



Council of Europe Social Development Fund

149

PRESS RELEASE

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Exceptional measures in favour of the refugees from Kosovo

The tragic events currently taking place in Kosovo are unfolding into a truly devastating humanitarian disaster, undoubtedly the worst that Europe has experienced in this second half of the twentieth century

34 member countries

Belgium
Bulgaria
Cyprus
Croatia
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Holy See
Hungary
Iceland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Moldova
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
San Marino
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
"The Former
Yugoslav Republic of
Macedonia"
Turkey

This dramatic situation directly concerns the Council of Europe Social Development Fund, one of whose priority vocations since its creation in 1956 has been to provide aid for refugees and migrants.

In these circumstances, it seemed essential that the Fund should take effective and rapid action both to help the refugees in this particularly precarious situation and to lend its support the countries that are taking them in. Already, messages have been sent to the Government of "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and to the Albanian Authorities.

Given the disastrous situation in the region, **the Governing Board, at its meeting today, decided to adopt an absolutely exceptional emergency measure** in favour of these refugees, by supporting the action of the humanitarian organisations that are providing emergency aid on the spot for the refugees from Kosovo.

This solution would basically consist **in making a payment to these humanitarian organisations**, drawn exceptionally from the Selective Trust Account, **in the form of a donation especially intended for the refugees from Kosovo in "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and in Albania, and clearly specified as such.** A recommendation to this effect has been sent today by the Governing Board to the Administrative Council and the Council is expected to approve the principle and the concrete provisions for this donation in the coming days.

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The Council of Europe Social Development Fund, established in 1956, is a multilateral development bank whose vocation is to contribute towards building a more humanitarian Europe.

As a key instrument of the Council of Europe solidarity policy, the Fund finances social projects by making the funds it raises available for them in conditions that reflect the quality of its rating. It thus grants loans to its member states, to financial institutions and to local authorities for the financing of projects in the sectors defined in its Articles of Agreement.

The Fund's priority action consists in responding to emergency situations (aid to refugees and migrants, aid to regions affected by natural disasters, etc.). The Fund also contributes to financing projects aimed at ensuring the sustainable well-being of the beneficiaries: social housing, rehabilitation of run-down urban areas, protection of the environment, education, health and job creation in small and medium sized businesses.

The Fund currently has 34 member states, including "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

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