

# EU wants to standardise migrant health screening

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The European Union said Tuesday it would promote common guidelines across the bloc for the health screening of incoming migrants and refugees.

"My intention is to set up a working group... to create [guidelines](#) on what (diseases) to screen for, when and how," EU Health Commissioner Tonio Borg said during a two-day informal meeting of EU health ministers in Athens.

"Most ([migrants](#)) are healthy. But we have the obligation to protect the health of our own citizens," said Borg, who was Malta's home affairs minister for a decade.

"Having these guidelines will protect migrants and European citizens," he said.

The commissioner added that a new EU fund worth 3.0 billion euros (\$4.2 billion) had been created to help member states manage immigration and asylum duties, including healthcare.

"This new fund can be used for healthcare, not only for infrastructure," Borg said.

In the EU overall, there is no common law but undocumented migrants are entitled to emergency [health](#) treatment, and recognised refugees have to be treated like EU nationals, Borg said.

Greece alone estimates that it spent 20 million euros last year, and 150 million euros in a decade, on [health treatment](#) for migrants, said Greek Health Minister Adonis Georgiadis.

The screening guideline initiative is voluntary.

EU states have until June 20 to join or, if parliamentary approval is required, to sign a political declaration to that effect, Borg said.

"My indications are that almost everyone is on board," he said.

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