

EVALUATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION EXTERNAL ACTION

FINAL REPORT

EVALUATION OF HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS IN THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID OPERATIONS, 2018-2022, AND OF THE MOBILITY PACKAGE WITHIN THE EMERGENCY SUPPORT INSTRUMENT RE-ACTIVATION, 2020-2022

MAIN REPORT

July 2023

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EVALUATION OF HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS IN THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION’S CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID OPERATIONS, 2018-2022, AND OF THE MOBILITY PACKAGE WITHIN THE EMERGENCY SUPPORT INSTRUMENT RE-ACTIVATION, 2020-2022

Contents

FIGURES	5
TABLES	6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	8
1. ABSTRACT	10
2. INTRODUCTION	11
2.1. Purpose of the evaluation	11
2.2. Scope of the evaluation	11
3. EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY	13
3.1. Evaluation questions	13
3.2. Method/process followed	14
3.3. Statement of validity of findings and conclusions on evaluation criteria	16
4. BACKGROUND TO DG ECHO’S SUPPORT TO LOGISTICS.....	18
4.1. Logistics	18
4.2. Humanitarian logistics	19
4.3. Logistics in the UCPM	27
4.4. The ESI Mobility Package	32
4.5. Framework contract with transport broker	37
5. ANSWERS TO THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS.....	38
5.1. Relevance	38
5.2. Coherence and complementarity.....	58
5.3. Effectiveness.....	71
5.4. Efficiency	86
5.5. EU added value	95
6. CONCLUSIONS	103
6.1. Relevance	103
6.2. Coherence and complementarity.....	105
6.3. Effectiveness.....	107
6.4. Efficiency	108
6.5. The added value of the EU	110
7. RECOMMENDATIONS	112
7.1. Humanitarian aid	112
7.2. UCPM	115
7.3. ESI Mobility Package	116
8. BEST PRACTICES: ESI MOBILITY PACKAGE	117
9. ANNEXES	118

FIGURES

Figure 3.1. Overview of approach	14
Figure 3.2. Task overview	14
Figure 4.2. Intervention logic for humanitarian aid	26
Figure 4.3. Intervention logic for the UCPM	31
Figure 4.4. Overview of requested and managed budget.....	35
Figure 4.5. Amount paid per Member State (EUR)	35
Figure 4.6. Intervention logic for the ESI Mobility Package	36
Figure 5.1. Perception of relevance of logistics services supported by DG ECHO among staff, INGO partners, and UN partners.....	42
Figure 5.2. Self-declared awareness of key purposes and approach of HLP among respondents to survey, by type of respondent and self-declared type of profession.....	46
Figure 5.3. Overview of RescEU deployable capacities 2022	52
Figure 5.4. Number of UCPM transport grant requests by year, inside the EU	53
Figure 5.5. Number of UCPM transport grant requests by year, outside the EU	53
Figure 5.6. Perceived extent to which ESI MP actions tailored to the local needs of their users (n=26)	56
Figure 5.7. Perceived extent to which DG ECHO was timely in providing support through grants, considering the emergency nature of the ESI MP (n=26).....	56
Figure 5.8. Perceived extent to which DG ECHO needs better overview of humanitarian logistics at country and regional level	63
Figure 5.9. Logistics services for humanitarian aid and civil protection outside the EU complement each other in a coherent manner (n=67)	67
Figure 5.10. Perceived extent of coherence between ESI MP and Member State activities, from 1 (not coherent at all) to 5 (very coherent) (n=25)	69
Figure 5.11. Extent to which the ESI Mobility Package was coherent with the UCPM transport and operations activities, from 1 (do not agree at all) to 5 (completely agree) (n=18).....	70
Figure 5.12. How effective is/was the coordination of logistics for the emergency response that you are currently working on/most recently worked on?	79
Figure 5.13. Perceived importance of ESI MP for the effectiveness of civil protection and pandemic response (n=26)	85
Figure 5.14. Status of UCPM Requests for Assistance for COVID-19	91
Figure 5.15. Perception about DG ECHO's method to allocate funding under the ESI Mobility Package (n=25).....	94

TABLES

Table 3.1. Evaluation questions	13
Table 3.2. Case studies conducted	15
Table 3.3. Stakeholders interviewed by type of stakeholder (KIIs and case studies)	15
Table 3.4. Summary of survey responses.....	16
Table 3.5. Overview of limitations and challenges.....	16
Table 3.6. Statement of validity	17
Table 4.1: Key concepts in logistics	18
Table 4.2: Logistics challenge/barrier18F.....	20
Table 4.3: DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics activities.....	21
Table 4.4: DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics along the supply chain.....	25
Table 4.5: Budget and actuals for logistics services and year, in EUR thousands.....	25
Table 4.6: Types of assistance	28
Table 4.7: UCPM logistics along the supply chain	29
Table 4.8. UCPM expenditure by year.....	30
Table 4.9. UCPM expenditure by geographic distribution	30
Table 4.10: UCPM expenditure by type of operational support (grant/broker).....	30
Table 4.11: Overview of calls.....	33
Table 4.12: ESI Mobility Package along the supply chain.....	34
Table 4.13. Funding for transport broker by programme 2019-2021 (n.a. for 2018).....	37
Table 5.1. In your opinion, to what extent can the following new initiatives contribute to more environmentally friendly humanitarian logistics? Please rate from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a great extent)	50
Table 5.2. Overview of cargo operations supported by ESI 2020-2022	84
Table 5.3. Overview of person transport operations supported by ESI 2020-2022	85
Table 5.4. Overview of operations costs and costs per output.....	94

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	Action Against Hunger
AL	Atlas Logistique
CAR	Central African Republic
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear
CDCS	French Crisis and Support Centre of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
CECIS	Common Emergency Communication and Information System
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CP	Civil Protection
DHC	De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	European Commission
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
ECPP	European Civil Protection Pool
ECS	European Cooperative Society
EHRC	European Humanitarian Response Capacity
EMT	Emergency Medical Team
ERCC	Emergency Response Coordination Centre
ESI	Emergency Support Instrument
ESI MP	Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package
EUCP	European Union Civil Protection
EUCPT	European Union Civil Protection Team
EUHAB	European Union Humanitarian Aid Bridge
EWRS	Early Warning and Response System
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
GLC	Global Logistics Cluster
H2H	Humanitarian to Humanitarian
HAB	Humanitarian Air Bridge
HAF	Humanitarian Aid Flight
HERA	Humanitarian Emergency Response Africa
HI	Handicap International
HIP	Humanitarian Implementation Plan
HLP	Humanitarian Logistics Policy
HPC	Humanitarian Procurement Center
HQ	Headquarter
HR	Human Resources
Hulo	Humanitarian Logistics
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IES	Instrument for Emergency Support within the Union
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

IHP	International Humanitarian Partnership
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LC	Logistics Cluster
LCA	Logistics Capacity Assessment
MP	Mobility Package
MS	Member State
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFI	Non-Food Items
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OF	Operational Feedback
PLR	Provider of Last Resort
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PS	Participating State
RLH	Réseau Logistique Humanitaire
RRC	Regional Rapid Response Coordinators
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SG	Secretary-General
SGUA	DG NEAR Support Group for Ukraine
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SS	Shared Services
TA	Technical Assistance
TOR	Terms of Reference
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
ULS	Universal Logistics Standards
UN	United Nations
UNGSC	United Nations Global Service Centre
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

1. ABSTRACT

This report presents findings, conclusions and recommendations from a thematic evaluation of logistics activities funded by DG ECHO for the period of 2018-2022; and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument activation, 2020-2022. On the humanitarian side, the evaluation covers operational support through the EU HAB and the EU HAF, funding of UNHAS, the Logistics Cluster and NGO-operated logistics services, the recently launched Humanitarian Logistics Policy and European Humanitarian Response Capacity, and DG ECHO's internal and external advocacy on logistics. On the civil protection side, it covers UCPM transport and operations activities.

The evaluation uses a mixed-method approach and concludes that overall, the EU's investments in the area of logistics were relevant, effective, efficient and added value, particularly during the heightened crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, where DG ECHO acted quickly to develop new logistics services in aid of the humanitarian community and EU Member States. Evidence was somewhat more mixed regarding coherence, where DG ECHO's innovations have the potential to disrupt the status quo and where DG ECHO needs to consider its specific role in the future in order to maximise its added value. The evaluation provides general and specific recommendations.

2. INTRODUCTION

This is the Final Report for the evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument (ESI) activation, 2020-2022. The evaluation was launched by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) in June 2022. The work was undertaken by Kantar Public and ICON Institute, with inputs from experts in the fields of humanitarian assistance, civil protection and evaluation.

This report contains the following structure:

- **Introduction:** Purpose and scope of the evaluation
- **Evaluation questions:** Overview of evaluation questions
- **Method/process followed:** Overall approach, data collection and analysis methodology, and limitations of the evaluation
- **Background to DG ECHO's support to logistics:** Policy context and logistics activities within humanitarian aid, the UCPM, and the ESI Mobility Package
- **Answers to evaluation questions:** Analysis of findings by evaluation criterion (relevance, coherence and complementarity, effectiveness, efficiency, and EU added value)
- **Conclusions:** Overall conclusions drawn by evaluation criterion
- **Recommendations:** Recommendations overall and by humanitarian aid, UCPM, and ESI Mobility Package

2.1. Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of this assignment is to provide an external, independent, thematic evaluation of logistics activities funded by DG ECHO for the period of 2018 - 2022; and of the ESI Mobility Package, for the period March 2020 - January 2022.

The evaluation of DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics activities also serves to assess the role that DG ECHO has developed in the context of an increasing number of humanitarian crises and their growing scale, and the associated expansion of DG ECHO's capacities and intervention fields.

Furthermore, this evaluation analyses the importance of strengthening logistical structures to respond to crises more effectively, and therefore contribute to a better evidence-base about DG ECHO's contributions and its work. The results related to UCPM logistics will feed into a forthcoming UCPM evaluation as well as a forthcoming comprehensive evaluation of humanitarian aid. It is also expected that the evaluation of the ESI Mobility Package will feed into an upcoming evaluation of the whole ESI's activation for COVID-19.

2.2. Scope of the evaluation

The scope includes evaluating three main components of DG ECHO logistics portfolio. The icons are used throughout the report to signal which component is being considered:



Logistics activities under humanitarian aid operations, covering protracted and sudden on-set crises, including the response to COVID-19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The time period covered by the evaluation is 2018 to 2022, including all funding and operations up until the end of June 2022 and until the end of September 2022 for some specific activities investigated through case studies. The evaluation does not include the logistics support that is provided under DG ECHO's geographically oriented Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs), although the evaluation considers how they are managed by DG ECHO. This scope includes the strategic initiatives and operational support to logistics:

- **the 2022 Humanitarian Logistics Policy (HLP):** The focus of the assessment is on the relevance of this policy and the level of implementation so far;

- **the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC):** The focus of the assessment is on the relevance of this initiative and the level of implementation so far;
- **DG ECHO's LOGIS and LOGIS+ networks:** The focus here is also on the relevance of these networks for the future;
- **the EU Humanitarian Aid Flight / ECHO Flight;**
- **the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (HAB)** in response to the transport challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- **DG ECHO's support to WFP (World Food Programme) logistical services,** particularly UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) and the Global Logistics Cluster (GLC) as well as cooperation with other international institutions and organisations involved in logistics;
- **DG ECHO's historical support to UN Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRD) and Humanitarian Procurement Centres (HPCs);**
- **Specific logistics services provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs).**



UCPM transport and operations activities, providing logistics support across the EU and in third countries, to respond to the humanitarian emergency triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as other crises, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The scope also includes the human resources for the coordination of logistics by the ERCC (Emergency Response Coordination Centre) and the EUCPTs (EU Civil Protection Teams) in specific emergencies. The period covered is from 2018 to 2022.¹



The Mobility Package included within the Emergency Support Instrument, used in 21 countries, which is also presented separately in a longer case study report (Annex 10.1-3). The period covered is 2020 until 2022 when the final payments were made.



Across these three components, the evaluation also considers DG ECHO's use of the **European Commission's transport broker** through a framework contract for the transport and storage of relief goods during the period 2018 to 2022. This contract was held by Kuehne+Nagel until 2021, after which Maersk/Damco² took over this contract.

Further detail on the scope is included section 4, including a brief description of activities, their funding, baselines (where available) and intervention logic.

¹ The document review for the UCPM, including the internal documentation for the 'transport grants', covers the period 2018 until the end of August 2022.

² Maersk has owned Damco since 1999 and is in the process of retiring the Damco brand.

3. EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Evaluation questions

This evaluation provides conclusions and recommendations based on five evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and EU-added value, considering 12 evaluation questions³. Annex 4 presents the evaluation matrix, where these questions are elaborated into sub-questions, judgement criteria, indicators, and sources.

Table 3.1. Evaluation questions

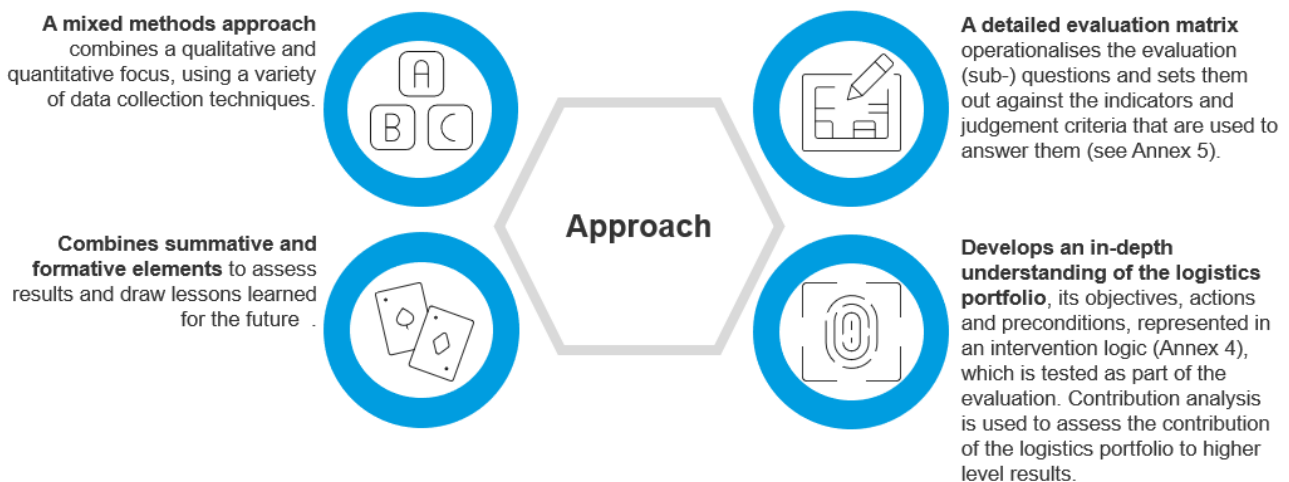
Criterion	Evaluation Questions
Relevance	1. How well were DG ECHO's logistics activities designed and tailored to the needs of humanitarian partners, UCPM Participating States, Member States, and final beneficiaries?
	2. To what extent has the 2022 Humanitarian Logistics Policy integrated the lessons learnt and recommendations of DG ECHO's 2018 Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics?
	3. To what extent are the recently introduced Humanitarian Logistics Policy, the European Humanitarian Response Capacity and the LOGIS and LOGIS+ networks likely to contribute to more effective, cost-effective and environmentally friendly humanitarian logistics?
	11. To what extent does DG ECHO have a deliberate and strategic approach to humanitarian logistics?
Coherence and complementarity	4. To what extent are the different activities of DG ECHO's logistics portfolio coherent and complementary to each other?
	5. To what extent have the Mobility Package activities been complementary to other related EU and Member State instruments and activities?
	6. To what extent does DG ECHO's policy and practice for humanitarian logistics complement or differ from that of other donors and partners?
	7. To what extent is DG ECHO's policy and practice for humanitarian logistics coherent with international humanitarian standards?
Effectiveness	8. To what extent have the objectives of DG ECHO's logistics activities been achieved? What were the concrete results? To what extent did the logistics arrangements contribute to or hinder an adequate and effective civil protection and humanitarian response?
Efficiency	9. To what extent were DG ECHO's logistics activities efficient and cost-effective?
	10. To what extent were funds appropriately allocated?
EU added value	12. What is the EU added value of DG ECHO's logistics activities?

³ Please note that in writing, the order of the questions has been slightly adjusted. This includes moving question 11 from efficiency to relevance to ensure the text flows better.

3.2. Method/process followed

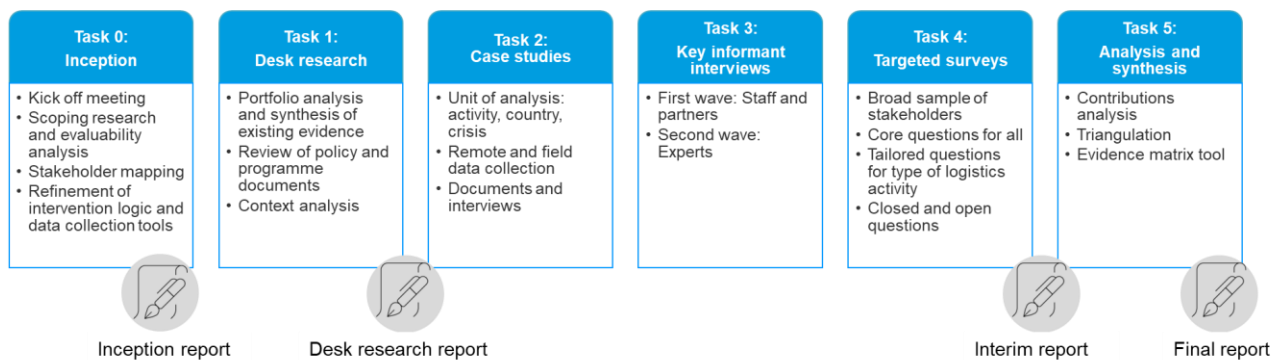
In order to provide a robust evidence-base for the evaluation, the evaluation relies on the use of sound evaluation techniques, in accordance with the European Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines. The approach can be characterised as follows:

Figure 3.1. Overview of approach



The evaluation process followed five tasks:

Figure 3.2. Task overview
















A full methodology is presented in Annex 1. The four key tools are described here: 1. Desk research, 2. Case studies, 3. Key informant interviews, and 4. Surveys.

1. Desk research: Comprehensive review of approximately 300 DG ECHO-internal documentation, such as administrative, financial, procedural, grant applications and monitoring documents; partner documentation, including programme documents, monitoring and evaluation reports, needs assessments, context analyses; and international literature on the current context of logistics in humanitarian aid. See Annex 2.

2. Case studies: 13 case studies, combining desk research (review of project reports, budgets and financial reports, project specific evaluations, documents relating to the country/crisis context, press, academic and/or practitioner literature) with interviews. Primarily conducted remotely, except for one field mission to Poland and Moldova that was undertaken 7-11 November 2022 to assess ongoing logistics operations in civil protection and humanitarian aid related to DG ECHO's response to Russia's war in Ukraine.



Table 3.2. Case studies conducted




#	CASE STUDY	Annex
1-3	 ESI Mobility Package	10.1-3
4	 UCPM: Sweden – Forest fires	10.4
5	 UCPM: Greece – Forest Fires	10.5
6	 UCPM: Indonesia Earthquake & Tsunami	10.6
7	 UCPM: Mozambique Tropical Cyclone	10.7
8	 UCPM: COVID-19 repatriations/consular services	10.8
9	 Humanitarian aid: Provision of Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) and Logistics Cluster (LC) Common Services in Support of the Humanitarian Community in South Sudan.	10.9
10	 Humanitarian aid: Evolution of ECHO Flight/ EU HAF– from DAC aviation to WFP Aviation – The DRC case: 2018-2021	10.10
11	 Humanitarian aid: RLH: Enhancing and strengthening collaborative approach and resources pooling of Humanitarian Supply chain and operational Logistics.	10.11
12	 Humanitarian aid: Soutien a la Reponse Humanitaire au Mali par L'Expansion de Services Logistiques Mutualises (Supporting the Humanitarian Response in Mali through the Expansion of Shared Logistics Services)	10.12
13	 Humanitarian aid: Overview and focus on humanitarian air services in Afghanistan 2021-22	10.13
14	 UCPM and Humanitarian aid: Haiti earthquake 2021: UCPM, EU HAB, UNHAS	10.14
15	 UCPM and Humanitarian aid: Ukraine Response 2022: UCPM emergency logistics hubs in Poland, Slovakia, Romania and the activation of the EHRC in Moldova and in Ukraine	10.15

3. Key informant interviews: two waves of interviews in addition to case study interviews were conducted:

- 1st wave: DG ECHO, partners, and Member State and Participating State representatives, persons at strategic level were also interviewed to gain a wider perspective, beyond the usual operational and managerial activity level.
- 2nd wave: Broader issues pertaining to DG ECHO's logistics portfolio with other donors and experts on humanitarian logistics (academics practitioners).

Table 3.3. Stakeholders interviewed by type of stakeholder (KIIs and case studies)

Stakeholder group	Humanitarian aid 	Civil protection 	ESI Mobility Package 	Total number of persons interviewed (without duplication)
DG ECHO: HQ	17	5	5	24
DG ECHO: Field	5		5	10
CP Pool of experts		3		3

Stakeholder group	Humanitarian aid 	Civil protection 	ESI Mobility Package 	Total number of persons interviewed (without duplication)
IOs/UN	12			12
NGOs	6	1		7
Civil protection agencies	1	17	7	20
Donors	5	2		7
Academic expert or logistics experts	3	2		5
Final beneficiaries/their representatives		3		3
Global Logistics Cluster	5			5
ESI MP applicants: health care providers			6	6
Private companies	1	1	1	1
Number of persons interviewed by component (with duplication)	56	39	18	102

See Annex 3 for a full list of stakeholders consulted.

4. Surveys: Three interlinked surveys were conducted targeting 1. DG ECHO staff, 2. humanitarian aid actors and Member States and Participating States of the UCPM, and 3. applicants of the ESI Mobility Package. The surveys were deployed through a publicly accessible link to enable those receiving the survey to forward the link to their networks, and or to forward it to colleagues who were in a better position to respond to the survey if appropriate. See Annex 9 for the survey analysis.




Table 3.4. Summary of survey responses

	No. respondents	Completion rate (%)
ESI-MP/UCPM	74	68%
Humanitarian aid	209	40%
DG ECHO staff	164	58%
Total	447	

3.3. Statement of validity of findings and conclusions on evaluation criteria

The evaluation has encountered several limitations and challenges. These have affected the timeline of the evaluation and the type of conclusions that can be drawn. See Annex 1 for an expanded description.

Table 3.5. Overview of limitations and challenges

 <p>Timing of the evaluation: The evaluation takes place just after the launch of the HLP and the EHRC, and when rapid developments on logistics in the UCPM were taking place. The evaluation has attempted to provide a snapshot of ongoing developments, but the timing means that some of the findings, conclusions and recommendations will quickly become outdated.</p>	 <p>Evaluation scope: The three strands of the evaluation and the specific activities covered have proved challenging to combine into one coherent evaluation. Each type of action has a specific set of results making it difficult to identify a global picture of the contribution of the different components. The scope does not include DG ECHO support to embedded logistics through HIPs.</p>	 <p>Data availability and quality: DG ECHO data on effectiveness is focused on output data. In HOPE, data is not available at the portfolio level for the actions included in this evaluation. For the UCPM and ESI MP, internal systems only allowed access a sample of grants. For the UCPM, financial data available can best be described as working documents, making analysis precarious.</p>
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	<p>Challenges in accessing relevant stakeholders: Fostering willingness to participate in the evaluation from Member States, particularly for ESI Mobility Package and the UCPM was challenging, making it necessary to send reminders and find alternative respondents using the survey.</p>		<p>Evaluation timeline: Due to the challenges related to the evaluation scope, and the difficulty in accessing relevant stakeholders, the timeline for the evaluation proved unrealistic. The evaluation team has appreciated DG ECHO's flexibility with the submission of deliverables.</p>		<p>Nature of logistics and the types of results envisaged: For logistics the criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency tend to be interlinked. If a response is late, it will also be irrelevant, ineffective and inefficient. Coordination of logistics is important for effectiveness, but also for coherence and efficiency.</p>
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These limitations have the following consequences for the validity of the evaluation's findings, conclusions, and recommendations (see Table 3.6). See Annex 4 for a detailed overview of the evidence.

Table 3.6. Statement of validity

Relevance:	
	Good availability of data across evaluation strands and indicators, allowing robust conclusions to be drawn against identified judgement criteria.
Coherence and complementarity:	
	Good availability of data across humanitarian aid, UCPM and ESI Mobility Package, with some exceptions for UCPM and ESI Mobility Package. The evaluation could draw robust conclusions.
Effectiveness:	
	Low availability of quantitative data to draw robust conclusions at an overall portfolio level for output, results, and impacts across all three strands.
	Strong evidence from case studies against several judgement criteria for UCPM and humanitarian aid .
	For ESI Mobility Package , the evidence is relatively weak at results and especially impact levels.
	The quantitative effectiveness analysis that was envisaged was not feasible due to the data available.
	The evaluation depended primarily on qualitative data, which made it very difficult to assess the relative contribution of logistics services to impacts identified in the intervention logic.
	However, there was good data availability on assumptions in the intervention logic, allowing assessment of potential contribution to impact.
Efficiency:	
	Limited availability of numerical data to support quantitative analysis of efficiency and cost-effectiveness at an overall portfolio level.
	Sufficient qualitative data to draw tentative conclusions for each evaluation strand.
EU added value:	
	Good qualitative data from case studies, interviews, and surveys. The evaluation could draw robust conclusions.

