**MEPs pressure Member States to relocate 120,000 additional refugees**

**Original Script Date:** September 17, 2015

**Script Version:** 1

**Locations:** European Parliament, Brussels; Röszke, Hungary.

**Dates Shot:** 14SEPTEMBER 2015, 17 SEPTEMBER 2015

**Sound:** natural with English speech

**Duration: 02:33**

**Source:** S&D Group

**Restriction:** none

**Intro**

An emergency proposal to relocate 120,000 asylum seekers from Italy, Greece and Hungary among EU member states was backed by Parliament on Thursday. The first temporary emergency rules for relocating an initial 40,000 over two years from Italy and Greece only were approved by Parliament on 9 September -© European Union, [2015] – EP

**Shotlist**

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**, BELGIUM (17 SEPTEMBER, 2015) (SOCIALISTS AND DEMOCRATS, EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT - ACCESS ALL)

1. CUTAWAY: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (EXTERIOR)
2. CUTAWAY: PLENARY ROOM (INTERIOR)
3. CUTAWAY: VARIOUS OF MEPS VOTING ON AN EMERGENCY PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE 120.000 ASYLUM SEEKERS
4. GIANNI PITTELLA (PRESIDENT OF THE S&D GROUP IN THE EU PARLIAMENT) SAYING (ENGLISH):

“The President of the European Parliamanet, Martin Schulz, decided to have an extraordinary meeting of the parliament to give an opinion on the decision of the European Council to relocate 120.000 refugees. I ask that the national governments put aside their divisions and that they approve the Juncker package in a united way ».

1. CUTAWAY: VARIOUS OF GIANNI PITTELLA SPEAKING WITH HIS TEAM AND CHECKING HIS MOBILE PHONE
2. GIANNI PITTELLA (PRESIDENT OF THE S&D GROUP IN THE EU PARLIAMENT) SAYING (ENGLISH):

“We have to ensure the relocation of the refugees. We have to ensure a compulsoray and permanent system for asylum seekers. We have to ensure a fine and strong surveillance of the borders, we hae to ensure a foreign policy able to stabilize North-Africa, we have to welcome corridors to welcome economic migrants”.

**STOCKSHOTS - (SOCIALISTS AND DEMOCRATS, EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT - ACCESS ALL)**

**RÖSZKE REFUGEE CAMP**, HUNGARY (14 SEPTEMBER, 2015)

7. CUTAWAY: VARIOUS OF THE ‘IRON CURTAIN’ AT THE HUNGARY-SERBIA BORDER

1. CUTAWAY: HUNGARIAN POLICE AND ARMY FORCES TALKING IN FRONT OF THE BORDER
2. CUTAWAY: PANORAMA OF TENTS
3. CUTAWAY: A FAMILY OF REFUGEES SITTING ON THE GROUND
4. CUTAWAY: A REFUGEE FAMILY TALKING TO GIANNI PITTELLA
5. CUTAWAY: REFUGEES QUEUEING IN FRONT OF THE BUS (PANORAMA)
6. CUTAWAY: VARIOUS OF HUNGARIAN POLICE KEEPING THE BUS GATES
7. CUTAWAY: REFUGEES QUEUEING IN FRONT OF THE BUS (LARGE PLAN)

**Story**  **- © European Union, [2015] – EP**

An emergency proposal to relocate 120,000 asylum seekers from Italy, Greece and Hungary among EU member states was backed by Parliament on Thursday. The first temporary emergency rules for relocating an initial 40,000 over two years from Italy and Greece only were approved by Parliament on 9 September.

Parliament’s backing in record time of the European Commission’s 9 September proposal to relocate 120,000 asylum seekers sends a clear signal to EU home affairs ministers, who meet again on Tuesday 22 September, that it is high time to act and finally agree on this second emergency scheme.

Under the Commission proposal, additional 120,000 asylum seekers would be relocated from Italy (15,600), Greece (50,400) and Hungary (54,000). This number comes on top of the initial scheme to relocate [40,000 asylum seekers, approved by Parliament on 9 September](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150903IPR91518/html/MEPs-approve-first-emergency-rules-for-distributing-asylum-seekers-in-the-EU) and endorsed by the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 14 September The total number of people to be relocated is thus 160,000.

Parliament backed the Commission's proposal (without amending it) by 370 votes to 134, with 52 abstentions. It then approved a legislative resolution by 372 votes to 124, with 54 abstentions, informing the Council that this approval is without prejudice to the position it will subsequently take on the proposal establishing a permanent crisis relocation mechanism, on which Parliament will co-decide on an equal footing with the member states.

**Hungary opposing relocation**

In the plenary debate on Wednesday, Luxembourg's Minister for Immigration and Asylum, Jean Asselborn, speaking on behalf of the Council's presidency, informed Parliament that "there will be an important change to the initial proposal: Hungary does not consider itself to be a frontline country and it does not want to benefit from the relocation scheme. The European Parliament needs to take this into account when giving its opinion", he said.

**Parliament backs mandatory distribution**

The [proposed mandatory scheme](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/proposal_for_council_decision_establishing_provisional_measures_in_the_area_of_international_protection_for_it_gr_and_hu_en.pdf) would allocate asylum seekers to member states according to their capacity to absorb them, to be calculated using the following weightings: population size 40%,, GDP 40%, average number of past asylum applications 10% and unemployment rate 10% (see proposed [allocation per member state](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/proposal_for_council_decision_establishing_provisional_measures_in_the_area_of_international_protection_for_it_gr_and_hu_-_annexe_en.pdf)).

Member states participating in the scheme would get €6,000 per relocated person, including a 50% pre-financing rate to enable national authorities to act very swiftly. The countries from whose territory the asylum seekers would be transferred from would receive €500 for each person relocated, to cover transport costs.

**Temporary solidarity clause**

The proposal foresees that if – for justified and objective reasons, such as a natural disaster – a member state is temporarily unable to participate, it would have to make a financial contribution to the EU budget of up to 0.002% of its GDP. It would be up to the Commission to assess the reasons notified by the country and decide on whether they would justify its non-participation in the scheme for a maximum of up to 12 months.

**Debate: MEPs deplore member states’ failure to act and call for solidarity**

The failure so far of EU home affairs ministers to agree on how to relocate 120,000 asylum seekers was severely criticised by a large majority of MEPs during Wednesday's plenary debate on the outcome of Monday's Council meeting. Most called on member states to stand together, take urgent action to tackle the current crisis, and build a European asylum and migration system that will work in the long term.

Before the vote, President Schulz announced that he would send a letter to the current Council President Xavier Bettel asking on behalf of Parliament for EU funds to be released immediately to help countries hosting the lion's share of the Syrian refugees, Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan.

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