

《欧盟土耳其“一对一”难民交换协议已实施》

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The implementation of a swap deal on refugees between Turkey and the European Union has begun.

On Monday, over 200 migrants, mostly Pakistani and Bangladeshi nationals, were transferred from Greek islands in the Aegean to Turkey's western province Izmir. From there, they will be transported on buses to the refugee camp in the northwestern province Kırklareli.



Migrants get on a ferry at the port of Mytilini on the Greek island of Lesbos April 4, 2016, the first day of the implementation of the deal between the European Union and Turkey. Under the deal, migrants arriving illegally in Greece will be returned to Turkey if they do not apply for asylum, or if they make an asylum claim that is rejected. [Photo:Xinhua/Marios Lolos]

Meanwhile, 32 Syrian refugees have arrived in Germany from Istanbul. Under the Turkey-EU pact reached on March 18th, Ankara will take back all migrants and refugees who enter Greece illegally, including Syrians.

In return, the European Union will take in thousands of Syrian refugees directly from Turkey. and reward it with more money, early visa-free travel and progress in its EU membership negotiations.

The deal aims to discourage migrants from perilous crossings, often in small boats and dinghies. It's also intended to break the business model of human smugglers who have fuelled Europe's biggest influx since World War Two.

As planned in accordance with the refugee deal between the EU and Turkey- in the early hours of Monday morning 3 boats carrying refugees left the Greek island of Lesbos and arrived to Turkey's southern town of Dikili the process was a smooth one, with helicopters and coast guards escorting the vessels to port.

The first group of refugees have registered at the port of Dikili behind me; their fingerprints have been taken, they've received medical checks - and now they are being transferred with buses to refugee camps around Turkey.

"Upon their arrival to Turkey - especially to prevent acts of terrorism and illegal activity they are receiving background checks in special centers and then, we know they are being transferred to refugee camps in Kırklareli," said Zafer Afyon, AK Party Dikili representative.

News that refugees will be sent to Northern Turkey is certainly a good one for the residents of the touristic town of Dikili who have been affected by the refugee crisis and were concerned many might settle here.

"Of course if they leave we will be relieved here, it will be better if they leave if they stay - it will harm the public peace," said Bekir Kilic, Dikili resident.

Though the deal aims to halt illegal crossings from Turkey to Greece - it seems some refugees have not given up on making an attempt. Turkish coast guards intercepted dozens of migrants trying to reach the Greek island of Lesbos, most of them Pakistani.

Turkey's EU Affairs Minister announced once Turkey begins receiving Syrian nationals back from Greece - the one-for-one factor of the EU deal will be initiated and the EU will be expected to take an equal number of Syrian refugees from Turkey.