4. BACKGROUND TO DG ECHO'S SUPPORT TO LOGISTICS

4.1. Logistics

The humanitarian literature refers to logistics as

*"that part of supply chain management that plans, implements, and controls the efficient, effective forward and reverse flow and storage of goods, services, and related information between the point of origin and the point of consumption in order to meet customers' requirements."*⁴

As noted in the previous evaluation of DG ECHO's logistics activities, conducted in 2018,⁵ the humanitarian community have increasingly adopted a broader view of logistics in line with a supply chain management approach.⁶ This has also been adopted by DG ECHO, who define humanitarian logistics as

*"the processes and systems involved in mobilising people, resources, skills and knowledge to help vulnerable people affected by natural disasters and complex emergencies. Therefore, the term logistics should be understood in this policy to cover the entire supply chain, including procurement, transport, tracking and tracing, customs clearance, local transportation, warehousing and last mile delivery".*⁷

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation notes that logistics involves *"emergency logistics preparedness, the assessment of needs, the procurement of aid/the offer of assistance and its delivery"* (page 1).

This broader definition is used in the evaluation across the three evaluation components. The supply chain view of logistics includes the following areas (see Annex 7 for more details): procurement, market/needs assessment, international transport (staff and goods), tracking and tracing, customs clearance, local transport, warehousing and stockpiling (and including prepositioning), distribution (including last mile delivery), and ongoing fleet and asset management.

DG ECHO engages with the supply chain at different points by financing, supporting or undertaking different types of actions. As discussed further in section 4.2, on the humanitarian aid side DG ECHO intervenes as a donor, but also works more operationally by providing direct support to its partners. The UCPM covers a variety of transport and logistics operations, as discussed in section 4.3. For the ESI Mobility Package, DG ECHO primarily financed transport operations, see section 4.4. Table 4.1 introduces some key concepts in logistics.

Table 4.1: Key concepts in logistics

Concept	Description
Common services	This is a series of logistics services along the supply chain that can be provided by one specialised organisation (e.g. procurement, transport, warehousing, delivery) rather than by each individual organisation for themselves. ⁸

⁴ Kozlenkova, Irina V.; Hult, G. Tomas M.; Lund, Donald J.; Mena, Jeannette A.; Kecec, Pinar, "The Role of Marketing Channels in Supply Chain Management". Journal of Retailing. 91 (4): 586–609. doi:10.1016/j.jretai.2015.03.003, 2015.

⁵ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report, Publications Office, 2019,

⁶ See for instance the Sphere Handbook that refers to "supply chain management and logistics" (page 23), <https://spherestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/Sphere-Handbook-2018-EN.pdf>

⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy, p. 7, January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

⁸ See glossary in European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy, p. 13-14, January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

Pooled/shared services or resources	A collaborative approach between organisations involving the grouping together of resources (e.g. means of transport and storage, equipment, personnel, knowledge, for example sharing warehouse space) for the purposes of maximising benefits and minimising risks for all. ⁹
Logistics coordination	Intra-organisational (or vertical) and interorganisational (or horizontal) coordination in humanitarian that logistics can take place at different stages in the chain such as contingency planning, needs assessment, transport management and last-mile delivery. This can also take place at different levels, for example at strategic (or tactical) level and at operational level. ¹⁰



4.2. Humanitarian logistics

4.2.1. Context

The importance of the logistics element in humanitarian aid derives from the fact that successful delivery of humanitarian aid is contingent upon good logistical supply chain management and logistical preparedness. This is specifically set out within the Humanitarian Aid Regulation 1257/96, which iterates that EU humanitarian assistance is implemented with the objective:

*“to help finance the transport of aid and **efforts to ensure that it is accessible to those for whom it is intended**, by all logistical means available, and by protecting humanitarian goods and personnel”.*

As noted in the previous evaluation of humanitarian logistics, DG ECHO has made significant investments in humanitarian logistics that have had important and lasting benefits¹¹. The evaluation concluded that the support to the setup of the UNHRDs, logistics training and support to the development of the Logistics Cluster had lasting benefits and that the substantial support to humanitarian air services was highly relevant. The evaluation recommended that DG ECHO exercise further leadership in humanitarian logistics.

Since 2018 the number of crises globally have been growing, and their nature has gradually become more protracted, unpredictable and complex, exacerbated by factors such as climate change, environmental degradation, and by the overlaps between disasters, conflict, and fragile situations.¹² The need for humanitarian assistance reached an all-time high. This has further increased with the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Humanitarian needs are increasing at a faster rate than humanitarian funding allocations, resulting in the needs of vulnerable people being increasingly left unmet. At the same time, basic norms and principles around humanitarian action are being challenged, making the delivery of aid more difficult and dangerous.¹³

Within this context, logistics is a key enabler for the delivery of humanitarian assistance in an effective and timely manner, which in turn, determines whether lives will be saved.¹⁴ As noted in the DG ECHO Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) for ECHO Transport and Logistics Operations from 2022¹⁵,

⁹ See glossary in European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy, p. 13-14, January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹⁰ Jahre, M., & Jensen, L-M., *Supply chain design and coordination in humanitarian logistics through clusters*. Paper presented at 21th Annual NOFOMA Conference, Jönköping, Sweden, 2009.

¹¹ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report*, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

¹² See DG ECHO Guidance Note on Disaster Preparedness

¹³ Development Initiatives, *Global humanitarian assistance report 2021*, 2021; European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the EU’s humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles*, 2021. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2021:110:FIN> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2021:110:FIN>; OCHA, *Humanitarian action – analysing needs and response*, n.d. <https://gho.unocha.org/>.

¹⁴ Paciarotti, C. and Valiakhmetova, I., *Evaluating Disaster Operations Management: An Outcome-Process Integrated Approach*. *Prod Oper Manag*, 30: 543-562, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1111/poms.13280>

¹⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) – ECHO Transport and Logistics Operations*, 2022.

most of the challenges within the sphere of humanitarian aid are in one way or another linked to logistics and particularly in contexts where it becomes important to: (i) reach remote locations; (ii) provide common services and pooling cargo of different partners; (iii) help humanitarian partners and cargo to reach countries when transport options are scarce or disrupted.

While it is true that logistics expenses and resources constitute a majority in overall costs for humanitarian operations (ranging from between 35-40% to sometimes as much as 60-80%)¹⁶, the previous evaluation of logistics highlighted that there is room for optimisation of resources and a decrease in logistics expenditure through better top-level management and coordination.¹⁷ Such cost-saving would enable more funds to be spent on actual relief and go some way to fill the expanding funding gap between humanitarian needs and the shrinking resources available to meet these needs.

In any case, the management of humanitarian logistics and supply chains presents significant challenges. Some of these are recognised in the DG ECHO Humanitarian Logistics Policy, specifically within the area of humanitarian aid, summarised in Table 4.2. These vary depending on the specific context and there has been some progress with regards to overcoming some of these challenges, but for others the situation is worsening.

Table 4.2: Logistics challenge/barrier.¹⁸

Barriers to access: Poor infrastructure, lack of transport options, transport restrictions, poor security, natural hazards and blockages to humanitarian aid. During COVID-19, travel restrictions were one of the key barriers to overcome to deliver aid. Even after the pandemic, international freight and custom operations continue to be an issue, especially for smaller INGOs that do not have the in-house capacity to manage international procurement.

Barriers to working together and transparency: There is a lack of collective action and coordination and an increased need to pool and share warehouses, transport, and information, to avoid duplication, waste, and gaps in relief. However, there does seem to be some progress, with a recent survey of humanitarian logistics and procurement professionals conducted as part of the 2022 States of the Humanitarian System finding that there is relatively frequent pooling of transport and procurement, whereas there was less pooling of staff resources and information systems.¹⁹

Lack of funding or inappropriate funding models: Logistics funding is sometimes not prioritised and coordination in logistics is made more difficult due to the disparate funding streams and grants to individual organisations. The 2022 State of Humanitarian System report noted that inflation and pandemic-related supply chain issues have increased local and international transport costs, even before Russia's invasion of Ukraine sent global fuel prices soaring.²⁰

Barriers related to sudden onset crises: With challenges around stocks and warehouses and where to pre-position stocks. This became a major barrier during COVID-19, with massive disruption to global supply chains, necessitating EU intervention. The UN Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRD), which DG ECHO supported the establishment of, are focused on resolving some of these barriers.

¹⁶ Paciarotti, C., Piotrowicz, W.D. and Fenton, G., "Humanitarian logistics and supply chain standards. Literature review and view from practice", *Journal of Humanitarian Logistics and Supply Chain Management*, Vol. 11 No. 3, pp. 550-573, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHLSCM-11-2020-0101>

¹⁷ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report*, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

¹⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy. January 2022 (page 23). https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹⁹ Center for Humanitarian Logistics and Regional Development, *The State of Logistics and Supply Chain in the Humanitarian Context. Global Survey Findings*, 2022. <https://www.alnap.org/help-library/the-state-of-logistics-and-supply-chain-in-the-humanitarian-context-global-survey>

²⁰ In a survey, 75% of surveyed respondents reported rising local transport costs and 69% reported rising costs for international transport over 2021. Obrecht, A. and Swithern, S. with Doherty, J., *The State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS) – Full report*, 2022. <https://sohs.alnap.org/help-library/2022-the-state-of-the-humanitarian-system-sohs-%E2%80%93-full-report-0>

Environmental challenges: The supply chain accounts for most of the carbon footprint of organisations: from production, to transport to finally end-of-life management. For instance, waste management, including end-of-life of packaging. There are several initiatives in this space, including some with DG ECHO involvement.²¹

Barriers to engaging with local markets: Humanitarian actors often lack knowledge about local markets, and local suppliers and actors often have issues aligning their operations to the standards required by international humanitarian actors.

Lack of capacity and staffing challenges: There is a difficulty to attract competent staff for a technical area that is becoming broader and more complex.

Lack of common standards for logistics: There is some emerging work on this, but still no agreed and widely implemented standards. Examples include the Sphere Handbook with a checklist for supply chain management and logistics²², the Global Logistics Cluster-hosted Logistics Operational Guide²³ and the Universal Logistics Standards²⁴.

Annex 7 includes a longer description of the ecosystem of logistics in humanitarian aid.

4.2.2. The DG ECHO humanitarian logistics portfolio

The scope of the current evaluation covers **strategic initiatives (in terms of policy and strategic coordination efforts)** and **operational support (both in terms of funding and offering direct solutions)** support to humanitarian logistics. These activities are further described in Annex 8 and summarised in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics activities

Strategic initiatives

The development and implementation of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy.²⁵ In early 2022, DG ECHO launched a Humanitarian Logistics Policy, with the objective to improve effectiveness and efficiency of its support to logistics. The policy aims to strengthen capacities and better integrate logistics in all EU-funded humanitarian interventions. For 2023, the HLP implementation is supported by a specific HIP²⁶, which focuses on supporting joint approaches such as **common and shared services** and including joint procurement. Some of the initiatives described below are now considered to be specific initiatives under the HLP, including support to Hulo (see below).

The evaluation primarily assesses the relevance of the HLP for the future effectiveness, efficiency and environmental sustainability of humanitarian logistics. This also includes an assessment of the implementation of the policy so far. Note that due to a rapidly evolving implementation process, this assessment may be out of date by the time the report is published.

The Emergency Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC). First piloted in 2021 for the response to the Afghanistan crisis and officially launched during the 2022 European Humanitarian Forum²⁷, the EHRC operates as a gap-filling mechanism that can be directly activated by DG ECHO²⁸. The EHRC is a set of operational tools designed to fill gaps in the humanitarian response to sudden-onset natural hazards and human-induced disasters. As such, while EU's humanitarian aid will continue to be delivered by EU's humanitarian partners, there may be situations in which there is a clear added-value for the EU to intervene directly, for instance to fill a temporary gap

²¹ The Joint Initiative for Sustainable Humanitarian Assistance Packaging Waste Management (Joint Initiative). Multi-Donor Policy Landscape Analysis Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Mitigation. January 2023

²² Sphere Association, The Sphere Handbook – Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response, fourth edition, Geneva, Switzerland, 2018. <https://spherestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/Sphere-Handbook-2018-EN.pdf>

²³ <https://log.logcluster.org/>

²⁴ <https://handbook.ul-standards.org/en/humlog/#sec001>

²⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

²⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Humanitarian Implementation Plan – Logistics Policy, 2022.

https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/hip2023/echo_hlp_bud_2023_91000_v1.pdf

²⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Note for the Attention of Aleska Simkic, Head of Cabinet, "State of play of EHRC implementation", 09 June 2022.

²⁸ European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC), EHRC Standard Operating Procedures, 12 July 2022; European Commission, DG ECHO (2022), Note for the Attention of Aleska Simkic, Head of Cabinet, titled "State of play of EHRC implementation", 09 June 2022.

when the usual delivery mechanisms or available capacities from humanitarian organisations or national authorities may be ineffective or lacking.

The EHRC is managed by DG ECHO's A2 unit and funded via a dedicated HIP.²⁹ The EHRC includes 3 pillars: 1) provision of European **common logistics services** (among others, air services through EU HAB, EU HAF, and land transport operations and warehousing systems); 2) Regional Emergency Stockpiles; 3) provision of niche expertise (primarily in logistics and health sector).³⁰ The operations of EHRC are currently organised under a number of different grants and framework contracts. There are some specific to the EHRC, including one with Atlas Logistique for specific deployments,³¹ and more recently one contract with WFP for the coordination of stockpiles with UNHRD. In 2023 DG ECHO introduced a HIP specifically devoted to the EHRC for the value of 27 million EUR.³²

Note that as the EHRC is an initiative under development, the evaluation only includes conclusions on the future relevance of the EHRC. Nevertheless, findings from EHRC, with evidence from the activation for Ukraine as part of case study 15, are integrated across the evaluation criteria to ensure that the evaluation captures the most recent developments of DG ECHO's logistics portfolio.

Initiatives for cooperation and collaboration on logistics, internal and external:

- **Internal:** The LOGIS advisory group involves DG ECHO staff at both HQ and field level in regular meetings to discuss specific logistics issues. While the LOGIS group is composed of EU HAF Technical Assistants (TAs), Regional Rapid Response Coordinators (RRCs), Regional Logistics Coordinators and an environmental specialist, the LOGIS+ network includes representatives of all HQ units.³³
- **External:** DG ECHO is also part of discussions in a number of international institutions and organisations involved in logistics, with the aim of supporting greater global cooperation on logistics.³⁴ This includes for instance DG ECHO's ongoing discussions with the Global Logistics Cluster (GLC) and other key logistics actors.

Operational support

The EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (EU HAB) flight operations are intended to help reinforce humanitarian or emergency responses in countries facing fragile contexts.³⁵ The ad hoc initiative was set up in response to the transport constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and is now operated on a needs-based approach. These flights are aimed to provide **common services** to help fill critical gaps by facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid, emergency assistance, and the transport of humanitarian staff when required.³⁶ As such, beyond the support to logistics during the COVID-19 crisis, EU HAB operations should contribute to raising attention to forgotten crises and, in doing so, fill the gaps and overcome hurdles faced by humanitarian actors on the ground, such as limited access and delayed logistical or administrative barriers.³⁷ Operational coordination is delegated to the cargo coordinator (RLH/Hulo).³⁸ and the geographical unit or country office, in partnership with the overall coordinator DG ECHO Unit A2.³⁹ The flights are operated by the DG ECHO transport broker Maersk/Damco. The EU HAB has recently become one of the common services provided through the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC)

²⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO (2022), Update to HIP for ECHO/WWD/BUD/2022/01000, May 2022; European Commission, DG ECHO, Note for the Attention of Aleska Simkic, Head of Cabinet, "State of play of EHRC implementation", 09 June 2022; My DG ECHO, European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC), accessed 3/17/23.

³⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, EHRC Presentation to IFRC, 22 June 2022.

³¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Reports, Logframe and Budgets for HI/AL (2022), Agreement n° 2022/00714 under the HIP: ECHO/TLO/BUD/2022/91002 - "Within the EHRC framework, to improve the immediate delivery of humanitarian aid assistance through logistics solutions after an acute crisis", 2022.

³² European Commission, DG ECHO, HIP – European Humanitarian Response Capacity, 2022.

https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/hip2023/echo_hrc_bud_2023_91000_v1.pdf

³³ LOGIS and LOGIS+ membership lists / logistics focal points (5 May 2022)

³⁴ Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September 2022.

³⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Delivering on the Coronavirus Global Response – AN EU Humanitarian Air Bridge; Update to HIP for ECHO/WWD/BUD/2022/01000, May 2022.

³⁶ Défis Humanitaires, A successful gamble for the European Humanitarian Airlift, November 2020.

<https://defishumanitaires.com/en/2020/11/30/a-successful-gamble-for-the-european-humanitarian-airlift/>

³⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, EU HAB Standard Operating Procedure, Internal Document, Last revised: 06.12.2021

³⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Single form for HIP ECHO/ERC/BUD/2020/91004, 2020.

³⁹ Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September 2022.

(further details below).⁴⁰ This evaluation assesses its operation before and during this integration in 2022.

The EU Humanitarian Aid Flight (EU HAF), previously ECHO Flight, provides **common passenger air services** (including evacuations) servicing locations that are very difficult to access, which are locations where there are no regular, safe or reliable transport options.⁴¹ EU HAF operates out of hubs in DRC, Mali and Kenya, and has been activated on an ad hoc basis for other emergencies.⁴² EU HAF was operated by DAC Aviation until March 2020,⁴³ and has been operated by WFP since then.⁴⁴ In the previous evaluation, ECHO Flight was viewed as being highly relevant to the success of many EU-funded (and non-EU funded) humanitarian aid projects.⁴⁵ During 2022 the EU HAF was integrated into the EHRC.⁴⁶ and the evaluation assesses its operation before and during this integration.

The partnership with WFP supporting UNHAS and the Logistics Cluster. From 2018 to 2022, DG ECHO has supported over 50 different WFP logistics services, representing a total of 298 million EUR (96 million EUR on specific logistics activities and 202 million EUR on agreements that cover logistics as part of broader initiatives).⁴⁷ These logistics services are managed through DG ECHO geographical units and are either part of broader country and regional level agreements with WFP, where for instance food assistance or cash-based transfers are also included, or through specific country or regional level agreements that only include logistics support.⁴⁸ The support to the WFP was highlighted as a key result in the previous evaluation, specifically the WFP was supported to become the main provider of common humanitarian logistics services.⁴⁹ he agreements c

The UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS), which is a large-scale air operation operated by WFP Aviation and serves multiple destinations through 22 operations linking 24 countries and serving more than 300 regular destinations via a global fleet of more than 100 aircraft.⁵⁰ Similar to EU HAF, UNHAS provides **common services** and responds to the need for access to the world's most remote and challenging locations, often under precarious security conditions, where no safe surface transport or viable commercial aviation options are available.⁵¹ See case studies 9 on South Sudan, 13 on Afghanistan, and 14 on Haiti.

The Logistics Cluster provides coordination and information management to support operational decision-making and improve the predictability, timeliness, and efficiency of humanitarian emergency response.⁵² While it operates at both global and country level, DG ECHO primarily provides support at country level for certain emergencies.⁵³ Core activities include logistics coordination and standard setting, information management, and access to **common logistics services**, and operating as a provider of last resort (see Annexes 7 and 8). In addition to that, the Global Logistics Cluster (GLC) provides a set of additional activities to humanitarian actors such as logistics capacity assessment, operational guidelines for logistics activities in humanitarian settings, and satellite imagery, as well as acting as a global forum for discussions on humanitarian logistics.⁵⁴ See case study 9 on South Sudan for further details.

⁴⁰ My DG ECHO, EHRC European Logistics Services, 3/17/23, 9:38 AM

⁴¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Update to HIP for ECHO/WWD/BUD/2022/01000, May 2022.

⁴² European Commission, DG ECHO, Agreement No.: ECHO/FLI/BUD/2020/91001, 2020.

⁴³ European Commission, DG ECHO, HIP for ECHO Flights 2018 and 2019: HIP ECHO/WWD/BUD/2018/01000, 30 May 2018; European Commission, DG ECHO, HIP ECHO/WWD/BUD/2019/01000, 26 November 2018.

⁴⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, HIP for EU HAF 2020, 2021: ECHO/FLI/BUD/2020/91000, 12 May 2020; European Commission, DG ECHO, ECHO/WWD/BUD/2021/01000 ref., 20 September 2021.

⁴⁵ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

⁴⁶ My DG ECHO, EHRC European Logistics Services, 3/17/23, 9:38 AM

⁴⁷ Analysis based on data collected from HOPE.

⁴⁸ The desk review uncovered 50 agreements over the evaluation period (see Annex 1). However, due to the way in which these agreements are recorded in HOPE, it is difficult to present details on exactly what is contained in each agreement

⁴⁹ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

⁵⁰ World Food Programme, United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) Annual Review 2021, 13 May 2022.

⁵¹ World Food Programme, United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) Annual Review 2021, 13 May 2022.

⁵² Logistics Cluster, About Us, 2022. <https://logcluster.org/about-us>

⁵³ Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September 2022 ; Review of funding for WFP – LC in HOPE.

⁵⁴ World Food Programme, Logistics Capacity Assessments (LCAs), n.d. <https://dlca.logcluster.org/display/public/DLCA/LCA+Homepage>

Direct funding to NGOs, including outside of the tools defined above. Within HIPs, DG ECHO funds some partners for specific logistics activities. An extensive search of HOPE uncovered six such initiatives which were included in this evaluation. Some are integrated into other initiatives, with specific grants to NGOs involved in the EU HAB and the EHRC. The others include:

- **“Enhancing and strengthening collaborative approach and resources pooling of Humanitarian Supply chain and operational Logistics”,** led by Solidarités Internationales and Action Contre la Faim (ACF) as the head of the RLH consortium (now Hulo).⁵⁵ See case study 11. This initiative to develop **shared services** is now organised under the HLP.
- **Supporting Expansion of Shared Logistics Services** implemented by Atlas Logistique in Mali.⁵⁶ See case study 12.
- **Air services in Afghanistan.** DG ECHO's collaborates with transport providers for **common long-term transport services** for remote areas in Afghanistan. The project entitled Flight Operations for Humanitarian Assistance in Afghanistan (2018 and 2019) by Mission Aviation Fellowship and then by ZOA-NL, was first launched in 2018 and was then renewed in 2019.⁵⁷ See case study 13.

Development of logistics preparedness and pre-positioning: The TOR for this evaluation stated that there should be a focus on DG ECHO's efforts to make logistics a priority sector for capacity building investment. After review and consultation with DG ECHO, the focus included two aspects of support to logistics capacities:

UN Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRD): There are six Humanitarian Response Depots around the world, all operated by WFP as **common services** for NGOs and humanitarian aid providers to pre-position relief supplies close to disaster areas.⁵⁸ They are located near disaster prone areas and have easy access to airports, seaports and main roads for rapid response purposes: Accra (Ghana), Brindisi (Italy), Dubai (United Arab Emirates), Panama City (Panama), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) and Las Palmas (Spain).⁵⁹ The previous evaluation highlighted a steady demand for HRDs, but also the importance of continuous stock rationalisation to ensure the most efficient use of storage space.⁶⁰ During 2022, DG ECHO renewed the agreement with WFP/UNHRD to manage some stocks through the EHRC (see below).

Humanitarian Procurement Centres (HPCs): There is a register of DG ECHO certified **Humanitarian Procurement Centres**,⁶¹ which are audited regularly, with the costs covered by DG ECHO.⁶² The aim of the HPCs is to provide access for humanitarian partners to high quality products, through **common procurement services**, with good value for money, and to bypass complicated procurement procedures.⁶³ The previous evaluation revealed that the HPCs were not perceived as being used to their full potential, with some ambiguity regarding their usage and, with partners using them as a source of price comparison rather than for procuring items. Certification has not happened in the last few years, and now DG ECHO is interested in

⁵⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Interim Reports, Modification Requests, and Logframes for Agreement No. ECHO/ERC/BUD/2020/91004 Project 2020/01086, 2020.

⁵⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Interim Reports, Modification Requests, Budgets and Logframes for Agreement No. ECHO/FLI/BUD/2021/91001 Project 2021/00070, 2021.

⁵⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Interim Reports, Modification Requests, Budgets and Logframes for Agreement No. ECHO/-AS/BUD/2018/91004 Project 2018/00249 and Agreement No. ECHO/-AS/BUD/2019/91005 Project 2019/00581, 2018.

⁵⁸ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

⁵⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Archive of selected projects, n.d. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/archive-selected-projects_en; World Food Programme, Supply Chain Factsheets, 2019. <https://www.wfp.org/publications/supply-chain-factsheets>; World Food Programme, UN Humanitarian Response Depot, n.d. <https://www.wfp.org/unhrd>

⁶⁰ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

⁶¹ ASRAMES, CHMP, Action Medeor, Farmamundi, IDA Foundation, IFRC-GLS, MEDS, MSF Logistique, MSF Supply, OXFAM, UNHRD, UNICEF SD, UNOPS; Register of Humanitarian Procurement Centres (HPCs) recognised by DG ECHO, updated September 2021

⁶² Interview with DG ECHO staff members, August 2022.

⁶³ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

understanding the extent to which humanitarian partners see the value of these centres, including understanding whether the audit process could be self-financed⁶⁴.

These activities cover (or aim to cover in the case of the HLP and EHRC that are under development) various parts of the supply chain. Table 4.4 provides an overview of DG ECHO engagement.

Table 4.4: DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics along the supply chain

	Procurement	Market/needs assessment	International transport	Tracking and tracing	Customs clearance	Local transportation	Warehousing / stockpiles	Last mile delivery	Fleet/asset management
HLP									
EHRC									
EU HAF									
EU HAB									
UNHAS									
Log Cluster									
HPCs									
NGO support									

Source: Evaluation team's analysis of DG ECHO's portfolio

The funding for the operational support described above is further described in Table 4.5 and in Annex 8. Note that strategic initiatives are based on internal human resources. The table distinguishes between budgeted and actual costs. Actual costs are not included for many ongoing activities. For WFP agreements, only budgeted costs are presented; these are likely to be the same as actual costs. For agreements that combine UNHAS and support to Logistics Cluster activation with other activities, it is not always possible to distinguish this part of the budget from the broader support package. The grand total includes the latter, whereas the total does not.

