an operation to stem the tide of refugees and migrants. Germany is leading the operation. The NATO ships will collect information and conduct reconnaissance on human traffickers using rickety boats to bring migrants to Europe. The information will then be forwarded to Turkish and Greek authorities as well as the EU border protection agency Frontex.

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SCHULZ: "FOR THE BENEFIT OF REFUGEES WE NEED TO COOPERATE WITH TURKEY"

EUROPARL.EU

"For the benefit of refugees we need to cooperate with Turkey," EP President Martin Schulz said following a meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu on Monday 7 March. They discussed the refugee crisis, border controls, visa liberalisation for Turkish citizens as well as press freedom in Turkey, ahead of a meeting with the EU heads of state and the Turkish government in Brussels.

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MIGRANT CRISIS: UK TO SEND SHIPS TO TACKLE PEOPLE SMUGGLERS

BBC.COM

The UK will provide "vital military assets" to help a Nato mission tackling people smugglers in the Aegean Sea, David Cameron has said. The ship, which carries a Wildcat helicopter, will be working alongside three UK Border Force boats. RFA Mounts Bay and two Border Force patrol boats, known as cutters, will join naval vessels from Germany, Canada, Turkey and Greece as part of Nato's first intervention in the migrant crisis.

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KING DECIDES NOT TO CALL NEW MEETINGS WITH POLITICAL CHIEFS

ELPAIS.COM

Spain's King Felipe VI has decided not to call a new series of meetings with Spain's political leaders, with a view to inviting one of them to form a government. Monday's announcement comes in the wake of Socialist Party candidate Pedro Sánchez's failure to win two investiture votes in Congress, which took place over the course of last week. A two-month period of negotiations has now begun, which will be followed by new elections if no cross-party deal is reached.

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CREDITORS COME BACK TO ATHENS

EKATHIMERINI.COM

The Eurogroup council of eurozone finance ministers opened the way on Monday for the return of the heads of the creditors' missions to Athens on Tuesday, with the aim of completing the bailout review by end-April. Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos spoke of a very good meeting in Brussels on Monday, noting that the creditors have agreed to return to Athens despite the differences between the eurozone and the International Monetary Fund.

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EUROSTAT: WOMEN EARNED ON AVERAGE 16% LESS THAN MEN IN THE EU

EUROPA.EU

In 2014, the gender pay gap stood at 16.1% in the European Union. In other words, women earned on average 84 cents for every euro a man makes per hour. Across Member States, the gender pay gap in 2014 ranged from less than 5% in Slovenia and Malta to more than 20% in Estonia, Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany and Slovakia

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8 MARCH, 2016

THE AGENDA

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

• 9:00 **the plenary session continues in Strasbourg**. On the agenda: **International Women's Day**. DEBATES: The socio-economic situation of women in Europe - Commission statement, The situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU (report by **Mary Honeyball**, S&D). 11:30 **Address by Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for refugees**, followed by one round of political group speakers. 12:30 VOTES followed by explanations of votes: Animal health (recommendation for second reading by **Jasenko Selimovic**, ALDE), Aid scheme for the supply of fruit and vegetables, bananas and milk in the educational establishments (report by **Marc Tarabella**, S&D), Market access to port services and financial transparency of ports (report **Knut Fleckenstein**, S&D), Harmonised indices of consumer prices (report by **Roberto Gualtieri**, S&D), Annual report 2014 on the Protection of the EU's financial interests - Fight against fraud (report by **Benedek Jávor**, ALDE), Gender mainstreaming in the work of the European Parliament (report by **Angelika Mlinar**, ALDE), The situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU (report by **Mary Honeyball**, S&D). 15:00 DEBATES: Situation in Syria - statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Communication on implementing the European agenda on migration - Commission statement, Interinstitutional agreement on Better law-making (report by **Danuta Maria Hübner**, EPP), Posting of workers - Commission statement, What is a 'social triple-A' rating? - oral question, Procedural safeguards for children suspected or accused in criminal proceedings (report by **Caterina Chinnic**, S&D), Guidelines for the 2017 Budget - Section III (report by **Jens Geier**, S&D).

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

• 10:00 the **Economic and Financial Affairs Council** meets in Brussels. The Council will aim to reach a political agreement on the proposed amendment to the directive on mandatory exchange of information in the field of taxation. The Council is also expected to adopt conclusions on the future of the Code of Conduct in the area of business taxation and conclusions on the fiscal sustainability report for 2015. The Council will be briefed by the Presidency and the European Commission on the state of play of the implementation of the banking union legislation and on the G20 meetings of finance ministers and central bank governors, which took place on 26-27 February in Shanghai. The Council will exchange views on the implementation of the country-specific recommendations from the 2015 European Semester and the Commission will present its reports on the situation in all EU countries, which it published on 26 February

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

• Today, the European Commission will present its **Social Package**, which includes, among others, the launch of a public consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights. The results of the consultation, which will run until the end of 2016, will feed into the final text on the Pillar.

• Commission invites **comments on draft provisions to simplify implementation of unproblematic state support for ports and airports**. This first public consultation on draft provisions to extend the 2014 General Block Exemption Regulation is open until 30 May 2016. The Commission will take into account views and comments by stakeholders and prepare an updated draft, which will be subject to a second public consultation, currently planned for autumn this year, before deciding on the final Regulation.

TODAY CELEBRATING BIRTHDAY



Francisco José MILLÁN
MON
EPP
(61)