

Covid-19: boosting the EU's response capacity for emergencies



The EU's Civil Protection Mechanism

https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/a-stronger-eu-response-to-future-crises_N01-AFPS-210406-CVPM_ev

The EU is strengthening its Civil Protection Mechanism to respond more effectively to emergencies, including medical ones such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

The fund helps EU countries respond to emergencies and disasters. It has been activated to help in earthquakes, fires, floods and most recently to gather the necessary medical equipment to combat Covid-19.

Check out the [timeline of EU measures to fight Covid-19 and mitigate its impact](#)

Aiming to fill the gaps revealed by the pandemic, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism is being revamped.

In a vote on 27 April 2021, the Parliament confirmed its [agreement with the Council](#) ensuring €3.319 billion for the Civil Protection Mechanism from the EU's budget for 2021-2027 and the EU Recovery Instrument. To deploy help more quickly, the European Commission will be able to directly acquire resources under RescEU. Parliament also ensured sufficient resources for prevention, preparedness and response.

EU defence mechanism to save lives

Since its creation in 2001, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, a collaborative system of mutual aid, has been activated more than 420 times to respond to natural and man-made disasters, inside and outside the EU, such as forest fires, floods, marine pollution, earthquakes, hurricanes, industrial accidents and other emergencies, including health crises.

During the **current coronavirus outbreak**, the Mechanism was used to support member states and national health systems, by coordinating the delivery of emergency medical supplies and personal protective equipment in Europe and around the globe. . It also helped to repatriate more than 90,000 EU citizens to Europe from all over the world.



EU-coordinated response to earthquake and flash floods in Albania

Strengthening emergency response capacity

When an EU country is overwhelmed by a disaster, it can ask for help via the Mechanism. The Commission coordinates the response and covers at least 75% of the transport and operational costs.

In 2019, the EU developed a new [European reserve of additional capacities called RescEU](#) to directly assist when the resources deployed by member states are not enough.

In mid-March 2020, during the pandemic outbreak, [medical stockpiling](#) was also included as part of RescEU to help countries facing shortages of equipment. The rules backed by Parliament allow the EU to cover up to 100% of the funds needed for the deployment of the RescEU capacity, which is to be hosted by one or several member states.

Find out more

[Briefing](#)

[Check legislative progress](#)

[What EU does for me: Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

[Fact sheet: Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

[Fact sheet: RescEU](#)

[Civil Protection: faster EU response to large-scale emergencies](#)