Table 4.5: Budget and actuals for logistics services and year, in EUR thousands

		EU HAF	EU HAB	WFP - UNHAS and LC only	WFP – UNHAS and LC combined with other support	Funding to NGOs	EHRC	Total
2018	Budget	14.600	-	24.250	20.150	750	-	59.750
	Actuals	14.081	-	-	-	750	-	14.831
2019	Budget	12.400	-	17.000	27.176	2.500	-	59.076
	Actuals	12.083	-	-	-	-	-	12.083
2020	Budget	14.800	-	12.282	5.700	650	-	33.432
	Actuals	-	8.083	-	-	-	-	8.083
2021	Budget	-	-	36.602	105.589	600	-	142.791
	Actuals	-	5.402	-	-	-	-	5.402
2022	Budget	4.000	200	6.100	43.440	-	17.000	70.740
	Actuals	-	2.869	-	-	-	-	2.869
Total Budget		45.800	16.554	96.234		4.500	17.000	180.088
Grand Total Budget		45.800	16.554	96.234	202.055	4.500	17.000	382.143
Total Actuals		26.164	16.354	-	-	750	-	43.267

Source: Evaluator's analysis from DG ECHO internal documents and HOPE

The intervention logic in Figure 4.1 presents the needs and context for the logistics operations within humanitarian aid, their objectives, inputs, activities, envisaged results and impacts. This intervention logic has elaborated as part of this evaluation, in consultation with DG ECHO. As such there is no overall results framework for DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics, including indicators and targets.

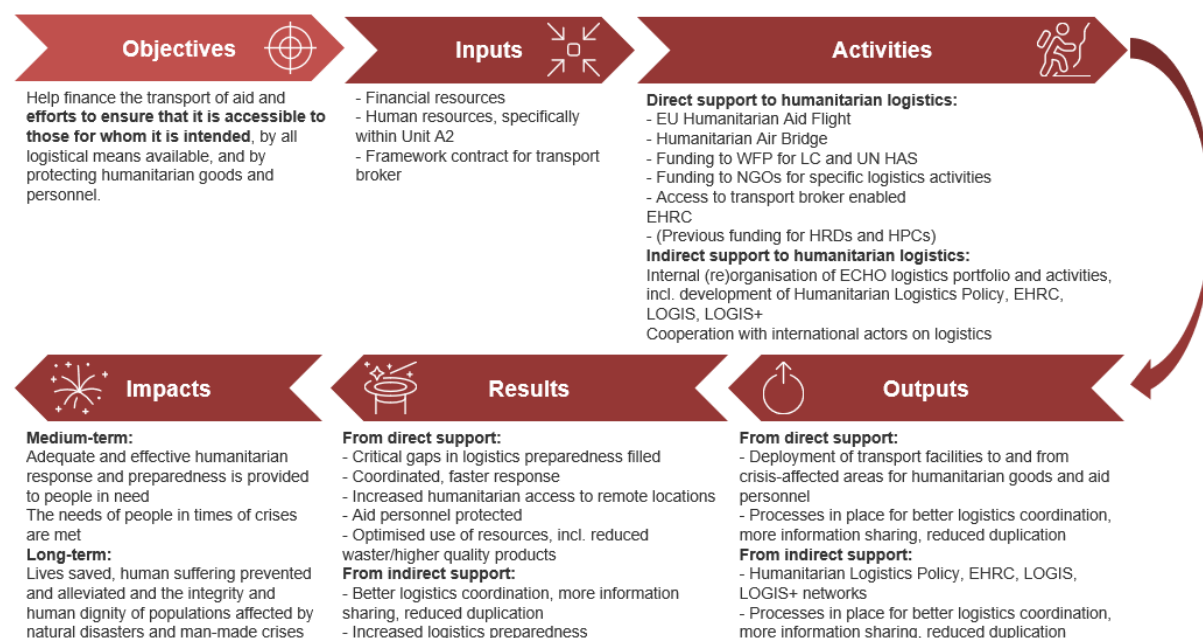
⁶⁴ Interview with DG ECHO staff members, August 2022.

The intervention logic considers DG ECHO strategic and operational support to humanitarian logistics separately. In terms of operational support, this includes the deployment of transport facilities, through EU HAF, EU HAB, support to WFP for UNHAS, and support to NGOs for some flight operations, and support to increased logistics coordination, through support to GLC, the establishment of the EHRC and historical support to UNHRDs and HPCs, this aims to lead to filling critical gaps in logistics preparedness, coordinated faster humanitarian response, increased humanitarian access to remote locations, protection of aid personnel, and to some extent also optimised use of resources, including reduces waste and higher quality products.

Strategic initiatives include DG ECHO's work on the Humanitarian Logistics Policy and its implementation, DG ECHO's cooperation with international logistics actors, as well as new activities, including the establishment of the EHRC and activation of the LOGIS and LOGIS+ networks. This work aims to support increased logistics preparedness and better logistics coordination, more information sharing and reduced duplication, in a more longer-term perspective – in the case of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy, it supports a paradigm shift in humanitarian logistics as a whole, towards a more efficient and effective use of resources, notably through joint working.

Both operational and strategic support to humanitarian logistics aim to contribute to **efficient and effective humanitarian response and preparedness (specifically preparedness around logistics)** and to meet the needs of people in times of crises. DG ECHO's support aims to act as an enabling factor for the implementation of emergency response activities, the purpose of which is to put response teams in a position to be able to operate as best as possible and to guarantee safe access to the areas of operations, enabling access of humanitarian actors to affected populations and people in need of humanitarian aid⁶⁵.

Figure 4.1. Intervention logic for humanitarian aid



There are a number of preconditions/assumptions that need to be in place for results and impacts to be realised. The evaluation investigates the extent to which these are in place. These include:

- DG ECHO has access to the expertise needed to deploy logistics resources within humanitarian aid strategically, based on the greatest need principle and on sound financial management.

⁶⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy, p. 13-14, January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

- Humanitarian aid partners and all relevant DG ECHO HQ and field staff are aware and understand the logistics services that DG ECHO offers.
- DG ECHO has a coherent and unified approach to logistics, supported by appropriate resources at HQ and field level.
- DG ECHO logistics capacity is used as gap filling and do not crowd out other logistics options within relief operations.
- DG ECHO logistics activities are aligned to international humanitarian standards and do not counteract efforts to localise humanitarian aid.



4.3. Logistics in the UCPM

4.3.1. Context of logistics for civil protection

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism was established with an aim to strengthen cooperation between the EU and the Member States and to enable coordinated assistance.⁶⁶ The UCPM seeks to coordinate risk and disaster management at the EU level, to provide assistance to countries struck by natural or man-made hazards affecting peoples and/or territories, and to provide assistance where national response capacity is overwhelmed and national services are unable to respond to the crisis adequately.

Many of the barriers and challenges that affect logistics operations in humanitarian contexts (Table 8) are also relevant for civil protection responses in emergency contexts such as pandemics, floods, earthquakes, and tsunamis, both inside and outside the EU. There are however some unique challenges. These include:⁶⁷

- Uneven distribution of resources and funding for logistics across Member States and Participating States, with some countries having access to for instance specialised transport options through military planes or framework agreements with private transport brokers, whereas others lack funding to cover the costs of emergency responses.
- Gaps in strategic logistics capacities across the EU for particular types of emergency operations. RescEU reserves were initiated for this reason, but only cover some of the gaps in capacities.
- A lack of coordination on logistics between Member States and Participating States, with bilateral coordination on logistics largely absent, with some exceptions (see case study 4 on the Swedish forest fires).

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically exacerbated this situation, with specific challenges around the need to repatriate EU citizens and support the pandemic response outside of the EU. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has moved large-scale crises even closer to the borders of the EU.

4.3.2. The UCPM logistics portfolio

Within the UCPM, and DG ECHO more broadly, the role of logistics has increasingly been establishing itself as a key determinant for operations' outcomes, as logistics underlies the entire process of civil protection operations, from provision to distribution of relief or assistance services. Due to the increasing inclusion of logistics as an integral and underlying function throughout civil protection operations, it is difficult to separate logistics activities from the scope of the activities it accompanies. While the supply chain includes activities spanning from procurement, transport, tracking and tracing, customs clearance, local transportation, warehousing and last mile delivery⁶⁸, the UCPM logistics activities that fall under the scope of this evaluation primarily concern the **transport and operation**

⁶⁶ Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism Text with EEA relevance. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013D1313>

⁶⁷ These have emerged in discussion with DG ECHO.

⁶⁸ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

activities, including the coordination of these activities, as per clarifications that emerged during scoping interviews and the inception workshop.

Transport and operations activities constitute a main pillar of the response mechanism managed by the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), which coordinates and co-finances transport activities. UCPM transport and operations can be set off via the European Civil Protection Pool (ECP) or via the RescEU tool. For the purposes of this evaluation, the RescEU capacities under investigation concern the transport of medical equipment⁶⁹, rather than the RescEU stockpiles themselves. This was agreed with DG ECHO despite stockpiles being consistent with the broader definition of logistics adopted by DG ECHO.

At a general level, the UCPM is based on Member States-led assistance, and therefore relies on Member States' and Participating States' funding. The ERCC's function is therefore to coordinate Member States', Participating States', and RescEU resources in a centralised manner, creating additional value by coordinating efforts and thereby enhancing the efficiency and timeliness of civil protection interventions.

The ERCC coordinates several configurations of assistance as presented in Table 4.6. As of 2019, co-financing levels are at either 75% or 100%, depending on whether the crises is inside or outside the EU, whether assistance is pooled or whether it is a low probability disaster with a high impact (Lo-Hi operations). Before 2019 the co-financing rates were 55% and 85%.⁷⁰

Table 4.6: Types of assistance

Spontaneous offer of in-kind assistance: This is where a Member State/Participating State responds to a request for assistance with resources that are specifically and spontaneously mobilised for that request.

Assistance through the ECP: The ECP is a pool of Member States and Participating States resources (modules and expert teams) that can be drawn on to provide support to another Member State(s) or third country, where they are unable to respond sufficiently to one or more disasters without external support.

Assistance through the RescEU capacity: RescEU capacities were introduced to make available an additional reserve of capacities to provide adequate responses to disasters induced by natural or man-made hazards, the magnitude of which could not be matched through solely national capacities and ECP pre-committed capacities. This was the case for the Portugal wildfires in 2017, where none of the ECP capacities were available for deployment, and therefore required the Commission to purchase its own firefighting planes and helicopters. RescEU capacities are owned and hosted by Member States, to facilitate the activation speed and agility. RescEU capacities include medical supplies, firefighting aircraft, and emergency shelter.⁷¹

The transport provided is either **shared**, if Member States pool their transport services, or **common**, if provided by the transport broker. The logistics portfolio under evaluation also includes the **logistics coordination** that is provided by the ERCC at HQ. During an emergency, the ERCC often deploys a Liaison Officer (LO) or full EU Civil Protection Team deployed (EUCPT) that provides coordination support, including on logistics, alongside Member State teams and assistance. Finally, the evaluation includes the new logistics hubs in Poland, Slovakia, and Romania that were set up as a response Russia's invasion of Ukraine and provides **common services** to Member States (see case study 15). The portfolio of activities is illustrated in Table 4.7.

⁶⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, RescEU Factsheet, 2022. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/RescEU_en

⁷⁰ Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism Text with EEA relevance. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013D1313>

⁷¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, RescEU Factsheet, 2022. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/RescEU_en

Table 4.7: UCPM logistics along the supply chain

	Procurement	Market/needs assessment	International transport	Tracking and tracing	Customs clearance	Local transportation	Warehousing /stockpiles	Last mile delivery	Fleet/asset management
Transport co-financing									
Logistics hubs									
RescEU									
ERCC									
LO/EUCPT									

Between 2013-17, the period covered by the previous evaluation, Member States and Participating States responded to crises in 27 countries. A total of almost 30 million EUR was requested as grants for transport and related logistics between 2014 and 2017, of which more than 93% involved transport outside the EU.⁷²

In the period 2018-2022 (July) covered by this evaluation, the tables below present an overview of overall funding for transport and logistics operations.

⁷² European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

Table 4.8. UPCM expenditure by year

UPCM expenditure by year		
Year	Net contribution requested	Total payments ⁷³
2018	3 074 995	2 295 083
2019	10 837 806	7 042 123
2020	83 130 058	53 627 742
2021	53 473 040	13 792 757
2022	70 592 616	-
Total	221 108 518	76 757 706

Source: Evaluator's analysis of documentation provided by DG ECHO

The breakdown by year shows a steady increase in requests between 2018-2019, before a dramatic increase between 2019-2020 with the beginning of COVID-19. Expenditure held steady during the years 2020-2022.

Table 4.9. UPCM expenditure by geographic distribution

UPCM expenditure by geographic distribution				
Geographic distribution	Net contribution requested	%	Total payments	%
Inside EU	13 651 501	6%	4 731 322	6%
Outside EU	207 457 016	93%	72 026 384	94%
Total	221 108 518	100%	76 757 706	100%

Source: Evaluator's analysis of documentation provided by DG ECHO

In terms of geographic distribution, most of the expenditure is outside the EU. Approximately 93% of expenditure was committed/dispensed to emergencies occurring outside of the EU. Amongst the emergencies occurring outside of the EU, emergencies in Lebanon, Mozambique, and Nepal accounted for a large proportion of expenditure. While within the EU, forest fires in Greece, Italy, and Cyprus, and earthquakes in Albania and Croatia were substantial expenditures.

Table 4.10: UPCM expenditure by type of operational support (grant/broker)

Type of operational support	Number of activations	Percentage
Broker	134	12
Grant	760	71
Unspecified	180	17
Grand Total	1074	100

Source: Evaluator's analysis of documentation provided by DG ECHO

There is a clear tendency for grants to be used, rather than the broker when it comes to the type of operational support. Grant-related expenditure accounts for approximately 80 percent of expenditure.

Figure 4.2 below illustrates the intervention logic for the UCPM transport and operations. Note that this intervention logic has been elaborated as part of the evaluation, in consultation with DG ECHO, without there being a clear results framework, with indicators and targets against which to evaluate progress.

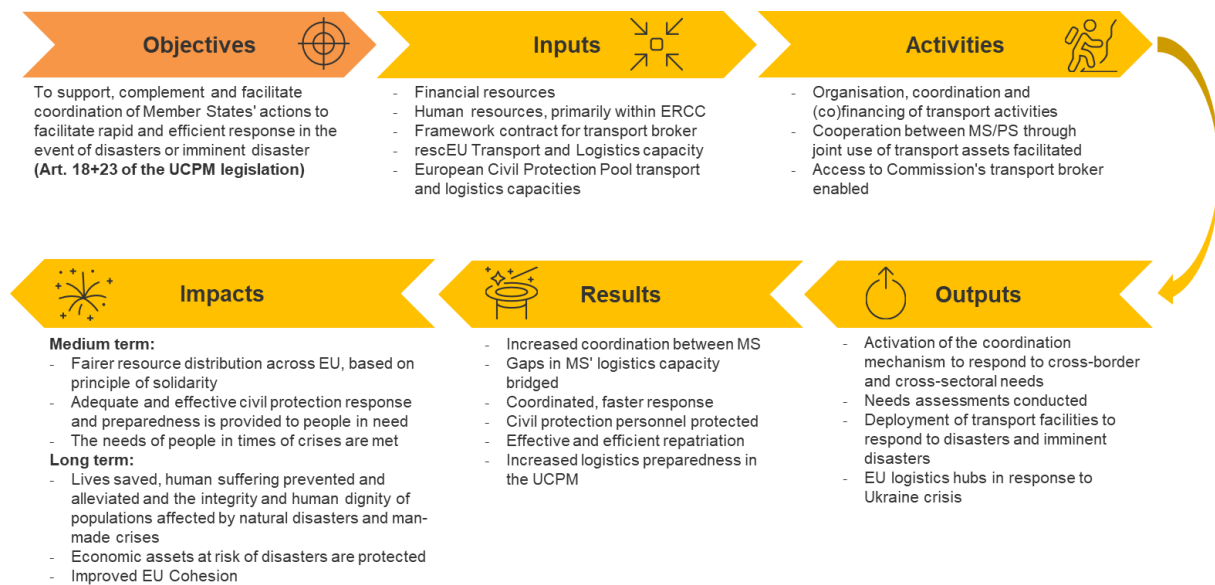
Once the civil protection Mechanism is activated DG ECHO organises, coordinates, and co-finances transport and operations activities, facilitates cooperation between Member States and Participating States and enables access to the transport broker engaged by ECHO, via the ERCC. These outputs in

⁷³ It is not possible to provide disbursements for 2022 as they are still ongoing.

turn aim to result in increased coordination between Member States, the bridging of gaps in Member State logistics capacities, coordinated and fast responses, protection of civil protection personnel, effective and efficient repatriation (as part of COVID-19 response), and increased logistics preparedness.

In turn, these results aim to contribute to **adequate and effective civil protection response and preparedness** (specifically preparedness around logistics) and that the needs of people in times of crises are met. In addition, there is also an aim to contribute to fairer resource distribution across the EU, based on the principle of solidarity. Ultimately, this should contribute to lives saved, human suffering prevented and alleviated, and upholding the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural hazards and man-made crises; economic assets at risk of disasters are protected, and improved EU cohesion.

Figure 4.2. Intervention logic for the UCPM



There are a number of preconditions that need to be in place for these results and impacts to be realised. These are investigated in terms of the extent to which they are in place as part of the evaluation of effectiveness:

- Member States know and understand what the UCPM can offer and how to apply;
- UCPM responds to logistics needs and priorities of Member States and Participating States;
- The UCPM is sufficiently flexible to adapt to respond to changing needs and priorities of civil protection;
- There is sufficient funding for the UCPM;
- DG ECHO is timely in their coordination and administration of the UCPM;
- The UCPM does not duplicate/crowd out Member States/Participating States existing logistics arrangements;
- Transport and operations grants are distributed fairly among all applicant Member States and Participating States and based on greatest need;
- Participation in the UCPM transport and operations contribute to an increased willingness to collaborate between Member States and Participating States.



4.4. The ESI Mobility Package

4.4.1. Context

Within the European Union, the COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on Member States' health care systems due to the quick spread of the virus and the large number of people in need of hospitalisation simultaneously. Health care systems across the EU quickly became overburdened, which created an urgent need to gain access to medical equipment and medical assistance to provide essential healthcare to patients. The worldwide disruption in logistics made it challenging for Member States to access medical supplies as well as to transport medical services across the EU. The demand for medical equipment increased by 100 times, creating a persistent shortage of equipment around the world.⁷⁴ The impact of the pandemic varied in intensity across the Member States, and as such the need for support differed depending on the scale of crisis and the pre-existing healthcare capacity.⁷⁵

The Emergency Support Instrument (ESI) was first introduced in 2016 via the Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 of 15 March 2016 on the provision of emergency support within the Union,⁷⁶ which provided the legal basis for implementation. The ESI is a needs-based instrument which is activated in the event of human-induced disasters and disasters related to natural events of exceptional scale with far-reaching humanitarian implications, to support EU Member States to address such emergencies. For instance, this support instrument was previously activated between 2016 and 2019 to provide supplementary support for the management of refugees and migrants in the context of the European Refugee Crisis.⁷⁷ The ESI played a pivotal role in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, providing 2,7 billion EUR to support Member States,⁷⁸ in particular the healthcare sector.

The Mobility Package was first launched under the ESI in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a budget of 220 million EUR. The Mobility Package supported Member States to overcome logistical challenges caused by the pandemic such as the disruption of the global logistics market, limited access to healthcare resources, and increased demand for medical assistance, and the uneven distribution of healthcare resources across the EU.

4.4.2. The ESI Mobility Package logistics portfolio

Following the Commission Decision of 24 April 2020 on the financing of Emergency Support under Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369, the following three actions, managed by DG ECHO, were implemented through the ESI Mobility Package.⁷⁹

- **Cargo transport** (e.g., assistance and medical items, COVID-19 vaccination-related equipment and therapeutics) for any essential medical items from third countries into the EU and within the EU.
- **Support of transfer of patients** within the EU and from the EU to third countries.
- **Support of transport of medical personnel and teams**, within the EU and into the EU from third countries, as well as operational support for mobile medical response capacities.

All EU Member State authorities (national, regional, and local authorities and other public bodies) were eligible for support. Only private law bodies with a public service mission were eligible. Operations

⁷⁴ De Onderzoeksraad Voor Veiligheid, Aanpak coronacrisis. Deel 1: tot september 2020, Onderzoeksraad, Den Haag, 2022, p.53.

⁷⁵ Proposal (EC) No COM (2020) 175 of 2 April 2020 for a Council Regulation activating the emergency support under Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 of 15 March 2016 and amending its provisions in respect of the COVID-19 outbreak. European Commission, Brussels.

⁷⁶ Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 of 15 March 2016 on the provision of emergency support within the Union. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/369/oj>

⁷⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Evaluation of the operation of Regulation (EU) 2016/369 on the provision of emergency support in the Union, Brussels, 2018. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2018-11/esi_evaluation_final_211118_0.pdf

⁷⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Emergency Support Instrument Factsheet, 2023. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/emergency-support-instrument_en

⁷⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Questions & Answers on the activation of the Emergency Support Instrument in the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic, DG ECHO Mobility Package, Brussels, 2021.

were eligible if they directly related to the COVID-19 emergency response, were of public benefit, fit into the national response plan, and had not received any other EU funding.⁸⁰

Under the Mobility Package, Member States were invited to submit applications for support via three calls. Support was provided through two different modalities: 1. Grants, and 2. Use of the Commission's transport broker. Grants were awarded to Member States via grant agreements to reimburse costs incurred.⁸¹ The transport broker was made available at the application of Member States and directly paid by the Commission.⁸² The table below details the three calls:

Table 4.11: Overview of calls

Call	Application period	Type	Eligibility
1	Cargo: 19 June – 10 July 2020 (initial deadline, 3 July 2020, was extended). ⁸³	Grants, broker	Transport for all three actions carried out before the call must have arrived in the country of destination on or after 24 April 2020 , the date the Financing Decision entered into force. ⁸⁴
	Transfer of patients, transport of medical teams and personnel: 19 June 2020 – open-ended. ⁸⁷	Grants, broker	For cargo transport, expenditures for items ordered after 1 February 2020 (date from which the Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 activating the ESI ⁸⁵ allowed retrospective eligibility) were also eligible for funding. Cargo transport had to arrive at its final destination within two months of the application deadline. ⁸⁶
2	Cargo: 5 May – 30 June 2021. ⁸⁸	Grants	Cargo transport grants were provided if the transport arrived at the country of destination between 1 January and 30 September 2021 , and operations had to be contracted by 30 June 2021 . ⁸⁹
	Cargo: 5 May – open-ended. ⁹²	Broker	
	Transfer of patients: 5 May – open-ended. ⁹³	Grants	Support was newly introduced for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cargo transport of COVID-19 vaccination-related equipment and COVID-19 therapeutics through the use of the Commission's transport broker.⁹⁰ • Transfer of non-COVID-19 patients.⁹¹
	Transport of medical teams and personnel: ongoing since 19 June 2020 – open-ended. ⁹⁴	Grants, broker	

⁸⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, Brussels, 2020.

⁸¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Terms of reference for the evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, Brussels, 2022.

⁸² European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, Version 3, Brussels, June 2021.

⁸³ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, Brussels, 2020.

⁸⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, Brussels, June 2020.

⁸⁵ Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020 activating the emergency support under Regulation (EU) 2016/369, and amending its provisions taking into account the COVID-19 outbreak, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32020R0521>

⁸⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, Brussels, June 2020.

⁸⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, Brussels, June 2020.

⁸⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, Version 3, European Commission, Brussels, June 2021.

⁸⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, Version 3, European Commission, Brussels, June 2021.

⁹⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3, Brussels, June 2021.

⁹¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package: New invitation to submit applications, Information meeting, Brussels, 5 May 2021.

⁹² European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, Brussels, June 2020.

⁹³ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, Brussels, June 2020.

⁹⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, Brussels, June 2020.

Call	Application period	Type	Eligibility
3	Cargo: 10 – 18 November 2021 ⁹⁵	Broker	In this last call, grant agreements had to be signed by 31 December 2021 . ⁹⁶ Costs had to be incurred at latest by 31 January 2022 . ⁹⁷
	Transfer of patients: 10 – 18 November 2021 ⁹⁸	Grants	
	Transport of medical teams and personnel: 10 – 18 November 2021 ⁹⁹	Grants, broker	

DG ECHO carried out various activities to prepare and implement the calls, including: considering the duration and deadlines of the calls, the needs of Member States specific to each call, the distribution of the budget, due diligence and legal checks on information and application documents, ensuring that only public entities would receive the funding, launching an information campaign to raise awareness about the Mobility Package and support Member States in the application process (PowerPoint presentations, infographics, ‘frequently asked questions’ documents, etc.), giving the ERCC regular updates on the Mobility Package, participating in weekly meetings with Civil Protection authorities in Member States and consulting them about their needs.¹⁰⁰

The transport financing provided for cargo operations was for bilateral transport operations, although some **shared services** did take place for transfer of patients and medical teams, where Member States coordinated transport operations. The transport broker provided **common services**. See Table 4.12

Table 4.12: ESI Mobility Package along the supply chain

	Procurement	Market/needs assessment	International transport	Tracking and tracing	Customs clearance	Local transportation	Warehousing/stockpiles	Last mile delivery	Fleet/asset management
Cargo									
Transfer of patients									
Transfer of medical teams									

From the total Mobility Package envelope of 220 million EUR, approximately 173 million EUR was awarded/committed and, ultimately, 157.3 million EUR in total was paid to Member States by DG ECHO: 48,6 million EUR in 2020; 96,3 million in 2021 EUR; and 12,3 million EUR in 2022.¹⁰¹ Another 45 million EUR was decommitted and transferred to DG SANTE to cover needs. The amount requested by applicants was 477,5 million EUR, which far outreached the available budget, as shown in Figure 4.3 below.

The total amount of 157,3 million EUR spent by DG ECHO remained well within the available budget envelope, after decommissioning. The remaining amount of about 18 million EUR was intentionally kept by DG ECHO as a safety net in case the budget would be needed for other Mobility Package requests.¹⁰² In sum, 71% of the total budget of 220 million EUR was used. Considering that 45 million

⁹⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, Version 4, Brussels, November 2021.

⁹⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4, Brussels, November 2021.

⁹⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4, Brussels, November 2021.

⁹⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, Version 4, Brussels, November 2021.

⁹⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, Version 4, Brussels, November 2021.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with DG ECHO on 13/03/2023.

¹⁰¹ Budget data derived from DG ECHO’s internal Mobility Package budgeting, financial, and output-level monitoring table.

¹⁰² Based on interview with DG ECHO on 25/08/2022.

EUR was decommissioned, 90% of the available budget of 175 million EUR was used, leaving a safety net of approximately 10%. The budget is visualised in the figure below.

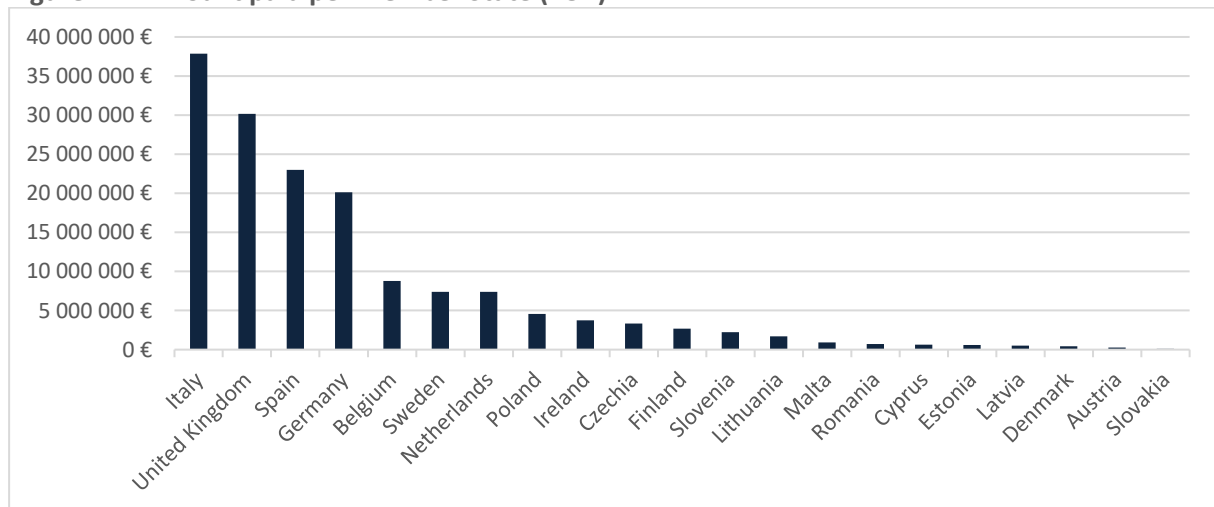
Figure 4.3. Overview of requested and managed budget



Source: Evaluator's analysis based on data provided by DG ECHO

During the evaluation period, 21 Member States have benefitted from the ESI Mobility Package funding (including the UK, which was a Member State until 31 December 2020). Most grants were awarded to Italy and Sweden (16 grants each), followed by Germany (8 grants), Romania (6 grants), and Spain (4 grants). This may be related to the fact that applicants in Italy and Sweden are regional health authorities. Meanwhile, a large share of Member States received only one or two grants.¹⁰³ It is important to note that the number of grants awarded does not correlate with the total amount paid per country; e.g. the UK was awarded only one grant but this constituted a considerable share of the budget, see figure below. Member States which did not apply for support were Bulgaria, Greece, France, Croatia, Hungary, Luxembourg, and Portugal.

Figure 4.4. Amount paid per Member State (EUR)



Source: Evaluator's analysis based on data provided by DG ECHO

When considering the budget distribution, DG ECHO decided against an extended application period for cargo operations because this would have resulted in a 'first-come-first-served' approach which would have hindered a fair distribution of funds among the Member States based on needs.¹⁰⁴ Since DG ECHO judged the demand for the transfer of patients and transport of medical teams and personnel to be lower compared to the demand for cargo transport support, applications could be made continuously on a first-come-first-served basis throughout the three calls.¹⁰⁵ The methodology used to calculate the reimbursement rate for each Member State for cargo operations was developed by

¹⁰³ Data based on DG ECHO internal documentation.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with DG ECHO on 13/03/2023.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with DG ECHO on 13/03/2023.

the DG ECHO's A.3 unit (Security and Situational Awareness). It was based on Member States' needs resulting from the COVID-19 emergency:¹⁰⁶

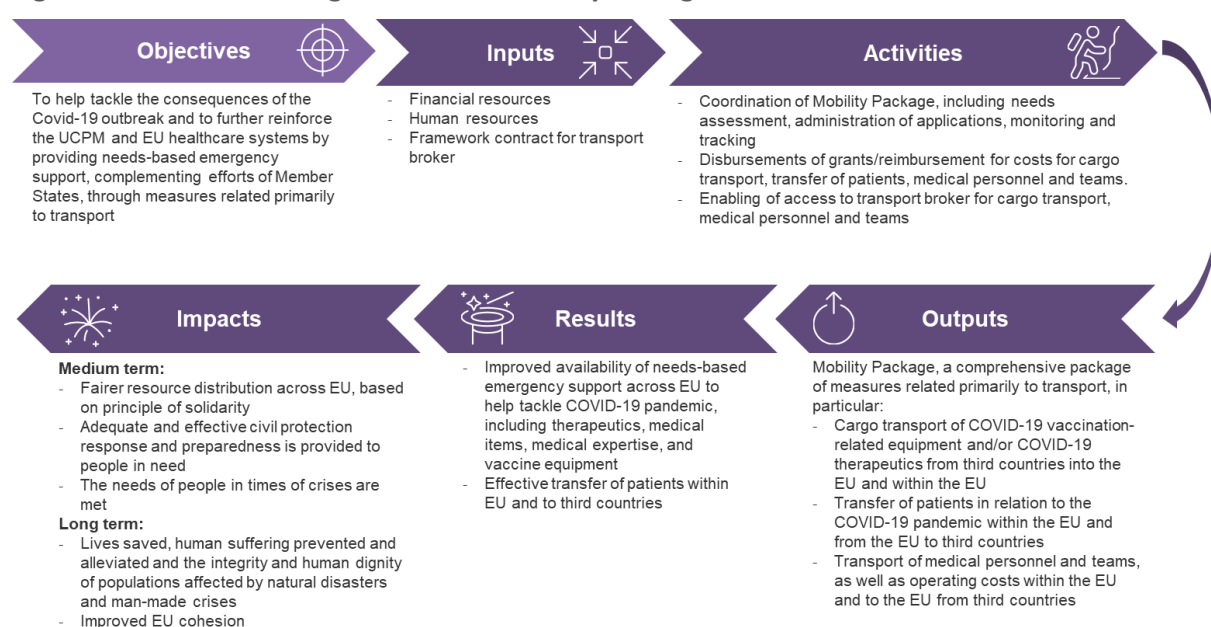
- Total population: 20%
- Number of COVID-19 cases: 40%
- Number of COVID-19 deaths: 40%

Figure 4.5 below is the intervention logic for the ESI Mobility Package which was developed in consultation with DG ECHO. Since the ESI Mobility Package is a new instrument, it was not included in the previous evaluation of DG ECHO's logistics activities. A clear results framework with indicators and targets against which to evaluate the activities supported was not available and could not be considered in this evaluation.

A set of indicators was developed and was used to compare the three outputs of the Mobility Package (presented in the intervention logic as cargo transport, transfer of patients, and transport of medical personnel and teams) against the results. These results are closely linked to the objectives and are: 1. The improved availability of needs-based emergency support across the EU to help tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, and 2. An effective transfer of patients within the EU and to third countries.

By extension, the results aim to contribute to positive medium-term and long-term impacts. The foreseen medium-term impacts are interlinked with the defined needs/context and include: a fairer resource distribution across the EU, based on the principle of solidarity, an adequate and effective civil protection response and preparedness for emergency situations, and meeting the needs of citizens in times of crisis. The targeted long-term impact refers to the larger positive effects of the Mobility Package: the lives saved, suffering prevented or alleviated, human dignity maintained, and improved cohesion in the EU.

Figure 4.5. Intervention logic for the ESI Mobility Package



The evaluation is guided by a set of assumptions, as presented in the intervention logic below, which are a precondition for the achievement of the described results and impact. These assumptions were:

- Member States understood what the Mobility Package could offer and how to apply;
- Mobility Package responded to needs and priorities of Member States;

¹⁰⁶ Interview with DG ECHO on 20/03/2023.

- The Mobility Package was sufficiently flexible to change according to the development of the pandemic;
- There was sufficient funding for the Mobility Package;
- DG ECHO was timely in their coordination and administration of the Mobility Package;
- Mobility Package did not duplicate/crowd out Member States' existing logistics arrangements;
- Mobility Package was distributed fairly among all applicant Member States.¹⁰⁷



4.5. Framework contract with transport broker

Finally, as part of its logistics operations, DG ECHO holds a framework contract with a transport broker (first Kuehne and Nagel (K&N) and then Maersk/Damco since 2021) to cover the transport and storage of relief goods and assistance.¹⁰⁸ During the evaluation period, this has been used both for civil protection (UCPM transport and logistics grants and ESI Mobility Package) and humanitarian relief operations (EU HAB). The funding for these operations is integrated into the tables above, but also presented separately below. Note that the source of the table below the Financial Transparency System, which is a different source than that used for the information above. Figures for 2022 are not yet available.

Table 4.13. Funding for transport broker by programme 2019-2021 (n.a. for 2018)

Company and programme	2019	2020	2021	Grand Total
DAMCO DENMARK AS (Maersk/Damco)			13 160 896	13 160 896
2.2.24 – Union Civil Protection Mechanism (RescEU)			7 704 140	7 704 140
6.0.12 – Humanitarian Aid (HUMA)			5 456 756	5 456 756
KUHNE + NAGEL AS	30 238	8 142 925		8 173 163
3.0.12 – Instrument for Emergency Support within the Union (IES)		159 383		159 383
4.0.12 – Union Civil Protection Mechanism	30 238			30 238
4.0.7 – Humanitarian aid		7 983 541		7 983 541
Grand Total	30 238	8 142 925	13 160 896	21 334 059

Source: Financial Transparency System

¹⁰⁷ Information is based on a call with DG ECHO on 25/08/2022.

¹⁰⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, ANNEX I :Call for tenders ECHO/2020/OP/0004-Provision of worldwide transport and logistic services in the framework of Civil Protection, Humanitarian Aid and other European Union operations, 2020.

5. ANSWERS TO THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Findings on each of the evaluation criteria are presented in this section. The sections begin with a summary of the overall findings against each evaluation question. This is then followed by a longer section where the detailed evidence is presented and the arguments for the key findings are elaborated. The presentation of the detailed findings is divided between the three different strands of the evaluation, beginning with logistics in humanitarian aid, followed by logistics in civil protection, and then the ESI Mobility Package.






5.1. Relevance





A key dimension of the relevance of logistics operations is their responsiveness to the needs of participating countries, key stakeholders and ultimately also of the affected populations/ or areas. This, in turn, has several dimensions: the extent to which the logistics portfolio was designed to respond to the specific crises that occurred during the period of the evaluation, the level of consultation in the design of activities, their perceived usefulness within a given context, the demand for activities, and whether their design has changed as a response to a changing context.

This section also considers the extent to which DG ECHO addressed the recommendations of the previous evaluation and future relevance of Humanitarian Logistics Policy, the European Humanitarian Response Capacity and the LOGIS and LOGIS+, and whether DG ECHO has a deliberate and strategic approach to humanitarian logistics.

For this evaluation question, the strength of evidence is high.

5.1.1. Overall key findings

EQ1. How well were DG ECHO's logistics activities designed and tailored to the needs of humanitarian partners, UCPM Participating States, Member States, and final beneficiaries?	
 	<p>DG ECHO has shown flexibility in adapting to needs arising during the evaluation period, by developing new logistics services across humanitarian aid in its response to emerging and protracted crises, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine, with several new activities and mechanisms developed, including the EU HAB and the EHRC.</p> <p>DG ECHO logistics portfolio is designed and tailored to the needs of humanitarian partners, Member States, Participating States, and final beneficiaries, but the level of relevance depends on the specific context. There is high strategic and operational relevance of the logistics portfolio, with a consolidated stakeholder engagement mechanism and thorough assessment of needs for all logistics actions. Technical assistance provided is seen as relevant to the needs of partners when offered.</p>
	<p>In civil protection (UCPM), DG ECHO has also shown flexibility through the expansion of transport and operations co-financing and the initiation of logistics hubs to respond to the dramatic increase in the volume of in-kind assistance being sent to Ukraine. There is a high demand for logistics support from Member States and Participating States, particularly for emergencies outside of the EU.</p>
	<p>The ESI Mobility Package represents a specific mechanism designed specifically to respond to the logistics needs precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The ESI Mobility Package was generally relevant and met Member States' needs, with evidence of flexibility as the Mobility Package adapted to some changes.</p>
	<p>With regards to the relevance of the transport broker, there is evidence across humanitarian aid and civil protection that activities were tailored to needs. The framework contract with the transport broker has been used in humanitarian aid, civil protection, and for one operation in the ESI Mobility Package and was seen as relevant by users. For humanitarian aid this consisted of services to NGO partners to access hard-</p>

	to-reach locations. ¹⁰⁹ In relation to the UCPM, the broker was reported to be most relevant for operations outside of Europe where Member States and Participating States were less familiar with the transport routes and modalities or for transporting particular items such as energy transformers.
EQ2. To what extent has the 2022 Humanitarian Logistics Policy integrated the lessons learnt and recommendations of DG ECHO's 2018 Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics?	
	The evaluation finds that DG ECHO has integrated the lessons learned and recommendations from the previous evaluation to a large extent, with most recommendations adopted. The development of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but it has now been launched and is starting to be implemented. In the HLP, DG ECHO reconfirms its commitment to support coordination on logistics, and proposes to take a more active role in logistics at crisis level. There are signs that during the evaluation period, DG ECHO also supported improvements in humanitarian logistics at the country/crisis level, with significant funding for common logistics services and some support to capacity development.
EQ3. To what extent are the recently introduced Humanitarian Logistics Policy, the European Humanitarian Response Capacity and the LOGIS and LOGIS+ networks likely to contribute to more effective, cost-effective and environmentally friendly humanitarian logistics?	
	The introduction of the HLP, the EHRC, and LOGIS and LOGIS + networks seem to be relevant to promoting the objectives of effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and environmental friendliness. Evidence of effective alignment in contributing to a measurable outcome(s) is still somewhat early, and might require improved monitoring data, but emerging qualitative evidence points in the direction of relevance.
EQ11. To what extent does DG ECHO have a deliberate and strategic approach to humanitarian logistics? ¹¹⁰	
 	There is evidence that DG ECHO is increasingly taking a more strategic and deliberative approach to logistics. While a strategy has been defined and operational guidelines are being disseminated, the shift has yet to translate into practice, be it in grants management, monitoring or technical support.



5.1.2. Logistics in humanitarian aid

The importance of logistics in humanitarian aid derives from the fact that successful delivery of humanitarian aid is contingent upon logistical supply chain management and logistical preparedness throughout all stages. Globally, humanitarian demands are growing faster than humanitarian budget allocations, leaving an increasing number of vulnerable peoples' needs unmet.¹¹¹ As a result, the need to reach those in need and administer relief in a timely and cost-effective manner has never been greater.¹¹² This is specifically set out within the Humanitarian Aid Regulation 1257/96, which iterates that EU humanitarian assistance is implemented with the objective "to help finance the transport of aid and efforts to ensure that it is accessible to those for whom it is intended, by all logistical means available, and by protecting humanitarian goods and personnel, but excluding operations with defence implications".¹¹³ In this sense, the evaluation found that logistics is an enabling factor for humanitarian aid in general.

The logistics activities supported by DG ECHO under the humanitarian aid strand include a variety of different tools aimed at providing transport of passengers, the storage and fast and safe delivery of

¹⁰⁹ This was the case during COVID-19.

¹¹⁰ This evaluation question was originally presented as belonging to the efficiency criterion. However, in writing the report, it became clear that this discussion fits better under relevance where the HLP is analysed.

¹¹¹ UNOCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview, 2022. <https://gho.unocha.org/>

¹¹² European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹¹³ Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid, Art. 18 and 23, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/1996/1257/oj>

humanitarian aid cargo. They directly contribute to the implementation of humanitarian aid operations, and/or to the safe evacuation of stakeholders from hard-to-reach areas. Interventions covered under the humanitarian aid package include both existing and relatively new activities.

Alignment to the needs developed during the evaluation period, in terms of crises and needs of partners, Member States and beneficiaries.

At the strategic level, DG ECHO logistics operations are relevant to the needs created by the crises occurring during the evaluation period. First, DG ECHO has responded to needs created by forgotten crises.¹¹⁴ that occurred during the evaluation period, in 2020, 2021 and 2022.¹¹⁵ This includes logistics operations in the context of the regional Central African crisis (CAR, Burkina Faso, Mali) (in 2020 and 2021), the Afghanistan crisis (since 2019), the Ukraine crisis (since 2021), the Yemen crisis (from 2019), and the South Sudan crisis (since 2018), DRC (since 2018), Myanmar (since 2018), and Haiti (since 2018).¹¹⁶ DG ECHO provided logistics support in one form or another to respond to the needs presented by these crises.

At the level of specific actions, analysis of activities' designs suggest that they are based on a thorough analysis of needs and contextual factors.¹¹⁷ This is particularly showcased with the strong role taken by DG ECHO in the response to the COVID-19 and Ukraine crises.¹¹⁸ The two crises have had an impact on Member States, Participating States, and partners, and have exacerbated a number of pre-existing crises. In addition, they affected a significant proportion of the global population.¹¹⁹ In the context of humanitarian aid only, DG ECHO has developed tailored transport and warehousing solutions For each of these crises, including the EU HAB and the EHRC, which met both political and programming needs of Member States and partners, as well as being aligned with the requirements of the policy context and a Team Europe approach.¹²⁰

Logistics activities are usually designed and tailored to the needs of specific stakeholders. The analysis of DG ECHO's activities reveals that the logistical tools adapted to respond to specific crises is relevant, with documentation.¹²¹ indicating that the direct logistics initiatives supported contributed to fulfilling contextual needs. The design of specific tools such as the EU HAB, the EU HAF or common services under the EHRC was done through a consultation with relevant stakeholders at country and beneficiary level, as well as a considering the results of a context and needs analysis.¹²² Beyond consultations with stakeholders, the selection of logistical interventions is based on a series of factors, including the geographical location, needs and capacities of the partners, and the presence (or lack thereof) of other actors on the ground, including the Logistics Cluster.¹²³ The case studies also confirm that logistics services supported by DG ECHO were often an enabling factor for humanitarian operations: without air services in South Sudan (case study 9) it would never be possible for humanitarian actors to access hard-to-reach areas; in DRC (case study 10) the air services are the only ones allowing rapid and safe access to hard-to-reach areas; in Mali (case study 11), NGOs recognise the logistics support provided by ECHO-supported activities as very important for access; in Afghanistan (case study 13), DG ECHO-supported humanitarian flight operators are considered to be

¹¹⁴ According to the DG ECHO Partners Helpdesk, "Forgotten crises" are defined as severe, protracted humanitarian crisis situations where affected populations are receiving no or insufficient international aid and where there is no political commitment to solve the crisis, due in part to a lack of media interest. Accessible at: <https://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/ngo/financing-decision/dg-echo-strategy>

¹¹⁵ Additional data would need to be gathered about forgotten crises in 2019 and before to be able to make that assessment then.

¹¹⁶ Monitoring data for all activities from HOPE.

¹¹⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Single Form Template*, 2022.

¹¹⁸ ELRHA, *The impacts of COVID-19 on humanitarian needs*; UN SC, "Conflict, Humanitarian Crisis in Ukraine Threatening Future Global Food Security as Prices Rise, Production Capacity Shrinks, Speakers Warn Security Council", 30 March 2022.

¹¹⁹ European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Fenton, G., Hale, S., Lawry-White, S. et al., *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017 – Final report*, Publications Office, 2019, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2795/673639>

¹²⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Team Europe Initiatives*, 2021. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/team-europe-initiatives_en

¹²¹ HIPs, SOPs, Activation Requests, Single Forms, Monitoring Reports and Logframes.

¹²² Evidence from HIPs and Monitoring Reports, and from case studies 9 (South Sudan), 10 (DRC), 15 (Ukraine).

¹²³ Evidence from Single Forms and Activation Requests, Interviews with DG ECHO staff, September 2022.

the only reliable actors in the country; in Ukraine (case study 15) the provision of last mile delivery services overcame market issues for smaller NGOs, while shared services allowed humanitarian partners to free up resources normally allocated to logistics. In the case of aviation services, there is some evidence that the technical assistance provided directly by DG ECHO's aviation experts is both useful and important (see case studies 9 and 10).

Furthermore, the design of these tools and programmes as described in documentation also shows that, in the context of humanitarian aid operations where DG ECHO is more operational in the field, the design process takes either an H2H (humanitarian to humanitarian) approach,¹²⁴ where activities and operations are tailored to the specific needs of their beneficiaries (and in particular humanitarian partners) and, where possible and relevant, a Team Europe Approach.¹²⁵ The latter is particularly evident in the case of EU HAB, and in those instances where humanitarian aid and civil protection actions are coordinated (see case study 14 on Haiti).

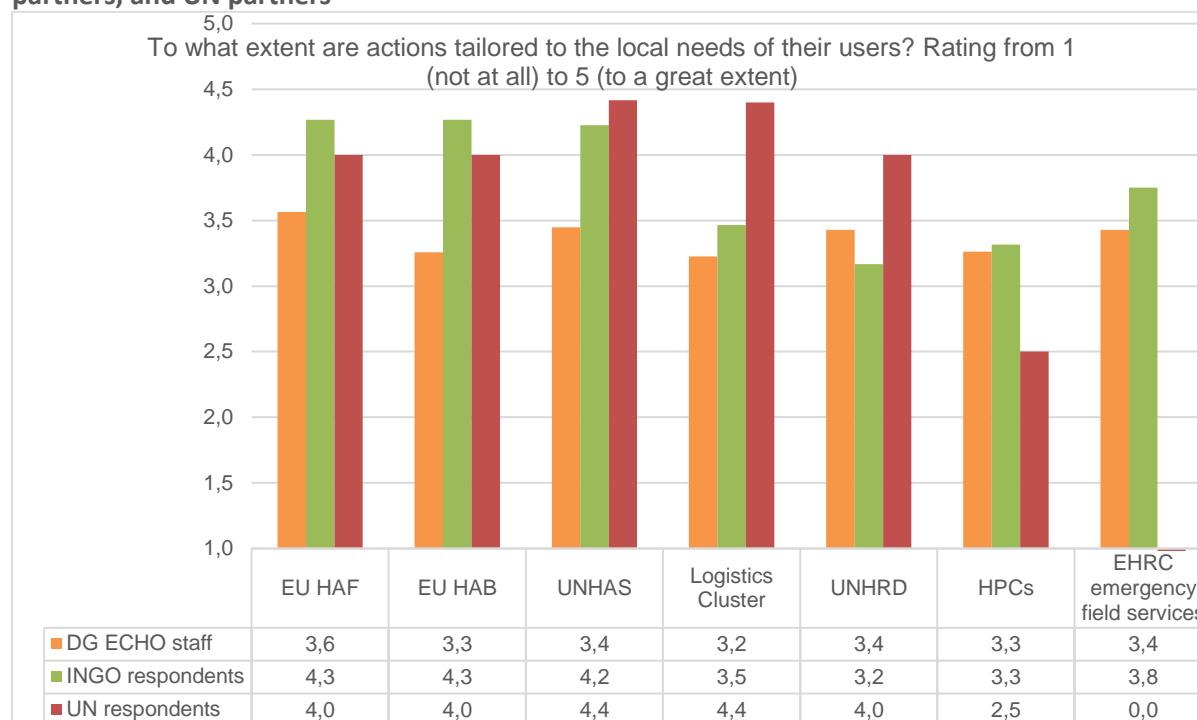
According to stakeholders consulted through surveys, logistics services are mostly aligned to the local needs of their users, but there is room for improvement. Surveyed DG ECHO staff considered services to be very aligned with local needs. Points of improvement include human resources and technical expertise in logistics, as well as coordination and transparent communication on logistics among humanitarian stakeholders. The perception of external partners captured through the survey was much more diverse: while aviation services were assessed as aligned with users' needs, UN and INGO respondents had different perceptions on the services provided by the Logistics Cluster, UN Humanitarian Response Depots (assessed as mostly relevant by UN respondents, less relevant for INGO respondents), and HPCs (more relevant for INGOs than UN respondents). Survey respondents criticised HPCs as lacking documentation and reported that they were associated with delays and increased costs, but also provided suggestions for how HPCs could be improved.

UNHRDs were assessed as often not effective and biased towards the needs of UN agencies (although this perception varied greatly across crises). UN agencies were more likely to consider that UNHRDs were aligned to local needs in comparison with INGO respondents. The graph below summarises through a weighted average the differences in perception among internal DG ECHO staff and the two main groups of stakeholders participating in the survey.

¹²⁴ Internal documentation, DG ECHO, 2022.

¹²⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, *DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy*. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

Figure 5.1. Perception of relevance of logistics services supported by DG ECHO among staff, INGO partners, and UN partners



Source: Survey. Note: The 1-5 options included in the questionnaire's Likert Scale are not integers, but categorical. For this reason, a weighted average is not the proper way to analyse answers to this type of questions. Here, they are presented as a mere indication and should be treated with caution.

This finding is also verified through interviews with INGO and DG ECHO stakeholders, that note that there can sometimes be barriers to access for smaller NGOs to the Logistics Cluster and the common services offered, often due to the larger scale of operations. Access to this type of services varies across crises (see for instance case study 12 on shared logistics services in Mali and case study 15 on Ukraine and Moldova). To a smaller extent, the homogenization of air services with the operation of EU HAF, to align them with UNHAS procedures as described in case study 10 in DRC was accompanied by the perception of higher costs for end users and less control from DG ECHO on flight destinations. This perception seems to be unfounded, as the operations of the new system (in place since of April 2023) did not correspond to a change in destination selected.

Response to the previous evaluation

The previous evaluation provides two sets of strategic recommendations, the first relating to DG ECHO partnership and project systems, and civil protection, and the second to potential actions by DG ECHO to help strengthen the global and local humanitarian logistics sector. The second set of recommendations was intended to be a series from which DG ECHO would select priority elements.

Development of a DG ECHO Humanitarian Logistics Policy (Recommendation 1). Developed throughout the evaluation period and finally published in 2022,¹²⁶ the HLP directly aligns with the first recommendation of the previous evaluation and helps provide clarity on DG ECHO's approach to logistics, the level of ambition for engagement in humanitarian logistics, what DG ECHO requires of partners, and how DG ECHO intends to contribute to the strengthening of logistics systems across the humanitarian sector. The HLP also underlines that logistics are a priority for humanitarian

¹²⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, *DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy*. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

interventions as the “backbone of every project’s design”¹²⁷ and that the success of humanitarian operations are dependent on logistics.

As such and in alignment with the previous evaluation’s recommendations,¹²⁸ the HLP is designed as a standalone document, which can be used by Member States and partners to understand the current state of humanitarian logistics sector, gaps, and needs, as well as concrete examples and solutions of current interventions by partners that contribute to increase the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and environmentally friendliness of humanitarian logistics.

Strengthen EU Members States’ contributions to Humanitarian Aid (Recommendation 2). According to the management response developed by DG ECHO’s A.2 Unit, DG ECHO focused on coordination with the Global Logistics Cluster to support overall coordination with Member States and other humanitarian actors. DG ECHO also continued to collaborate with the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP).¹²⁹ Regarding the recommendation of considering the coverage of all relevant transport costs provided by UCPM Participating States, in 2020 the Commission decided to increase the co-financing rate to 75% and 100% depending on the circumstances (see section 4.3) for further details), however, it is not clear if this was in response to the evaluation.

Reinforce the HPC network and application of the HPC Charter (Recommendation 3). In the HLP DG ECHO recognises the role of the HPC network and the benefits that they can have in creating efficiencies of scale by providing common resources. The HPCs are supposed to provide access for humanitarian partners to high quality products, with good value for money, and bypass complicated procurement procedures. While DG ECHO has maintained a register of suitably qualified HPCs,¹³⁰ certification has not happened in the last few years, and as mentioned the perception of end users (NGOs) is not necessarily positive (see Figure 5.1). A few years from their creation, partners seem to procure items locally or through other sources, with some even feeling no need to keep and maintain HPCs, although needs and perceptions differ widely across crises (see Annex 9). Interviews with DG ECHO staff revealed that DG ECHO are considering how to continue working with HPCs in the future.

A quote that summaries the varying relevance of different logistics services is the following from an INGO respondent to the external partners survey:

“HPC are only relevant with ECHO funds and rarely is an emergency single donor funded so HPC don't plan (sic) a big part in a response. EU HAB again only relevant if you import, most agencies do the bulk of procurement in country. Cluster good if activated, not always the case, HRD limited to if you have stock and the costs of import. Global stocking is becoming less and less relevant unless you are a UN agency.”

Improve humanitarian logistics at the country/crisis level (Recommendation 4). While it is hard to generalise about DG ECHO’s role at country level, there is evidence of its contributions to improve humanitarian logistics, including through support to strategic assessment of logistics capacities, either through intervention-related needs assessment, the development of HIPs, and direct support to the Logistics Clusters. The HLP Implementation Plan identifies thematic trainings (for both staff and partners) and dedicated support to geographical units, as well as funding for innovative initiatives.¹³¹

From this perspective, partners responding to the external survey indicated DG ECHO can improve its support by better aligning with needs and implementing the localisation of logistics support. Suggestions from partners include better familiarisation with local logistics context and partners,

¹²⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, *DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy*. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹²⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017: final report*, 2019. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹²⁹ DG ECHO Response to the evaluation of transport and logistics, 14/04/2020

¹³⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Humanitarian Procurement Centres (HPCs)*, n.d. <https://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/ngo/actions-implementation/procurement/humanitarian-procurement-centres-hpcs>

¹³¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Humanitarian Logistics Policy Implementation Plan*, internal document, n.d.

localisation of logistics initiatives and engagement with local markets, and continuous support to allow access to remote and hard-to-reach areas.

Since 2022, DG ECHO also facilitated trainings on the HLP to professionalise humanitarian partners in logistics, including by delivering e-learning and virtual classroom training, pilot initiatives for joint approaches and procurement. There is evidence that DG ECHO has acted as a coordination actor to facilitate importation of goods and solve transborder challenges (see case studies 9 and 11) and the LOGIS and LOGIS+ networks are also designed to improve collaboration and cooperation within humanitarian delivery..¹³²

Relevance of the new Humanitarian Logistics Policy and instruments such as EHRC and LOGIS and LOGIS+ networks

As the policy and these instruments are relatively new, it is hard to provide an assessment at the time of writing. However, some early signs emerge from the body of evidence collected.

The Humanitarian Logistics Policy can be considered as a guiding policy in which “DG ECHO sets out its vision for a paradigm change in humanitarian logistics, to help all humanitarian actors meet the objective of a more efficient, effective, and greener delivery of humanitarian aid”..¹³³ As it was launched in 2022, many of the concepts it introduces still need to be applied and monitored.

The HLP underlines that logistics are a priority for humanitarian interventions and integral to the success of humanitarian operations. In alignment with the Grand Bargain..¹³⁴ and the Sustainable Development Goals..¹³⁵ the objectives of the HLP are to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of humanitarian logistics, for humanitarian partners to have better access to the most vulnerable, save on costs and resources whilst improving delivery time, even in emergencies, and improve the environmental impact of humanitarian aid delivery. In this respect, the policy recognises the complexity of humanitarian supply chains and sets the organisation to strengthen capacity and better integrate logistics in all EU-funded humanitarian projects..¹³⁶

The Humanitarian Logistics Policy responds to many of the logistical needs of humanitarian contexts, and the current humanitarian aid funding gap..¹³⁷ for which increased efficiency and effectiveness in the humanitarian supply chain could play a significant role. The HLP is also explicitly aligned to existing policies, including EU policies (humanitarian and not) and international initiatives (including the Grand Bargain, Agenda 2030, and the Paris Agreement)..¹³⁸ It takes into account the existing challenges of the humanitarian logistics sector, including specific barriers to logistical coordination and resource pooling, and other issues such as environmental challenges related to logistics. The Operational Guidance for Partners..¹³⁹ published in January 2023 to support the HLP also specifically refers to existing policies and documentation, such as DG ECHO's own environmental policy and guidelines..¹⁴⁰ and the triple

¹³² LOGIS and LOGIS+ membership lists / logistics focal points (5 May 2022)

¹³³ European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy, page 7, January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹³⁴ IASC, The Grand Bargain – Webpage, 2022. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/about-the-grand-bargain>

¹³⁵ United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), n.d. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

¹³⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹³⁷ According to the HLP, humanitarian aid operations funding needs increase at a faster rate than humanitarian aid funding does. As a result, there is a need to increase efficiency and cost-efficiency whilst continuing to advocate for more funding to meet the gaping needs of vulnerable populations around the world.

¹³⁸ This is further elaborated in the desk research report for this evaluation. (see Annex 8).

¹³⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, HLP Operational Guidance for Partners, 2023. <https://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/download/referencedocumentfile/285>

¹⁴⁰ Including DG ECHO's Guidance on the operationalisation of the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations, 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/document/download/c6b17ea3-807c-4c5f-ad86-484477c78173_en, but also the Compendium of good practices for a greener humanitarian response (https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/climate-change-and-environment_en#downloads), and the WREC - Environmental Sustainability in Humanitarian Logistics project webpage (<https://logcluster.org/wrec/green-logistics>)

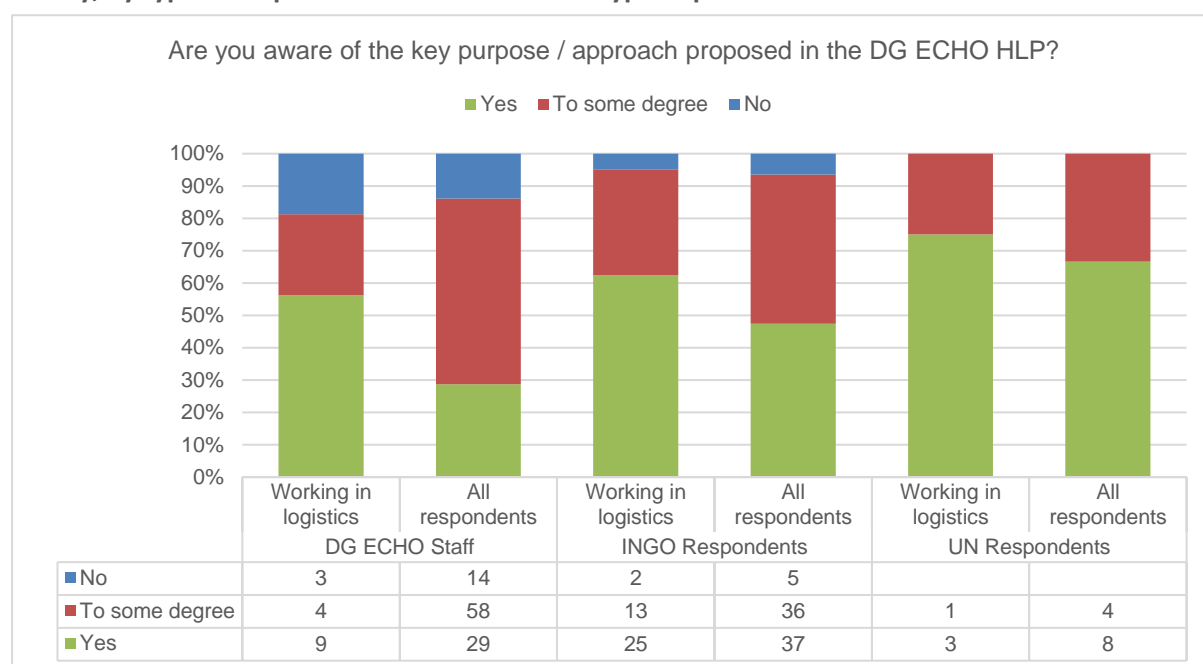
humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach (with reference to disaster preparedness¹⁴¹ and localisation). The evidence collected through case studies, interviews and surveys indicates that due to its very recent approval and limited dissemination so far, the application of the policy has just begun and more work needs to be done to streamline it across the organisation and more broadly. The survey conducted among DG ECHO staff provides some insights about the state of the policy implementation within the Directorate. Among respondents, 25% of civil protection and 32% of humanitarian aid respondents reported that they were aware of the HLP. About 4 in 7 respondents (57%) in both groups stated to know of it only to a certain degree. Only 27% of humanitarian staff and 16% of civil protection staff declared to have been involved or to have used the HLP, and only about a half of respondents (51% of humanitarian and 48% of civil protection) were sure about applying it in the future. It should be noted that this survey was conducted in Q4 of 2022 and awareness will most likely have improved by the time of writing this report.

There is more nuanced evidence on the perception of the HLP's relevance by DG ECHO's partners. The results of the online survey involving external humanitarian partners indicate that a considerable portion of humanitarian actors (51% of all respondents, and 57% of respondents operating at global level) were aware of the HLP, although they less frequently declared to know its purpose and approach (25% of all respondents) or that they will apply it to their work (30% of all respondents). When asked to provide optional comments, some respondents (and especially UN respondents) indicated to perceive DG ECHO's policies and regulations as too dispersive (too many guidelines at the same time) and confusing for partners. Among partners responding to the survey, while about half (51%) declared to be aware of the HLP, only a third (33%) think that they will apply it to their work. When asked for suggestions on how to better disseminate it, they frequently mentioned capacity building, practical demonstrations, and closer integration with existing procedures (including by finding common grounds with the policies of UN Agencies).

It is surprising to note that external partners declared to be aware of the policy content more frequently than DG ECHO staff (47% of INGO and 67% of UN respondents, against just 29% of DG ECHO staff). However, as shown in the figure below, this difference decreased substantially (but did not disappear) when considering only respondents who worked in logistics (with 63% of INGO and 75% of UN respondents declaring to be aware, against 56% of DG ECHO staff).

¹⁴¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Disaster Preparedness Note, 2022. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/dg_echo_guidance_note_-_disaster_preparedness_en.pdf

Figure 5.2. Self-declared awareness of key purposes and approach of HLP among respondents to survey, by type of respondent and self-declared type of profession



Source: Survey

When asked to provide suggestions on how to improve the dissemination of the HLP, external partners provided concrete indications, but also partial or complete disagreements with its necessity. Among the most common suggestions, partners suggested to strengthen capacity building, especially online and by showcasing concrete examples (possibly through a compendium of best practices), but also by advocating its integration (or finding complementarities) with existing policies of other donors, (including UN Agencies), leveraging existing partnerships and logistic networks to ensure buy-in. In the words of an INGO respondent:

(the HLP)... “needs maybe to be explained even more clearly and loudly as a paradigm shift that DG ECHO would impose partners to take into account environmental impact, acknowledging by the same as an important point that purchase costs (at least at short time) could be higher if it makes a substantial difference in environmental impact. I would also recommend the same pushy way for the subject of mutualization. I would recommend ECHO to push its partners including the RLH to enhance mutualized supply chain trainings for logistics and programs staff as it seems one of the necessary step to enable mutualization and further significant cost savings.”

As for the negative feedback, some respondents felt that the policy was too strategic and abstract, and just added to already heavy administrative burdens and did not fit with heterogeneous donor requirements and procedures, some respondents directly criticised the contents of the policy, mentioning replacement of supply structures, omission of the do no harm principle, and excessive focus on financial cost reduction rather than sustainable improvement. These comments are exemplified by a comment from a senior INGO respondent:

“There is a risk that DG ECHO is becoming too operational with this policy, and is trying to define best practice, which is not necessarily suited to different contexts or the localisation agenda and may not be the best use of DG ECHO’s time and sector funds. If DG ECHO does want to push this policy forward, then they need to get buying from other donors first - harmonise policies on procurement, medical quality/procurement, supplier prequalification first, and then bring a harmonised approach to the table to be discussed within the lens of localisation of procurement, market resilience, local distributor/manufacturer capacity

development, local production quality and capacity, open source global supplier database, etc.). As a donor, DG ECHO can make a big impact in the localisation agenda - it is not clear if this policy is the right way to do that."

These quotes should be considered in light of a context where the HLP is still a relatively new policy. In addition, the survey was conducted before the operational guidelines had been completed and further work on implementing the policy had proceeded.

There is in fact some evidence that DG ECHO is moving to translate the commitments in the policy into practice. An implementation plan is in progress, which include a series of internal and external activities to disseminate and apply the policy.¹⁴² At the moment of writing, DG ECHO internally delivered information sessions for management, provided trainings for both HQ and field staff (approximately 50 participants), started a dedicated support dialogue with a sample of geographic units, and liaised with the B2 unit to improve the alignment between the HLP and greening strategy in the operational guidance.

Externally, it provided training for partners (177 participants) and an operational guidance to the policy was published in January 2023, targeting humanitarian partners.¹⁴³ DG ECHO has also engaged bilateral donors in targeted meetings, and participated in key humanitarian fora. In 2023, DG ECHO also foresees the development of KPIs to monitor the delivery of this implementation plan. Still for 2023, there is a specific HIP for the Logistics Policy with a value of 7 million EUR (2 million for global strategic initiatives, 5 million for regional and country specific projects) and 1 million under the Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) HIP for innovative technological approaches to logistics).¹⁴⁴

The evaluation included a question as to whether DG ECHO is now implementing a more strategic approach to logistics more broadly. Both interviews and documentation indicate that until recently DG ECHO did not push for logistics to be considered in all of its operations. This has changed with the development and publication of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy.¹⁴⁵ Among other key messages, the policy recognises the complexity of humanitarian supply chains and the connection between humanitarian logistics and disaster preparedness.

This strategic change is also evidenced by the definition of humanitarian logistics in the HLP, the definition of activities in HIPs and SOPs, and examples of field operations such as the EHRC, and pilots on joint logistics services. The Single Form used to design, monitor, and appraise interventions includes a more detailed section on logistics and some pilot initiatives (see case studies 11 and 12) are spearheading joint approaches to procurement and logistical services. Often, logistics needs are not only limited to transportation but also include the provision of warehousing (including specific warehousing), and coordination.¹⁴⁶ DG ECHO's efforts in humanitarian advocacy to facilitate logistics access (for example by supporting border control)¹⁴⁷ also indicate that logistics is not limited to transport.

Even so, so far there is still no evidence of a systematic application of the HLP in humanitarian settings. In the initial phase of the HLP implementation plan, DG ECHO expects partners to apply the policy but does not formally bind them to do so in the design of new interventions. Therefore, while a strategy is defined and operational guidelines are being disseminated, the shift has yet to broadly translate into practice, be it in grants management, monitoring or technical support. For example, while the Single

¹⁴² European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Humanitarian Logistics Policy Implementation Plan, July 2022.

¹⁴³ European Commission, DG ECHO, HLP Operational Guidance for Partners, 2023. <https://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/download/referencedocumentfile/285>

¹⁴⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, Humanitarian Implementation Plan – Logistics Policy, 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/hip2023/echo_hlp_bud_2023_91000_v1.pdf; European Commission, DG ECHO, Humanitarian Implementation Plan – Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC), 2023.

https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/hip2023/echo_erc_bud_2023_91000_v1.pdf

¹⁴⁵ Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September 2022; European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy, January 2022.

https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹⁴⁶ Evidence from Activation Requests and Single Forms describing activities funded under EHRC, work with RLH and other NGOs.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with DG ECHO staff, SOPs for EU HAB, EU HAF and EHRC.

Form does include improved references to logistics,¹⁴⁸ DG ECHO has not put in place mechanisms to verify logistics procedures of DG ECHO partners by referring them to the HLP, ensuring compliance with principles and preferred approaches. DG ECHO's staff themselves seem to indicate that their knowledge of how to practically apply the policy still requires considerable improvement, requesting examples of good practices and capacity building through the survey. The perception from partners seems to be similar, with external survey respondents requesting continuation of capacity building initiatives and more clarity on the procedures to follow to be aligned with the new policy.

The EU HAB and newly developed humanitarian logistics solutions (EHRC, and LOGIS/LOGIS+ networks) are aligned with the HLP approach and can be assessed as relevant to the policy objectives, as well as to the overall needs of both their users and the humanitarian sector. They also contribute to emphasising the need for additional funding to humanitarian aid interventions, which is highlighted as a key need by the HLP. The paragraphs below detail their relevance activity by activity.

The Humanitarian Air Bridge (EU HAB) is found to have a relevant operating mode and objective that fills a gap in needs. Originally designed for an operation in Mali in 2020, this form of air service¹⁴⁹ was retained to continue providing strong air support to operations around the world, providing access to remote areas and common services and to fill a need for those smaller NGOs that might not have access to the transport provided by the Logistics Cluster or UNHAS, either because of lack of capacity or due to an inability to join the cluster. The partner chosen to operate the EU HAB is also likely to be relevant, reflecting an alignment with a Team Europe approach whilst centring on the needs of beneficiaries, i.e., humanitarian aid workers. As such, the cargo operations of the EU HAB is partly led by a consortium of nine NGOs operating under the name Réseau Logistique Humanitaire, now renamed Hulo (RLH/Hulo).¹⁵⁰ This consortium, led by Solidarités Internationales (SI) with the support of Action Contre La Faim (ACF), has identified a gap in NGO's ability to access common transportation services and/or to co-fund them to reach high-needs yet hard-to-access areas, such as the Central African Republic (CAR), Haiti, CAR and DRC in 2020,¹⁵¹ Mali and Burundi in 2021,¹⁵² Afghanistan in 2022 and 2023 (see case study 13). DG ECHO, along with its transport broker Maersk/Damco,¹⁵³ provides support to NGO partners of the network and beyond to access these at-the-time hard-to-reach locations,¹⁵⁴ through the establishment of Member State led operations (including from Portugal, Belgium, Italy and more).¹⁵⁵ In Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic, EU HAB activities (and the support provided by RLH in their preparation and implementation) responded to identified sectorial needs and to the priorities of humanitarian actors. In Afghanistan (as evidenced in case study 13), the international cargo transport provided by EU HAB was relevant for humanitarian actors, and flexible enough to adapt to the events of 2022 (including earthquake, drought, floods, and the pandemic).

The support provided to RLH/Hulo is also relevant to HLP recommendations beyond the simple activation of the EU HAB. DG ECHO also supports RLH/Hulo to develop a network of humanitarian partners and promote collaborative resource pooling along the logistics supply chain.¹⁵⁶ By promoting an inclusive coordination governance mechanism, creating common digital tools for procurement, and

¹⁴⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Single Form 2021 - What has changed, 2021. <https://2014-2020.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/download/referencedocumentfile/147>

¹⁴⁹ Please note that other air services existed prior to the pandemic, and that the EU HAB is not the only air service that is offered by DG ECHO.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with DG ECHO staff members, September 2022; RLH (2021) EU HAB Report Update – 2020.

¹⁵¹ Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September 2022.

¹⁵² RLH Report Updates for 2020, 2021, 2022; Activation Requests for CAR, Mali, Burundi Haiti and DRC.

¹⁵³ DG ECHO (2021) European Air Bridge Standard Operating Procedure.

¹⁵⁴ This was the case during COVID-19.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with DG ECHO staff member; European Commission, DG ECHO, *Delivering on the Coronavirus Global Response – An EU Humanitarian Air Bridge*, 2021; Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September 2022.

¹⁵⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, *HIP and Single Form for agreement ECHO/ERC/BUD/2020/91004 - Enhancing and strengthening collaborative approach and resources pooling of Humanitarian Supply chain and operational Logistics*, Solidarités Internationales, 31 February 2022.

testing innovative resource-sharing activities, the initiative should be considered a pilot application of the HLP concepts. It is examined in detail under case study 12.

The European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC) also answers a need for greater coordination in humanitarian crises. By design, it explicitly aims to fill the gaps along the logistics supply chain. One of the key benefits of the EHRC is its ability to coordinate and streamline humanitarian responses. By bringing together different organisations and agencies, the EHRC can help to reduce duplication of efforts and ensure that resources are used more efficiently, helping to reduce costs and improve the effectiveness of humanitarian logistics. Aligned with the needs identified by the previous evaluation, this new emergency mechanism meets the HLP's commitments for more coordination in logistics, the use of a wider definition of logistics and the provision of more timely and efficient common services, by bringing together the EU HAB, EU HAF, the EU Stockpile Services as well as defining a new series of services for more niche and specific logistics and health expertise, in collaboration with the ECDC.¹⁵⁷ The provision of common services is very likely to increase the chance of cost-effective as well as more environmentally friendly operations, at least in terms of common transportation and use of resources (warehousing space). This final and new set of services is not only aligned with the professionalisation strategy of DG ECHO as described in the HLP, but it also increases the relevance of the design of the intervention, and thereby is most probably more likely to contribute to effective humanitarian logistics. The evaluation assessed the relevance of the EHRC in the context of Ukraine (see case study 15) in detail and found that its services strongly aligned with the perceived needs and priorities of local humanitarian actors, accelerating responses in the areas of Kyiv and Kharkiv at crucial moments of the war.

LOGIS and LOGIS+ groups - Although informal and mostly organised on an ad-hoc basis, these internal DG ECHO fora for discussion of logistics related to matters at field and HQ level respectively, respond to feedback from both DG ECHO staff and partners that there is a need for better technical logistical skills within DG ECHO and understanding of strategic opportunities, particularly regarding the appraisal of proposals and the monitoring of ongoing interventions. In this sense the LOGIS and LOGIS+ networks are designed to bring closer attention to logistics among DG ECHO staff and can function as a common space to share knowledge and good practices. Meetings take place approximately every two months and focus on specific areas of discussions on an ad-hoc and as needed basis. The survey deployed among DG ECHO staff provides some indication of the perception of the networks: while only 5% of all respondents declared to be involved in them in any way, respondents considered them relevant for DG ECHO's strategic objectives, with 60% considering that they can contribute to more effective and efficient humanitarian logistics within DG ECHO interventions.

Regarding environmental sustainability, the HLP explicitly considers the need to reduce both the carbon footprint and the environmental impact of logistics and identifies some of the environmental challenges faced by the humanitarian sector. This means that there is a potential contribution of the policy to the European Green Deal, the EU's new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use.¹⁵⁸ The principles of the European Green Deal are also expected to be translated into the EU's external action policies.

After commissioning the Scoping Review of the Environmental Footprint of Humanitarian Assistance,¹⁵⁹ DG ECHO developed an approach to reduce the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid,¹⁶⁰ articulated in three types of initiatives: 1. Policies and procedures (including

¹⁵⁷ European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC), Update to HIP for ECHO/WWD/BUD/2022/01000, May 2022.

¹⁵⁸ European Commission, Priorities 2019-2024: A European Green Deal, 2019. https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

¹⁵⁹ Brangeon, S., Crowley, F., Report on Environmental Footprint of humanitarian assistance for DG ECHO, 2020. <https://www.urd.org/en/publication/report-on-environmental-footprint-of-humanitarian-assistance-for-dg-echo-2020/>

¹⁶⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO's approach to reducing the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid, n.d. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/climate-change-and-environment/dg-echos-approach-reducing-environmental-footprint-humanitarian-aid_en

changes to framework partnership agreement, Single Forms, HIPs and other guidelines), 2. requirements for partners for reducing their environmental footprint, and 3. Adopting more environmentally-friendly processes for its HQ and field offices (including limiting travel whenever not necessary). In March 2022, DG ECHO published a guidance document to orient partners, with the expectation to have mandatory requirements by 2023.¹⁶¹ These are referenced in the HLP.

Evidence about the application of sustainability guidelines is diverse, indicating varying levels of both ambition and attention regarding environmental impacts across crises. Among humanitarian actors, the conception of what greening of logistics itself means is not always clear, with some limiting the concept to transport rather than considering the whole supply chain, and others already adopting and deploying advanced internal environmental and sustainability policies that in many ways surpass DG ECHO's strategic lines.¹⁶² Within the European Commission itself, other Directorates also follow the Green Public Procurement guidelines.¹⁶³ In this sense, DG ECHO is the only donor that has such detailed, project-level requirements.

Asked about how supported initiatives contribute to more environmentally friendly humanitarian logistics, DG ECHO staff responding to the survey assessed the Humanitarian Logistic Policy (79% of civil protection and 72% of humanitarian respondents chose either option 4 or 5) as particularly positive, innovative and joint approaches (84% civil protection, 85% humanitarian), more training (56% and 57%), and more information from partners (68% and 57%).

Table 5.1. In your opinion, to what extent can the following new initiatives contribute to more environmentally friendly humanitarian logistics? Please rate from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a great extent)

Logistics Service	Civil protection			Humanitarian aid		
	Mean	Mode	N	Mean	Mode	N
19.1. Humanitarian Logistics Policy	4,1	5	33	4,0	4	75
19.2. European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC)	3,6	3	29	3,5	3	63
19.3. LOGIS and LOGIS+ networks	3,6	5	20	3,4	4	40
19.4. Innovative and joint approaches to humanitarian logistics (e.g. supporting joint procurement, or shared transport and	4,3	5	32	4,3	5	72
19.5. More training aimed at HQ level on how to identify good logistics practice and apply this to your work	3,6	5	32	3,5	4	69
19.6. Request more information from partners on their logistics planning, e.g. more specific information on supply chain	3,9	5	34	3,5	4	74

At the same time, interviews with both DG ECHO staff and external partners indicate that the HLP and its implementation could be more ambitious both in setting standards and in providing practical

¹⁶¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance on the operationalization of the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations, 2022. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/f6d2240b-2d94-11ed-975d-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>


¹⁶² See for example UNHCR Operational Strategy For Climate Resilience And Environmental Sustainability 2022-2025, USAID Climate Strategy 2022-2030, or Save the Children's Supply Chain Sustainability Strategy

¹⁶³ See European Commission, Green Public Procurement, n.d. https://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm

guidance to partners to operationalise them, for example by linking its support to logistics to the application of existing good practices.

It is important to note that this transition often has a cost for partners. Given the diversity or realities in its operations, supporting a one fit-for-all strategy has proven complicated. As such, the guidance and support provided by DG ECHO needs to consider the capacities of its partners and promote sustainability without stifling effectiveness to ensure their involvement, thereby balancing what will move the sector forward and what is possible to implement. In this line, DG ECHO supports initiatives such as the mentioned WREC project, led by the Global Logistics Cluster, which aims to reduce and manage the harmful consequences of humanitarian logistics supply chain by raising awareness.¹⁶⁴

5.1.3. Logistics in the UCPM



The UCPM logistics portfolio has been designed and tailored to the needs of Member States, Participating States, and other users. The set-up of UCPM means that there are no explicit needs assessments carried out by DG ECHO for every crisis but rather the onus lies with the Member State, third country or international organisation requesting assistance to specify what assistance they need, and to accept or decline the offers provided by the Member States and Participating States. Inside the EU, Member States have a high capability to conduct these needs assessments, as illustrated in case studies four and five on forest fires in Sweden (case study 4) and Greece (case study 5). Outside the EU, DG ECHO interviewees reported that the ERCC and EUCP team were often able to tap into the knowledge of the UN family and other humanitarian actors (e.g. the Red Cross) to form an independent understanding of needs on the ground, and to be able to propose measures to the requesting country based on this assessment and knowledge of the UCPM capabilities. The final decision to accept these proposals, nonetheless, rests with the requesting country.

The internal survey corroborates that the UCPM is well-perceived by its users. 65% of DG ECHO respondents (n=92) state that the UCPM actions are strongly tailored to local needs of users.¹⁶⁵

Logistics support provided via the UCPM has demonstrated flexibility by responding to unprecedented, complex crises and the consequent changes in needs and priorities. This is evident during the evaluation period with the enlargement of the UCPM budget to cover the increase in demand, the inclusion of new activities such as RescEU, the COVID-19 repatriation/consular services, and the logistics hubs, and the lessons learned process.¹⁶⁶ that plans for future needs. A concrete example of the lessons learned process is the use of preliminary lessons and best practices identified during the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic to revise the UCPM legislation, which entered into force in May 2021. This gave the Commission additional elements of initiative and a higher autonomy in certain cases, adjusted the collective planning for large-scale and cross-boundary emergencies and enhanced the budgetary flexibility to rapidly react and adjust to major crises.¹⁶⁷

RescEU was borne out of a recognition that there was a need for an additional set of resources for when voluntary national contributions or pre-committed European Civil Protection Pool capacities were not adequate to meet a request for assistance.¹⁶⁸ Although this system had been sufficient previously, DG ECHO noted that the increased frequency of extreme weather conditions and new emerging threats had stretched the ability of Member States to help each other based on their existing capacities, especially when several Member States face the same type of disaster simultaneously.¹⁶⁹ The RescEU resources themselves reflect this flexibility and can be seen to have adapted to several

¹⁶⁴ Logistics Cluster, The WREC Project – Environmental sustainability in humanitarian logistics, 2021. <https://logcluster.org/blog/wrec-project>

¹⁶⁵ Choosing value 4 or 5 on the scale of 1 to 5.

¹⁶⁶ The UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme is established by the Decision 1313/2013 as amended by (EU) Decision 2019/420 (article 13.d). For more information see:

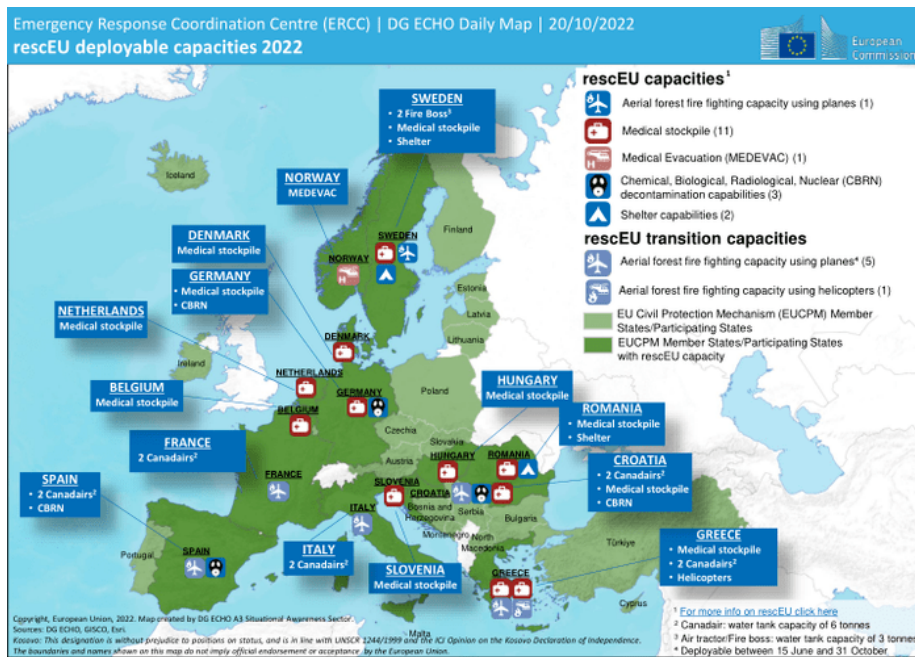
¹⁶⁷ European Commission, Civil Protection – Performance, n.d. https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/programme-performance-overview/civil-protection-performance_en

¹⁶⁸ European Commission, Forest fires: Commission adds planes to RescEU fleet to prepare for summer, Brussels, 2020.

¹⁶⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, RescEU Factsheet, 2022. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/RescEU_en

main drivers: the increasing ferocity of European forest fire season and the need for a fleet of firefighting planes and helicopters, the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for a stockpile of medical items and field hospitals that can respond to health emergencies, and Russia's war against Ukraine and the potential need for the ability to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incidents.

Figure 5.3. Overview of RescEU deployable capacities 2022

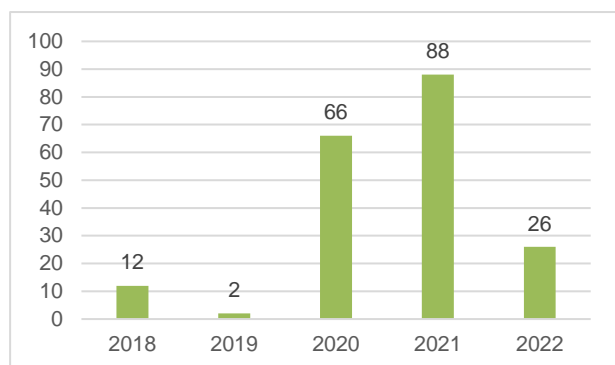


Source: DG ECHO

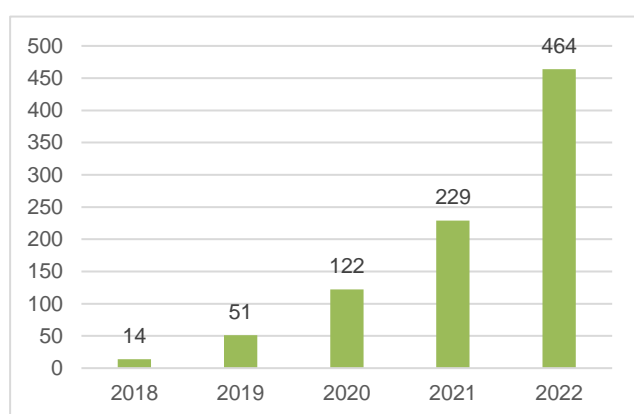
DG ECHO's response to Russia's war against Ukraine also presents a myriad of examples in this regard. For example, the establishment of the UCPM logistics hubs in Poland, Romania, and Slovakia¹⁷⁰ to pool Member State and Participating States assistance in shared warehouse prior to onward transport to Ukraine via simplified border procedures is an innovation specific to the particular logistics circumstances of this crisis. Namely that there is a war occurring on the border of four EU Member States and that an unprecedented amount of assistance was and is being sent through the Mechanism. The proximity to the EU means that it is relatively easy for Member States and Participating States to send assistance to the edge of the crisis, in terms of viable road transport throughout the EU and the straightforward customs procedures within the EU. However, the amount of the assistance combined with the need to deliver the assistance outside of the EU created significant bottlenecks, especially in Poland (see Annex 10.15: Case study 15: Humanitarian aid/UCPM – Ukraine response 2022). There is strong evidence from the desk research, interviews, and case study that the UCPM financed logistics hubs provided an effective solution to this issue and have been integral to responding to the crisis. Another example highlighted by interviewees is the creation of partnerships with the private sector and possibility to use the UCPM to transport their donations (for example energy transformers) for the Ukraine response 2022.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, Ukraine Factsheet, 2023. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/europe/ukraine_en

¹⁷¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Channelling aid donations to Ukrainians, 2023.

Figure 5.4. Number of UCPM transport grant requests by year, inside the EU

Source: Evaluator's analysis based on DG ECHO data

Figure 5.5. Number of UCPM transport grant requests by year, outside the EU

Source: Evaluator's analysis based on DG ECHO data

There is high demand for UCPM logistics and coordination support. As can be seen from the graphs above, there has been a general increase in demand for UCPM logistics and coordination support over the past five years. For emergencies inside the EU, the number of grant applications wax and wane each year but there is general upwards trend. The number of applications for co-financing in 2022 still exceed the numbers for 2018 and 2019 even if they are not at the 2020 and 2021 levels during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. For emergencies outside the EU there is a direct linear progression from 2018 to 2022. Although this trend can be attributed in part to the occurrence of unprecedented, large-scale emergencies (COVID-19 and Russia's war against Ukraine) during the period, it suggests that Member States and Participating States continue to find UCPM logistics and coordination support relevant and indeed, favour the Mechanism as a tool to respond to crises.

Demand nevertheless varies among Member States and Participating States. Desk research and interviews suggest several reasons for the variation in demand, including: 1) size of Member States and Participating States populations (during the COVID-19 response it follows that Member States and Participating States with larger populations generally had more citizens to repatriate. 2) Awareness of the Civil Protection Mechanism. For example, one interviewee suggested that Germany's high demand for logistics support during the COVID-19 pandemic in comparison to other states, was due simply to their awareness of the Mechanism. Whilst another stakeholder reported that the opposite was true for different Member State – they had less awareness of the services available under the UCPM and therefore did not apply for assistance. 3) For emergencies outside the EU, demand followed states general tendency to provide overseas development assistance, existing relationships and country presence, and the tendency to provide and participate in international and humanitarian development assistance. For example, regardless of a specific crisis, Italy already provides assistance to Mozambique

through a strong bilateral relationship and development cooperation.¹⁷², and accordingly also sought to provide assistance to Mozambique via the UCPM. 4) For emergencies inside the EU, demand for UCPM services may be moderated by other avenues of cooperation. In the case of the Swedish forest fires, for example, there is a Nordic cooperation that takes precedence over the UCPM and consequently Norway and Finland provided support through that mechanism instead.¹⁷³ 5) Political will to respond to the crises occurring during the timeframe of the evaluation.

Evidence suggests that the transport and logistics coordination support was relevant, particularly for emergencies outside of the EU, and for Member States, Participating States, with a less extensive diplomatic presence overseas. For instance, according to the Member States and Participating States interviewed for case study 6 regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, the assistance was relevant to their needs. The deployment of ERCC Liaison Officers to France, Finland, Germany and Slovakia were deemed relevant in terms of providing extra coordination support and supporting with establishing a system and procedures for the crisis. The ERCC in Brussels assisted with bilateral and multilateral coordination and organising regular inter-agency meetings and briefings on the crisis, which was also viewed as relevant by interviewees.



5.1.4. The ESI Mobility Package

The design of the ESI MP met generally the needs of the Member States, although had some weaknesses impacting the relevance of MP support to the Member States during the pandemic. Findings provide evidence for each judgement criteria related to relevance. The level of evidence across all judgment criteria varies.

First, there is clear alignment between ECHO's logistics activities since 2018 and the needs which arose during the evaluation period. The Mobility Package was launched in 2020 specifically as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating an alignment between ECHO's logistics activities and the crisis. The grey literature shows that the ESI and the Mobility Package under the ESI were designed as a needs-based emergency instrument with the aim to rapidly respond to human-induced disasters and disasters related to natural events of exceptional scale with far-reaching humanitarian implications, to support EU Member States in addressing such emergencies. The needs-based nature of the ESI is highlighted in article 3 of Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020, an amendment of Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 addressing the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁷⁴ Further, this statement is supported by the Commission Decision of 24/4/2020 on the financing of Emergency Support under Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 that was published four years later, in 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting that "due to the unprecedented nature and rapid development of the COVID-19 crisis, it is necessary to implement the actions of the Emergency Support Instrument rapidly and to adapt them and their budget constantly to the needs that will arise throughout all its phases."¹⁷⁵ Finally, an eligibility condition for support under the Mobility Package was that operations "must be directly related to the response to the COVID-19 emergency."¹⁷⁶ ¹⁷⁷ ¹⁷⁸ The survey with DG ECHO staff also indicated the relevance of the ESI MP due to its alignment with DG ECHO's strategic objectives in the area of civil protection.

¹⁷² OpenAid Italia, *Mozambique – South of Sahara*, n.d.

¹⁷³ Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, *Nordred – Cooperation between rescue services*, 2020. <https://www.msb.se/en/about-msb/international-co-operation/nordic-co-operations/nordred---cooperation-between-emergency-services/>

¹⁷⁴ Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020 activating the emergency support under Regulation (EU) 2016/369, and amending its provisions taking into account the COVID-19 outbreak.

¹⁷⁵ Commission Decision of 24.4.2020 on the financing of Emergency Support under Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 (C(2020) 2794 final).

¹⁷⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, June 2020.

¹⁷⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2, June 2021.

¹⁷⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4 (November 2021) – call 3, November 2021.

The MP fit well into the financial needs of the Member States. Since the majority of Member States (21 of 28 Member States)¹⁷⁹ applied for ESI MP funding, there is evidence of appropriate demand for the logistics support provided. Generally, stakeholder interviews demonstrated that the ESI MP fit well into the financial needs of the Member States, providing additional funding for necessary operations for civil protection and to obtain medical items such as personal protective equipment. While some Member States, such as Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Germany, reported that the amount of funding did not cover the entirety of their budgetary needs for their logistics operations during the crisis, Belgium highlighted that the funding was provided for an important cause during difficult times in which any support was appreciated.

There is evidence of changes to logistics activities in response to changing needs and priorities. The support that each of the three calls under the ESI MP provided evolved slightly over time, adapting to emerging needs brought about by the COVID-19 crisis. For each of these three calls, guidance notes were provided to support Member States to respond to the call and apply for grants or the use of the Commission's transport broker. DG ECHO also conducted a survey with Member States in early 2021 to assess the performance and challenges of call 1, which includes recommendations for the future.¹⁸⁰ DG ECHO drew on these lessons learnt and put them into action where sensible, as the analysis demonstrates.¹⁸¹

The objective of the second call from May 2021 was to make sure the COVID-19 response, including the vaccination campaign, would not be negatively impacted by the Suez crisis.¹⁸² It was designed and launched to adapt to the evolving needs of the Member States and additional support was introduced for (1) cargo transport of COVID-19 vaccination-related equipment and COVID-19 therapeutics through the Commission's transport broker to support Member States' vaccination campaigns following the release of COVID-19 vaccines on the market, and (2) transport of non-COVID-19 patients through grant agreements to reduce stress on hospitals and the medical system in EU countries. By contrast, however, it was no longer possible to use the Commission's transport broker for the transfer of patients since the second call.¹⁸³ The transfer of patients is a very delicate operation and, according to DG ECHO, it was judged that Member States were better placed to arrange and manage the transfer of patients than the Commission, as the situation regarding the transport of patients had improved.

There is evidence that DG ECHO consulted with key stakeholders in the design of and investment in the ESI Mobility Package. According to DG ECHO, this took place through weekly meetings with civil protection authorities in the Member States and through the regular EWRS meetings with DG SANTE. An interviewee from Belgium confirmed that they were consulted by DG ECHO about the design of the MP. Notably, this respondent appeared to be more involved in high-level discussions at EU-level about the civil protection instruments, stating that they were previously part of working groups on the UCPM and civil protection.

Regarding the alignment between logistics activities and stakeholders' perception of local and organisational needs and priorities, findings from both the survey and interviews, as well as findings from the survey conducted by DG ECHO in spring 2021, demonstrate that the logistics activities matched Member States' needs to some extent.¹⁸⁴ As shown in Figure 5.6 below, only 39% of the respondents agreed that the ESI MP actions were tailored to their local needs (option 4-5). Based on the analysis of stakeholder interviews, the reason for this medium level of satisfaction could be that Member States would have carried out the operations supported by the MP even without MP funding because these operations were vital to their management of the pandemic. From DG ECHO's perspective, the staff survey reveals that the ESI MP was found to be generally tailored to the local

¹⁷⁹ Including the UK, which was still a Member State at the time of the ESI MP activation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁸⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021.

¹⁸¹ Interview with DG ECHO on 12/05/2023.

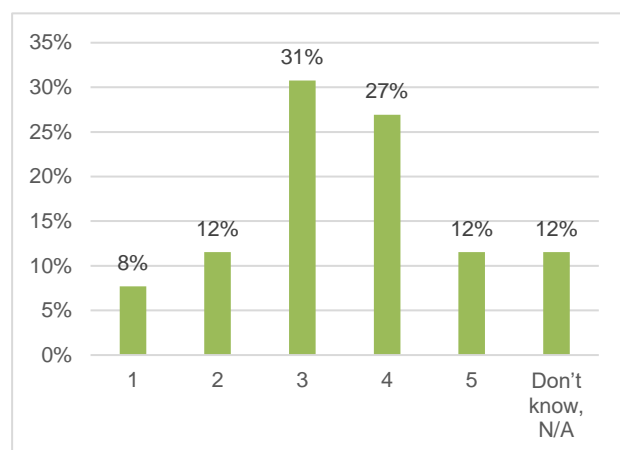
¹⁸² European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2, June 2021.

¹⁸³ European Commission, DG ECHO, Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package: New invitation to submit applications – Information meeting, 5 May 2021.

¹⁸⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021.

needs of its users, implying that there was intent within DG ECHO to tailor the MP to local needs (see Annex 9).

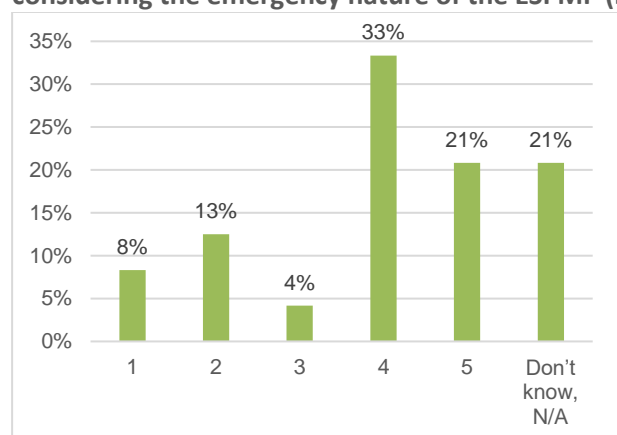
Figure 5.6. Perceived extent to which ESI MP actions tailored to the local needs of their users (n=26)



Source: Stakeholder survey

The analysis also shows that DG ECHO provided prompt and time-conscious support through the ESI MP. DG ECHO was the first DG to launch the call under the ESI (on 19 June 2020).¹⁸⁵ DG ECHO tried to initiate the first call as quickly as possible following the Financing Decision of 24 April 2020,¹⁸⁶ after Member States approved the activation of the ESI and its budget. Member States generally recognised the timeliness of the MP, as demonstrated by the stakeholder survey results. 54% of respondents found that DG ECHO was timely in providing support to Member States through grants, considering the emergency nature of the ESI Mobility Package (option 4-5). Beneficiaries in two of five countries (SE, RO) which were part of the ESI MP case study reported some concerns about the timeliness of the MP launch; however, they relate to the specific country-level circumstances outside of DG ECHO's control and are not representative of the Member States' views in general.

Figure 5.7. Perceived extent to which DG ECHO was timely in providing support through grants, considering the emergency nature of the ESI MP (n=26)



Source: Stakeholder survey

¹⁸⁵ Based on discussion with DG ECHO; see also European Commission, Emergency Support Instrument, n.d., https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/coronavirus-response/emergency-support-instrument_en

¹⁸⁶ Commission Decision of 24.4.2020 on the financing of the Emergency Support under Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369, C(2020) 2794 final; Interview with DG ECHO on 13/03/2023.

The ESI MP was also time-conscious since it allowed for retroactive and future support of operations throughout the three calls. Operations earlier or later than the respective application phase could be supported. Additionally, much of the support provided via grants and the use of the Commission's broker was also offered without a specific application deadline, ensuring continuous support.¹⁸⁷ The first call was launched on 19 June 2020, but its retro-activeness assured eligibility for support much earlier. For cargo transport, items ordered after 1 February 2020 were eligible for funding, as well as transport expenditures (including transfer of patients and associated eligible costs) that arrived in the country of destination on or after 24 April 2020.¹⁸⁸

Evidence shows that DG ECHO promptly responded to concerns from a small number of Member States finding the application period too short and extended it where possible, ensuring the relevance and flexibility of the MP. The survey conducted by DG ECHO on the ESI MP in 2021 states that "13% of respondents indicated that the application deadline for the cargo strand was too short (initially two weeks, then extended to three weeks)"¹⁸⁹ and recommended longer application periods and, where possible, a first-come-first served approach with no application deadline.¹⁹⁰ In interviews for this evaluation, two of six consulted Member States (SE, RO) who received MP support also found the application period short. An interview with DG ECHO¹⁹¹ and analysis of the application documentation shows that DG ECHO put its recommendations into action and made the application period longer in call 2 (about 2 months, 05/05/2021-30/06/2021).¹⁹² In call 3, the last call, DG ECHO had no choice but to keep the application period short (10/11/2021-18/11/2021 for all funding, i.e. cargo, transfer of patients, transport of medical teams and personnel¹⁹³) because contracting had to be closed and costs incurred by 31/01/2022.¹⁹⁴

While the transport broker was generally well received by Member States, it was not used. The stakeholder survey for this evaluation implies largely positive sentiment towards the broker. Despite this, the only time it was used was when it was piloted in an operation for Bulgaria. Results from the survey conducted by DG ECHO in 2021 – about a year after the ESI MP had been launched – offer insight into why the broker was not used in the first call.¹⁹⁵ One reason was that Member States found it challenging to integrate regularly scheduled cargo flights implemented directly by the broker into their existing arrangements, indicating limited relevance of the broker in call 1. Usually, items had been ordered several months in advance and the Member States' transport pipelines were already firmly established, which is why they did not make use of the Commission's broker.

¹⁸⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1*, June 2020; European Commission (2021), European Commission, DG ECHO, *Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2*, June 2021; European Commission, DG ECHO, *Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4 (November 2021) – call 3*, November 2021.

¹⁸⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1*, June 2020.

¹⁸⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021, p. 6.

¹⁹⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021, p. 6.

¹⁹¹ Interview with DG ECHO on 12/05/2023.

¹⁹² European Commission, DG ECHO, *Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2*, June 2021.

¹⁹³ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4*, Brussels, November 2021.

¹⁹⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4*, Brussels, November 2021; Interview with DG ECHO on 12/05/2023.

¹⁹⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021.









5.2. Coherence and complementarity

Coherence and complementarity involve investigating how well different interventions work together, in terms of both internal and external coherence and complementarity. This section considers whether the logistics portfolio fits together well within each strand evaluated, and whether there is coherence between these different strands. With regards to external coherence, this section presents findings on the coherence of DG ECHO with other actors, primarily within the UN system, and coherence with international humanitarian standards. It should be noted that certain services have both internal and external coherence dimensions due to DG ECHO supporting many different actors working on logistics in the humanitarian system, ones that operate with or without DG ECHO funding. Specifically for the ESI Mobility Package the coherence with other Member States is also considered.

For this evaluation question the strength of evidence is high, with some exceptions. Efforts to interview other bilateral donors with a specific focus on logistics, such as USAID, and other key civil protection actors, such as NATO, and other EU actors involved in the pandemic response, such as DG SANTE, did not come to fruition, despite efforts.

5.2.1. Overall key findings

EQ4. To what extent are the different activities of DG ECHO's logistics portfolio coherent and complementary to each other?

	There is strong internal coherence within each of the three evaluation components: DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics, logistics within the UCPM, and ESI Mobility Package .
	In humanitarian aid , DG ECHO have been making efforts to increase internal coherence during the evaluation period. The HLP, the new HIP for Transport and Logistics Operations and initiatives such as the EHRC and the LOGIS and LOGIS+ groups indicate that as an organisation DG ECHO is aware of the need to increase the coherence and complementarity of its portfolio, and that it has taken steps at the strategic level to respond to crises more efficiently and effectively. There are also initiatives that aim to support increased coherence between specific logistics services and those embedded in HIPs.
	For the UCPM , there is strong internal coherence within the logistics support provided, with a clear logic between different measures. There is also strong coherence between logistics activities the broader portfolio of UCPM actions. Logistics activities and coordination have a crucial enabling role for the response pillar of the UCPM.
	The ESI Mobility Package was by design internally coherent and there is no evidence of overlaps or gaps in activities.
	Coherence between civil protection and humanitarian aid , has improved over time and is better than during the previous evaluation. However, there is a need for a more deliberate approach to coordination, at HQ and in the field. DG ECHO has a clear aim at the strategic level to ensure complementarity between its approach to logistics in humanitarian aid and its approach in civil protection, while respecting the mandates and principles of both areas. There is some evidence of communication and collaboration, particularly when civil protection and humanitarian aid actors are located in the same facilities in the field. However, there is a lack of evidence of structured consultation and communication processes that allow regular documentation and dissemination of good practices and lessons learned between the two parts of the house.
 	There is no evidence to suggest that there were overlaps between the ESI Mobility Package with UCPM instruments. However, there are some indications of confusion between the MP and the UCPM activities on the part of Member States representatives.
	With regards to the transport broker , there is some evidence across humanitarian aid, civil protection and the ESI Mobility Package. The choice to contract one supplier to provide services across the three strands is evidence of coherence and joined up thinking. It

provides opportunities for coherence in responses to emergencies, internally within DG ECHO and the various humanitarian aid, civil protection, and ESI Mobility Pack portfolios, as well as with Member States and Participating States using the service. This service has contributed to coherence across the strands.

EQ6. To what extent does DG ECHO's policy and practice for humanitarian logistics complement or differ from that of other donors and partners?



There is conflicting evidence on external coherence. At the same time there are efforts to increase harmonisation of some activities, contributing to increased coherence (e.g. the takeover of EU HAF operations by WFP/UNHAS), while new initiatives providing direct support have led to more potential for duplication of logistics support (e.g. EHRC logistics hubs in Ukraine and Moldova with operations run by the Logistics Cluster and UNHRC). Nevertheless, very few specific overlaps have been identified.

EQ7. To what extent is DG ECHO's policy and practice for humanitarian logistics coherent with international humanitarian standards



The detailed analysis of the documents confirm that the policies are aligned with international humanitarian standards, specifically the Universal Logistics Standards (ULS). However, the effective implementation of the standards in the field is more difficult to assess.

EQ5. To what extent have the Mobility Package activities been complementary to other related EU and MS instruments and activities?



The **ESI Mobility Package** was largely coherent with Member States' own pandemic instruments.



5.2.2. Logistics in humanitarian aid

DG ECHO has made efforts to increase internal coherence during the evaluation period. DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics portfolio includes a diverse set of tools with very similar goals (see Table 6 in section 5.2), raising questions regarding internal coherence. From this perspective, the existence of the 2022 HIP for Transport and Logistics Operations, where several new initiatives were combined,¹⁹⁶ the HLP and its specific HIP for 2023,¹⁹⁷ and initiatives such as the EHRC and the LOGIS and LOGIS+ groups indicates that as an organisation DG ECHO is aware of the need to increase the coherence and complementarity of its portfolio, and that it has taken steps at the strategic level to respond to crises more efficiently and effectively. The evidence collected indicates that during the HIP development process, needs identification and appraisal of individual actions also influence the choices of logistics support to be provided. In this sense, the decisions on logistics support seem to be based on a holistic assessment conducive to internal coherence.

Considering the different direct logistics support actions that make up DG ECHO's toolbox, it is possible to identify gaps and overlaps across them. For example, three of the analysed tools (EU HAF, EU HAB and support to UNHAS) relate to air transport. In this sense, there is evidence that DG ECHO is aware of the need for increased coherence between the tools, and especially between EU HAF and UNHAS. This issue emerged both in South Sudan (in the case of UNHAS, see case study 9) and in DRC (in the case of EU HAF, see case study 10), where homogenisation of EU HAF and UNHAS procedures became necessary to deliver services in a more efficient way. At the same time, it is important to note that according to partners and DG ECHO staff in the field the increase in efficiency comes with disadvantages in other areas. They perceived that the services are less targeted to the objectives of DG ECHO partners, as under UNHAS, regular flights are more costly (to partners) and reported to be

¹⁹⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) – ECHO Transport and Logistics Operations 2022, 2022.

¹⁹⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Humanitarian Implementation Plan – Logistics Policy, 2022.

https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/hip2023/echo_hlp_bud_2023_91000_v1.pdf

less frequently directed to hard-to-reach areas (the least efficient destinations). This is further detailed below as it also relates to external coherence and the partnership with the WFP.

The common and shared services promoted through the pilot initiatives (see for examples case studies 11 and 12) move in the direction of creating coherence between direct logistics support and the logistics support embedded in single interventions, while at the same time standardising approaches and creating efficiencies through economies of scale. In this case, the promoted services only appear to overlap with the existing ones provided by the humanitarian system, such as the Logistics Cluster, the HPCs, and to some extent the HRDs (in case study 12) or UNHAS (in case study 11). The evidence collected in this regard indicates that in fact the supported services complement existing services and fill a gap for their users. In this sense, joint procurements and resource pooling can be considered useful, if they fill a gap in existing services. In the sample of interventions considered, the added value of these services is to provide last-mile delivery services that are very useful to relatively small NGOs but that are not covered by the humanitarian system.

As for gaps in services provided, the feedback from DG ECHO's partners in the survey identified a series of areas that DG ECHO could cover better:

- Supporting logistics for small, last-mile operations, in those cases where the Logistics Cluster and UNHAS do not provide the best fit;
- Supporting in-country logistical capacities, including by providing good examples and best practices;
- Supporting partners in market assessment and in identifying reliable suppliers;
- Finetune the needs assessment on logistics to better identify key logistics issues and bottlenecks.

These suggestions do align to the mapping of services presented in Table 10 in section 4.2, with very little done in the area of market/needs assessments. In addition, the EHRC (and to some extent, the HLP) can already be seen to address some of these gaps, with a focus on small-scale, last mile delivery.

On external coherence, there is a move towards increased coherence and complementarity for some logistics services, but there is at least a risk of overlaps and a perception by certain actors of decreased coherence and complementarity for certain services. An analysis of several secondary sources across DG ECHO's portfolio show that its activities are not implemented in silo from other donors and partners but rather meant to complement their action, follow in a similar direction or fill identified gaps. The review of a sample of funding provided to NGOs support the claim that DG ECHO does prefer to act in collaboration with other donors, with DG ECHO support ranging from 20% to 70% or more of the total budget.¹⁹⁸ In particular, activities funded by DG ECHO are often co-funded by another development aid or humanitarian aid agency, often from another Member State, e.g. the Swiss Development Cooperation (the SDC) or the French Crisis and Support Centre of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (CDCS). In addition, both EU HAF and EU HAB coherence and complementarity is ensured through their activation under the principle of non-competition with commercial airlines or other humanitarian aid flights.¹⁹⁹ As a result, no EU HAF flight route or activation of EU HAB should exist if commercial lines and/or regular humanitarian air flights exist for similar routes.

While evidence of overlaps or gaps in service delivery within DG ECHO's portfolio did not emerge from the review of e-single forms and reporting at intervention level, there is conflicting evidence on coherence and complementarity from the case studies and interviews. During interviews some informants stated that coherence was good and increasing, while others point to limited coherence and complementarity, due to a lack of coordination, sometimes unclear ownership of logistics

¹⁹⁸ Application for funding by NGOs as found in HOPE.

¹⁹⁹ Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), *Update to HIP for ECHO/WWD/BUD/2022/01000*, May 2022.

functions at crisis level and even examples of overlaps. The evidence collected on each type of logistics support is presented and discussed below.

The collaboration with WFP for EU HAF²⁰⁰ and the support given to WFP on specific projects for UNHAS and the Logistics Cluster²⁰¹, is one of the key partnerships for DG ECHO in logistics, with the majority of logistics funding committed to these actions (see section 4.2). WFP is one of the main providers of logistics operations to UN agencies and major international NGOs²⁰² and has been described by some as having a near “monopoly” for when a provider is sought for big operations, in particular for transport.²⁰³

The implementation of EU HAF by the same coordinator and operator as major air services (UNHAS) allows for increased internal coordination within WFP Aviation.²⁰⁴ EU HAF has been able to support over 350 different actions in 2019 and up to 250 in 2021, providing transportation for both DG ECHO partners, as well as smaller and local NGOs²⁰⁵ and occasionally, Member States’ diplomats. In DRC (see case study 10), Kenya and Mali, the contract with UNHAS currently implies the coexistence of two prioritisation systems under the same operator and booking system. While there is evidence that this homogenisation with existing services has certainly increased the coherence of this type of aviation service, it comes at a higher cost for users, the expense of dedicated flights for monitoring activities, and a more complicated booking system.²⁰⁶ Recently, Madagascar was also covered by the EU HAF²⁰⁷ through a short-term three-month operation, allowing access to the Eastern regions of the island which were most affected by the cyclone. In this case, the operation complemented the intervention by WFP UNHAS that covered Southern regions of the island.²⁰⁸ One point of discussion emerging from interviews is to assess the opportunity to standardise the service, adopting the level of service provided by UNHAS at global level, and integrating the DG ECHO and UNHAS fleets.

EU HAB: There is evidence of collaboration and coherence with international donors. Launched after discussions with the French CDCS, it was then made into an EU wide intervention by Portugal, Belgium, Italy and more. EU HAB intervened in several high-needs contexts where other international donors had interrupted or abandoned many of their activities. DG ECHO also acts as an advocate for the EU HAB with Member States, and coordinates the announcement and registration of all partners which it then sends to RLH/Hulo.²⁰⁹ The consolidation of cargo through a consortium of NGOs for the EU HAB, but also the coordination with local authorities and actors through DG ECHO geographical units indicates that activities are not done in silos but rather in coordination with UN agencies, including WFP. This is further corroborated by the logs of WFP using EU HAB and by collaborations seen in the case studies in Afghanistan (case study 13), Haiti (case study 14) and in the multi-country intervention directly involving RLH/Hulo (case study 11). For Afghanistan, it appears that international air routing, where EU HAB is focused, could at least partially also be covered by using the UNGSC (United Nations Global Service Center) (see case study 13). There was some indication of potential overlaps between EU HAB and UNHAS for Somalia, where one stakeholder noted an overlap between EU HAB and UNHAS with some route duplications. However, the evaluation has not specifically focused on the operations

²⁰⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, HIP Agreement number ECHO/FLI/BUD/2020/91001, 2020.

²⁰¹ Representing a total of over 50 different projects as found in HOPE.

²⁰² World Food Programme, *Logistics - We Deliver*, 2012.

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/webcontent/wfp251670.pdf>

²⁰³ Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September 2022.

²⁰⁴ Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September 2022; Example of WFP-IT Yemen Response – Single Form 2018/00407/RQ/01/01.

²⁰⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, *HIP for 2020*, 2020; European Commission, DG ECHO, *HIP for 2021*, 2021; User group feedback meeting notes.

²⁰⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Interim Reports 2020/00531*, 2020; Interview with DG ECHO desk – Aviation

²⁰⁷ World Food Programme, Monitoring data for EU HAF operations 2021-2022, 2022; World Food Programme, Modification request - HIP ECHO/FLI/BUD/2020/91001, 2021.

²⁰⁸ UNOCHA, *Madagascar: Grand Sud humanitarian response dashboard (January - November 2021)*, 2022.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/madagascar/madagascar-grand-sud-humanitarian-response-dashboard-january-november-2021>

²⁰⁹ Interview with DG ECHO staff member, September; European Commission, DG ECHO, *EU HAB – ECHO Operational Process*, n.d.; European Commission, DG ECHO, *EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (EU HAB) - Handover and Standard Operating Procedures for future EU HAB activations*, 2021.

in Somalia so has not corroborated this evidence to be able to conclude whether these activations of EU HAB actually represent overlaps in services.

EHRC: For one of the first activations of the EHRC, for the response to Russia's war in Ukraine, there were challenges related to coherence and complementarity due to the relatively unclear mandates and potential overlaps between the Logistics Cluster and the EHRC. EHRC interventions are meant to be coherent and complementary: by design, its actions complement existing current interventions from other donors.²¹⁰ The EHRC aims to fill temporary gaps during the onset of a crisis to enable other donors and actors to establish themselves and provide a considered and stronger response. As such, the decision of which services to activate and why should be based on the analysis of what is currently provided by other international donors, through discussions internally, with Member States and with key partners such as the WFP or other logistics actors intervening in the context.²¹¹ In Ukraine, this was not necessarily the case, with coordination issues at the beginning of the humanitarian response due to a lack of proper communication and consultation. Stemming from separate needs assessments, both the EHRC and the GLC set up warehouses in Dnipro, causing tension between the two actors. These tensions were overcome, and both agreed on the necessity of coordination, and with EHRC services presented to all partners during GLC meetings. The case study also finds that there was complementarity between the services offered by the Logistics Cluster and EHRC, with the EHRC operation focused on smaller operations, cold chain storage and last mile delivery, and the Logistics Cluster supported larger operations. In Moldova, the EHRC stepped up to offer common services when the Logistics Cluster was not present and where the UNHCR did not, at least initially, offer common services to NGOs. The evidence in case study 11 shows that RLH/Hulo has actively participated in Logistics Cluster at country and/or regional level,²¹² where it can also contribute and support the coordination of operations with other donors and partners.

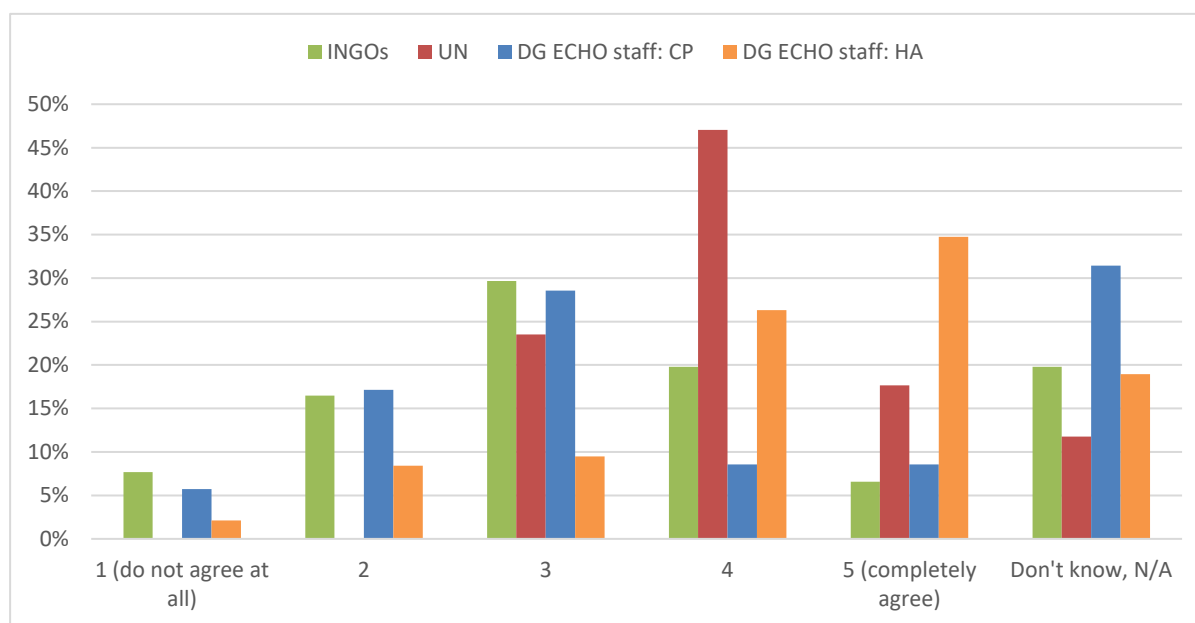
At the same time, both staff and external partners did not necessarily perceive DG ECHO as having a good overview of humanitarian logistics: 75% of humanitarian aid staff and 63.2% of external partners either agreed or strongly agreed with the fact that DG ECHO needs a better overview of humanitarian logistics at country and regional level (see Figure 5.8).

²¹⁰ Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Update to HIP for ECHO/WWD/BUD/2022/01000, May 2022.

²¹¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, *EHRC Standard Operating Procedure*, 2022; EHRC Activation Requests 1 and 2.

²¹² Evidence in project documents for Enhancing and strengthening collaborative approach and resources pooling of Humanitarian Supply chain and operational Logistics, Solidarités Internationales, 31/02/2022

Figure 5.8. Perceived extent to which DG ECHO needs better overview of humanitarian logistics at country and regional level



This also links to the fact that some of the logistics solutions supported by DG ECHO are managed in a decentralised way by geographical desks, and thus making it difficult to monitor logistics at a global level systematically. For example, DG ECHO's funding to WFP logistic services is split across different geographical portfolios, and difficult to isolate in HOPE, as noted in section 4. This may in part explain the potential gaps in complementarity noted above, both under internal and external coherence. Nevertheless, DG ECHO notes that EHRC and EU HAB activations are designed in close collaboration with the relevant geographical units to avoid any overlaps. In addition, DG ECHO Logistics TAs work together with the geographical desks to monitor specific actions.

Interviews in the case studies and with actors at the global level and comments made in the survey by both DG ECHO staff and external partners point to the need for the continued development of common logistics services operated/supported by DG ECHO and for DG ECHO to carefully consider its complementarity and specific mandate and role with regards to WFP operated common services. This is further discussed under section 5.5.

Coherence with humanitarian standards

In the field of humanitarian logistics, the most common standards are the Universal Logistics Standards (ULS).²¹³ The ULS are aligned with existing humanitarian quality and accountability standards such as the Sphere Handbook, The Humanitarian Charter, the Protection Principles, and the Core Humanitarian Standard. They are also designed to complement other humanitarian standards, with a specific contribution to the field of logistics. Both ULS and HLP have been promoted and developed by DG ECHO. An analysis of the two documents strongly indicates coherence between the two: in the body of the policy text,²¹⁴ reference is often made to standards and the need to comply with them in humanitarian logistics operations (*"DG ECHO is firmly convinced of the need for all the humanitarian community to share common standards and guidance to the extent that this is possible"*, page. 19). It is not possible to find a direct correspondence between the two documents at the level of specific contents (e.g. related to warehouses, transport, ...) due to the fact that the two are placed at different levels: the contents of the Policies are in fact of a strategic nature, while the contents of the standards enter are focused at an operational level.

²¹³ Inspire Consortium & European Commission, DG ECHO, *Universal Logistics Standards*, 2021. <https://handbook.ul-standards.org/en/humlog/#ch01>

²¹⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, *DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy*. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

While the detailed analysis of the documents confirms that the policies are aligned with international humanitarian standards, the effective implementation of the standards in the field operation is more difficult to assess. Since DG ECHO is prevalently a donor, the verification of the implementation of standards on the field requires a TA and logistical assessment of partners.²¹⁵ While this function occurs in operations such as support to aviation in South Sudan (case study 9)²¹⁶, the analysis of other case studies revealed either the absence of a TA, or the presence of very thinly stretched resources, where the active presence of TA supporting the assessment of standards implementation is currently missing (see for instance case study 13 in Afghanistan).²¹⁷ Further, attention to the implementation of standards is also lacking and could be integrated into the action design and funding phases.

Even if this is beyond the scope of this evaluation, it should also be noted that there are diverging views as to the usefulness of the ULS itself. Some interviews with external stakeholders point to a) the difficulty of creating a specific standard for humanitarian logistics outside those that operate for the commercial sector, particularly as commercial actors are also involved in logistics for humanitarian aid, and b) the complicated nature of the ULS, which demands a lot from logisticians at the field level.



5.2.3. Logistics in the UCPM

Clear logic exists within the UCPM logistics portfolio, different types of transport co-financing and coordination support are complementary. The UCPM was designed with the intention to be coherent as it seeks to foster a joint approach to crises and further helps pool expertise and capacities of first responders, avoids duplication of relief efforts, and to ensure that assistance meets the needs of those affected.²¹⁸ Logistics activities are streamlined and internally coherent with each activity having a unique and complementary role. For co-financing the Council decision expressly outlines the types of transport and operations to be funded by either a grant or through the use Commission's transport broker (see Annex 8 for a thorough description of the activities covered and the co-financing allocations).²¹⁹ Where Member States or Participating States have their own transport or can secure transport themselves the grant enables them to have the transport and the operations co-financed. In the case where the Member State or Participating States are unable to secure transport due to the difficulty with reaching the final location or specifics associated with the assistance to be transported, they are able to apply to enlist the services of the transport broker. A review of the portfolio showed that all UCPM logistics types (both the transports grant and broker) experience some level of demand, and they are often used alongside one another during a single emergency. This can be seen in case study 15, for Russia's war invasion of Ukraine, where states apply for grant co-financing in many cases but have also used the broker to send items that are difficult to transport, for instance, transformers.

Logistics activities play a key role within the broader portfolio of UCPM actions. The UCPM has been developed with a specific provision for co-financing for transport and operations.²²⁰ According to stakeholder interviewees, logistics activities and coordination have a crucial enabling role for the response pillar of the UCPM. Simply put, the assistance offered by Member States and Participating States and the expertise offered by the UCPM national modules is rendered redundant if it cannot be transported to the affected country and location. This is where the UCPM logistics portfolio plays a critical role.

²¹⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, *ECHO assessment and appraisal process*, n.d. <https://2014-2020.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/iofpa/action-proposal/dg-echo-assessment-and-appraisal>

²¹⁶ European Commission, *2021/0737 e-single form: Logistics Coordinator Input to LC monitoring*, pp. 41, 2021.

²¹⁷ This is for example the case for Afghanistan, see interview with DG ECHO Team Leader for Central Asia

²¹⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, *EU Civil Protection Mechanism Factsheet*, 2022. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en

²¹⁹ Council Decision 2013/1313, Euratom of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p.2).

²²⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Transport and operations co-financing procedures under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, n.d. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection/transport-and-operations-co-financing-procedures-under-union-civil-protection-mechanism_en



5.2.4. Coherence and complementarity between logistics in humanitarian aid and civil protection

The level of coordination to support coherence and complementarity between logistics in civil protection and humanitarian aid is limited at the strategic level and at DG ECHO headquarters. DG ECHO has a stated aim “to ensure complementarity between its approach to logistics in humanitarian aid and its approach in civil protection, while respecting the mandates and principles of both areas”.²²¹ However it is difficult to verify to the extent to which there is internal coherence between DG ECHO’s UCPM and humanitarian components in practice. Interviews and supporting documentation suggest that there is some degree of coherence in relation to assessing needs and information sharing about the goods and services being provided to the affected country. Regarding ongoing operations and lessons learned processes, it is less clear whether this is conducted across civil protection and humanitarian aid or occurs in silos. Based on interviews, it appears that there is some formal higher-level coordination, and informal coordination at operational level. Unless for a specific crisis, for example the EU multi-stakeholder crisis centre that was established for the Ukraine response that included representatives from the ERCC, DG NEAR Support Group for Ukraine (SGUA), EU Delegation to Ukraine, HERA, IFRC, WFP, USAID, and CBRN experts from Finnish Radiation and Nuclear Authority. Interviewees reported that there is a lack of formal mechanisms for operational coordination. Humanitarian aid experts may sometimes be invited to the UCPM lessons learned process but there is no evidence that this is done on the topic of logistics or on how to coordinate on better in the future, including on logistics.

The extent of internal and external complementarity between civil protection and humanitarian aid in the field depends on the specific crisis. There is some evidence that there is a stronger probability for synergies between logistics interventions under both UCPM and humanitarian aid components where DG ECHO has more operational involvement, though this is not a guarantee. The evaluation team analysed two case studies with both UCPM and humanitarian aid operational components: 14 in Haiti and 15 in Ukraine. Operational synergies could clearly be observed in the Haiti case study. For example, the EU HAB pooled and delivered both DG ECHO humanitarian aid and UCPM contributions from Slovenia. The French team deployed and coordinated via UCPM, purified water in Les Cayes that according to interviewees was distributed in the DG ECHO-supported actions of IOM and UNICEF. The deployment of a EUCP team, support of a knowledgeable EU Delegation, and regional humanitarian expert, enabled EU staff to seize opportunities for synergy.²²² In terms of external coherence with other donors/partners, the documentation and the stakeholders consulted did not note any gaps or overlaps in support provided. While on face value both UNHAS (funding by DG ECHO for this response) and EU HAB provide air services, which could be seen as duplication. However, this was not the case as they service different purposes and locations: while EU HAB is focused on transporting goods and resources from Europe to Haiti, UNHAS serves internal locations in Haiti. In theory, they could have been mutually reinforcing if UNHAS provided for last mile delivery for goods and resources transported from Europe by EU HAB, there was however no evidence that this occurred. The combination of EU HAB air services for international transport and UNHAS for local was also used to respond to tropical cyclone Batsirai, which struck Madagascar in February 2022.²²³

There is evidence of a mutually reinforcing approach in case study 7 on the 2019 UCPM activation for Mozambique, Tropical Cyclone Idai.²²⁴ For example, in terms of internal coherence a DG ECHO regional humanitarian logistics expert was deployed to Mozambique for a monitoring visit and assisted with the clearance of the goods of the incoming teams and their equipment.²²⁵ External cooperation with the broader international community was facilitated by the fact that the ERCC liaison officer was at

²²¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

²²² European Commission, DG ECHO, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting 2021 UCPM Activations*, Brussels, 2022; European Commission, DG ECHO, *Final Mission Report – Haiti*, Brussels, 2021.

²²³ European Commission, DG ECHO, Madagascar Factsheet, 2023. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/africa/madagascar_en

²²⁴ For case study 7 the evaluation team focused on the civil protection response, and only looked at coordination from the point of view of the EUCP. The Logistics Cluster was funded by DG ECHO in Mozambique.

²²⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Mission Report: Emergency Deployment to Mozambique – internal, April 2019.

same location in the Beira airport as the Logistics Cluster.²²⁶ One team member of the EUCP team dispatched to UNOCHA to assist with writing the daily situation report.²²⁷

The situation was however different in the Ukrainian case study, which presents a unique set of circumstances. In all other UCPM case studies occurring outside of the EU reviewed for this evaluation, a EUCP team was deployed to the affected State, often to multiple locations (generally the capital and the affected location). The Ukraine response is an exception to this tendency as the EUCP teams have been deployed to Poland, Slovakia, and Romania to focus on establishing and operationalising the logistics hubs, rather than to Ukraine itself. The decision was taken not to deploy civil protection personnel to Ukraine out of concerns for their safety, according to the ERCC. DG ECHO humanitarian aid personnel, along with the main presence of the international humanitarian community, however, have been deployed to Ukraine.

Although there have been initiatives that would see greater collaboration between civil protection and humanitarian aid, such as the EU train (an EU initiative to transport both civil protection and humanitarian assistance to various locations in Ukraine via the same train – there was limited knowledge of this initiative and the train only appears to have operated a few times), for the most part interviewees reported that further cooperation was not necessary as a) the roles and activities of civil protection and humanitarian were so different, and or b) due to issues with association. This relates specifically to the different recipients of UCPM and humanitarian assistance: UCPM is state-to-state assistance, while humanitarian is generally to international organisations and NGOs that rely on their neutrality and impartiality to be able to operate effectively in theatre. The differing locations of DG ECHO UCPM and humanitarian aid staff and the international humanitarian community, the perceptions of stakeholders that further collaboration was unnecessary, and potential issues of association has meant that internal coherence at the field level in Ukraine was limited.

There is some evidence of external coherence between UCPM and international humanitarian community. Although the Commission support did not involve a specific humanitarian logistics intervention Indonesia (see case study 6), there is evidence of external cooperation in humanitarian logistics. In Indonesia there is evidence of external complementarity: the Logistics Cluster assisted with building up Mobile Storage Units and established a logistics hub on Borneo Island at the Balikpapan airport, which was across the Strait from Palu.²²⁸ The EU civil protection benefitted from the airbridge set up by USA, Australian and New Zealand air forces, the ERCC offered assistance to the Red Cross for the last leg of aid delivery, and information on logistical access was efficiently shared between UN OCHA, DHL Disaster Response Teams, USAID, IOM, IFRC and Red Cross societies.²²⁹

External and internal surveys provide further examples of coherence between civil protection and humanitarian aid (does not differentiate between DG ECHO or external humanitarian assistance). DG ECHO staff were asked to provide examples of coordination between humanitarian aid and civil protection through the survey: when asked to provide examples of effective logistics coordination between the two, 21 out of 41 respondents (51%) specifically mentioned not being able to provide any, or that they could only think of very few. Those that did provide examples mentioned the COVID-19 response (including procurement of pharmaceuticals, vaccine distribution and repatriation flights), UCPM and EU HAB in Madagascar, as well as generally good coordination in the Dominican Republic, DRC, Madagascar, Mozambique, North Africa, Pakistan, and Ukraine.

²²⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Lessons learnt on the 2019 UCPM deployment in Mozambique – internal communication, Brussels, 2019.

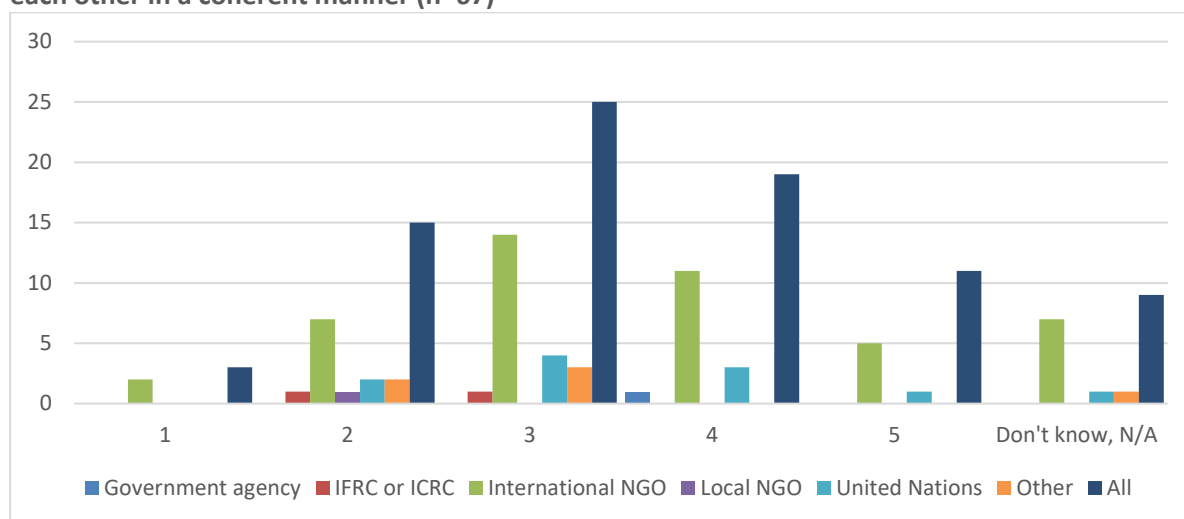
²²⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Mission Report: Emergency Deployment to Mozambique – internal, April 2019.

²²⁸ Logistics Cluster, Mozambique Closure Report, Brussels, 2019.

²²⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Fourth coordination meeting, 3 October 2018; European Commission, DG ECHO, Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations, 15 February 2019.

External actors, which included external government agencies, IFRC or ICRC, international NGO, local NGO, United Nations, and other, were asked whether “logistics services for humanitarian aid and civil protection outside the EU complement each other in a coherent manner”?

Figure 5.9. Logistics services for humanitarian aid and civil protection outside the EU complement each other in a coherent manner (n=67)



Source: Stakeholder Survey

They were also asked to provide examples of coordination between humanitarian aid and civil protection in the survey. The DG ECHO response to tropical cyclone Idai in Mozambique in 2019, response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013, response to the Rohingya refugee crisis (years not specified), response to the crisis in Ukraine, and in big disasters induced by natural hazards in general were all highlighted as positive examples of coherence between humanitarian aid and civil protection.

The internal and external surveys both posed a question on the presence of any overlaps or gaps between humanitarian aid and civil protection logistics services. A large proportion of DG ECHO respondents (22 out of 35, 63%) specifically mentioned not being able to identify any gaps or overlaps. Among the ones mentioned, the following elements emerged:

- issues in the complementarity with the Logistics Cluster;
- prioritisation of visibility over actual needs;
- adherence to transport needs from partners;
- lack of updated needs assessment creating redundancies;
- lack of coordination since the start of the crisis;
- general tendency to work in silos and absence of communication between the two.

There were 19 open comments on the existence of gaps and overlaps from the external survey. Several common elements can be seen in these answers:

- lack of operational communication and coordination between humanitarian aid and civil protection,
- the mandates are not always clear,
- approaches can be siloed,
- the response in Ukraine is not structurally coordinated.

Interviews confirm that coherence and complementarity between civil protection and humanitarian aid has improved over time, but there still is some way to go.



5.2.5. The ESI Mobility Package

The ESI Mobility was largely internally and externally coherent. The evidence collected offers insight into the level of coherence and complementarity, firstly, within the Mobility Package itself, secondly, with initiatives in the Member States themselves. By contrast, there is more limited information about the extent to which the Mobility Package created synergies and overlaps with the Emergency Support Instrument as a whole and other EU instruments and activities from applicants/key stakeholders. Nevertheless, interviews with DG ECHO representatives emphasised that both regular meetings with other DGs and follow-up meetings with the SG and DG SANTE were organised to gain an overview of the operations and ensure coordination and coherence.

There is no evidence to suggest that that there were overlaps or gaps within the MP itself. First, the analysis suggests that there are synergies within the ESI Mobility Package. The Mobility Package has been developed with the intention to create a coherent funding mechanism in support of logistics operations by Member States.²³⁰²³¹²³² The re-activation of the ESI Mobility Package under the timeframe of evaluation (2020-2022) specifically relates to operations carried out in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, at design stage, the Mobility Package was developed in a way which aimed to ensure that funding activities were streamlined and internally coherent. There is no evidence from the country level analysis to suggest that there were existence of overlaps or gaps within the Package itself.

The ESI Mobility Package was largely coherent with Member States' own pandemic instruments. The analysis shows that DG ECHO intended to create synergies with the EU's and Member States' activities and prevent overlaps. Two conditions set out in all three calls under the Mobility Package required operations to (1) not have received any other EU funding and (2) be of public benefit and fit into the national response plan to be eligible for receiving Mobility Package support.²³³²³⁴²³⁵ Further, the ESI legislation supports the intention to prevent overlaps with Member State's other activities. Specifically, article 1 paragraph 2 of Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369²³⁶ and article 3 paragraph 1 of Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521²³⁷ stipulate that the ESI should "complement" the actions of affected Member States.

These legal documents align to the results of the stakeholder survey (see Figure 5.10) where a majority of respondents agree that there is coherence between the ESI Mobility Package and activities carried out at Member State level. This is also confirmed in the DG ECHO staff survey. However, the interviews and open answers provided few concrete examples, particularly for those who applied only for financing to transport of cargo, with the Commission only providing financing for activities already carried out.

²³⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, June 2020.

²³¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2, June 2021.

²³² European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4 (November 2021) – call 3, November 2021.

²³³ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, June 2020.

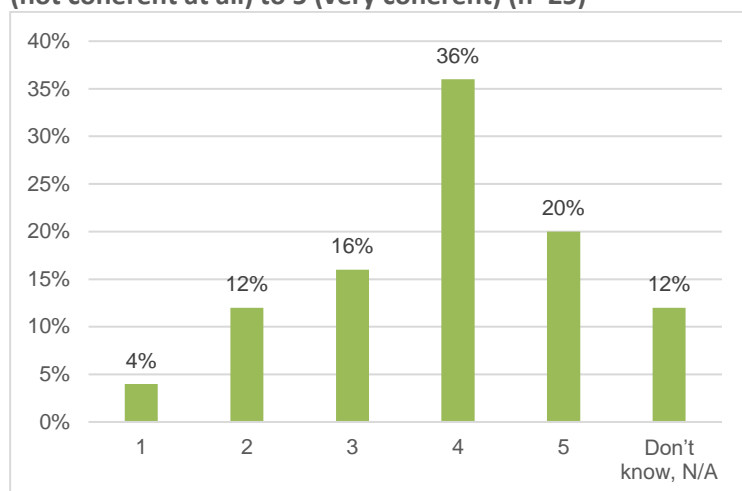
²³⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2, June 2021.

²³⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4 (November 2021) – call 3, November 2021.

²³⁶ Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 of 15 March 2016 on the provision of emergency support within the Union.

²³⁷ Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020 activating the emergency support under Regulation (EU) 2016/369, and amending its provisions taking into account the Covid-19 outbreak.

Figure 5.10. Perceived extent of coherence between ESI MP and Member State activities, from 1 (not coherent at all) to 5 (very coherent) (n=25)



Source: Stakeholder survey

Few gaps or overlaps were therefore found. The exception is the case of Sweden, where it seemed at least theoretically possible for applicants at the regional and municipal level to get reimbursement for transport from DG ECHO and from the national level for the whole procurement process (e.g., PPE and transport), since the reimbursement from the national level in Sweden was made without requiring details of other types of cost recovery. However, no such examples have been found. It is also not entirely clear that this would have been picked up through DG ECHO reporting requirements or audits. Notably, DG ECHO required applicants to declare the absence of double funding. Nevertheless, the responsibility for this would at any rate lie with national authorities in Sweden, rather than with DG ECHO that specifically mandated that applications came from national authorities to avoid any overlaps. The problem here was mainly related to the fact in Sweden, the focal point for the ESI Mobility Package (the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency) and the national authority for responsible for the state subsidies (the National board of Health and Welfare) did not coordinate. This highlights the difficulty in relying on one single focal point for this health emergency, with the responsibilities for pandemic response in Member States often not lying with DG ECHO's usual focal point authorities.



5.2.6. Coherence and complementarity between ESI Mobility package and civil protection

There is no evidence to suggest that there were overlaps with UCPM instruments. By design, the ESI was developed in a way that aims to create synergies with UCPM logistics activities. Both the ESI and the UCPM are part of ECHO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, aiming at "strengthening the Union's resilience and improving the Union's preparedness for addressing any further wave of COVID-19 and future pandemics."²³⁸ However, Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 points out that additional support is needed on top of the UCPM, elaborating that measures under the UCPM are "limited in scale and therefore do not allow a sufficient response or make it possible to address effectively the large-scale consequences of the COVID-19 crisis within the Union."²³⁹ In sum, the UCPM's RescEU and the ESI Mobility Package function differently. RescEU creates a mechanism for medical stockpiling and distribution, and the Member States are responsible for procuring and hosting the stock. Meanwhile, DG ECHO coordinated the stockpile and funded its development and deployment. Previously, a Council Regulation also noted the gap/shortcoming that "the operation of the Mechanism is based on voluntary contributions from Member States."²⁴⁰

²³⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Questions and Answers on Emergency Support Instrument (updated 26/06/2020), 2020.

²³⁹ Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020 activating the emergency support under Regulation (EU) 2016/369, and amending its provisions taking into account the COVID-19 outbreak.

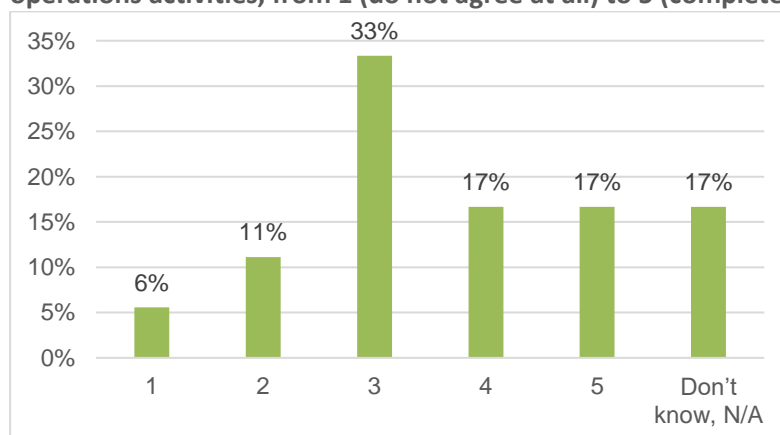
²⁴⁰ Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369 of 15 March 2016 on the provision of emergency support within the Union.

By contrast, the ESI Mobility Package is a more funding-focused instrument. Member States could apply for funding of logistics operations that they themselves had carried out and were paid/reimbursed (in many cases retroactively) by DG ECHO. In cases where Member States were struggling with access to transportation, they could also apply to use the Commission's transport broker, in which case DG ECHO would directly fund the transport without the Member States having to pay initially and be reimbursed. Hence, the ESI is described by the Commission as "a complementary instrument: it intervenes on top of the efforts made under other EU instruments such as RescEU, the Joint Procurement Agreement and the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative, as well as Member States' national efforts."²⁴¹ Further, DG ECHO adapted the application forms/templates taking into account already existing modules used for UCPM operations in order to facilitate ease of application.

Coherence with the UCPM is largely reflected in the results of both the stakeholder survey, see Figure 5.11, where most respondents agree that there is a certain level of coherence. This is also the case with the staff survey (see Annex 9). Open answers in the stakeholder survey align to this view, noting for instance that as the number of response activities specifically for pandemic related requests, it became crucial to strengthen and provide additional funding for transport, and one person noted that the UCPM strategic documents did not anticipate the type of funding that the ESI Mobility Package covered. Where the focus on the MP was financing, the UCPM provided additional coordination support.

However, there are some indications of confusion between the MP and the UCPM activities. Open answers in the survey and interviews noted some confusion and overlaps between the two. Some of those interviewed could not specify which type of activities belonged to which instrument. This was particularly the case for authorities not used to dealing with DG ECHO before the pandemic, for instance the representatives from Netherlands interviewed. Most of those interviewed noted the differences in the application process, noting that it was more complicated for the ESI Mobility Package. Some respondents reported that on the face it was unclear why there were two different mechanisms with similar goals and that it would have been useful with further clarification of how the two tools operate in a coordinated manner, through something such as a "services catalogue". However, there was no other option for DG ECHO since the MP follows a different legislation and mandate (Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020) than the UCPM (Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of 20 May 2021).

Figure 5.11. Extent to which the ESI Mobility Package was coherent with the UCPM transport and operations activities, from 1 (do not agree at all) to 5 (completely agree) (n=18)



Source: Stakeholder survey

²⁴¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Questions and Answers on Emergency Support Instrument (updated 26/06/2020)*, 2020.

5.3. Effectiveness

This section assesses the extent to which the objectives of DG ECHO's work on humanitarian logistics have been achieved. The objective of DG ECHO's support to logistics can be broadly summarised as aiming to facilitate rapid, effective and efficient responses in the event of disasters or imminent disasters, leading to a better coordinated, faster and wider response, optimised use of resources, and making sure that humanitarian relief and civil protection is distributed based on need and that aid workers are safe. Additional objectives of DG ECHO's interventions in this area are to support increased logistics preparedness and coordination.²⁴²

For this evaluation question, the strength of the evidence varies, particularly at the results and impact levels. Due to the fact that the monitoring system relies on output data, data on results under this criterion is based primarily on interviews and case studies. Due to the diversity of the actions covered, the complexity of the contexts and the resources available, it would not have been possible to collect quantitative results data. Similarly for impact, the evaluation uses qualitative data to consider the potential contribution of logistics services to impacts.

5.3.1. Overall key findings

EQ8. To what extent have the objectives of DG ECHO's logistics activities been achieved? What were the concrete results? To what extent did the logistics arrangements contribute to or hinder an adequate and effective civil protection and humanitarian response?



While there are limitations to the analysis, the findings of the evaluation are generally positive. DG ECHO's support to logistics enables the effective delivery of **humanitarian aid and civil protection** and there are no specific examples where logistics have hindered an effective response.



In **humanitarian aid**, DG ECHO has introduced strategic initiatives of importance for future effectiveness of humanitarian logistics: the Humanitarian Logistics Policy and the European Humanitarian Response Capacity. In terms of more direct operational support for logistics, there is evidence that activities meet output targets whenever they have been set, for instance for EU HAF and UNHAS. There is evidence of logistics services enabling humanitarian access, including in forgotten crises. Effectiveness has depended on the flexibility and the ability of DG ECHO and partners to meet emerging logistics demands. At the same time, monitoring mechanisms targeted to logistics and specific assessments on selected initiatives are still needed to shed light on achievement of outcomes and impacts.



In **civil protection**, coordination support provided by the ERCC was effective and particularly appreciated. Transport and logistics co-financing were largely viewed as an effective incentive to encourage Member States and Participating States to cooperate and work together. There is also some evidence of increased coordination between Member States and Participating States. However, there were also a number of barriers to effectiveness, including a poor ICT system and an administratively burdensome grant application process that struggled to cope with the massive increase in workload incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



The **ESI Mobility Package** was important to an effective pandemic response, but there is limited evidence of the extent to which this contributed to other objectives than just the provision of financing for transport; there was no concrete data recorded on the number of lives saved or extent of human suffering prevented at impact level. DG ECHO's coordination was considered to be very effective. DG ECHO also made efforts to ensure the effectiveness of the Mobility Package by modelling it after the UCPM to increase familiarity and engagement with it among Member States.

²⁴² Evaluation Terms of Reference; European Commission, Draft Amending Budget No. 2 to the General Budget 2020, Brussels, 2020. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0170&from=EN> ; Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (Text with EEA relevance). Text with EEA relevance, Article 3; Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid, Article 2(c).



With regards to the **transport broker**, there is some evidence across the humanitarian aid, civil protection, and the ESI Mobility Package that the transport broker has been an effective tool to support common transport provision across the logistics portfolio. Broker services have been increasingly used and are in high demand. The broker is one of the main partners in the EU HAB, which has been an effective service. For stakeholders involved in using the transport broker through the UCPM, they reported in interviews and via the external survey that the transport broker offered a number of advantages. This included that it was easier and more effective to use the broker to deliver goods and services to locations outside of Europe and to remote locations, as well as to transport unusual or particularly large items. They were also perceived by some to be more effective in terms of timeliness, less human resources required (from the ERCC and Member States and Participating States to coordinate), and the process for handling costs was more effective as the Commission pays upfront and does not involve the same degree of back and forth between the State and the Commission that comes with the grant compensation procedure. For the ESI Mobility Package, there was only one operation using the transport broker. There are suggestions that the type of services provided through a private partner or similar framework contracts could be extended, to cover services such as airport management, specific logistics equipment such as unloading and offloading equipment, and air support. For instance, the broker was used to procure a warehouse for the EHRC activation in Moldova (case study 15), where the broker was able to find a suitable warehouse quickly.



The presentation of the detailed findings below is divided between outputs, results, and impact levels. There is also a reflection on the accuracy of the robustness of intervention logic (above and in Annex 3).



5.3.2. Logistics in humanitarian aid

For the purposes of this evaluation, this criterion includes an assessment of the effectiveness of interventions supported by DG ECHO at different levels in the intervention logic, including outputs, outcomes and impacts, as well as a critical analysis of the assumption underpinning the intervention logic. Before analysing the effectiveness of the specific logistical interventions supported by DG ECHO, it is important to make two important contextualisations:

- Both the literature²⁴³ and evidence collected indicate that effectiveness of logistics within any humanitarian context is strongly dependent on the context. In this sense, the same logistics solution or service might be perfectly effective in a context, but ineffective in another;
- DG ECHO does not usually have control over the adopted logistics solutions. In the context of humanitarian coordination, logistical issues are often addressed by the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster, WFP. With other partners, DG ECHO can contribute to identifying needs and support the implementation of actions deemed necessary.

This being said, as mentioned above, DG ECHO's logistics support in the humanitarian sector includes a variety of different tools. For each of the initiatives examined the evaluation retrofitted and analysed its intervention logic considering outputs, results and impacts, including their contribution to DG ECHO's strategic objectives. While the available data is often of good quality, monitoring and reporting documentation is often limited to output and intervention level, rather than at portfolio level. In addition to this, in many cases logistics services and operations are "enablers" of humanitarian action, making it difficult to detail their contribution to broader humanitarian results.

The analysis of the effectiveness of each logistics initiative is based on the consideration of a set of three key questions:

- To what extent have the objectives and the results of the initiative been achieved?

²⁴³ See Sphere Association (2018), *The Sphere Handbook – Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response*, fourth edition, Geneva, Switzerland. <https://spherestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/Sphere-Handbook-2018-EN.pdf>, or Kunz et al., *Relevance of humanitarian logistics research: best practices and way forward*, 2017.

- Were the outputs of the initiative realised?
- To what extent did the logistics arrangements contribute to or hinder an adequate and effective civil protection and humanitarian response?

Strategic initiatives

The Humanitarian Logistics Policy. As mentioned, from 2022 onwards the overarching document guiding logistics work is the HLP. In and of itself, this was a key output achieved during the evaluation period. While its objectives and ambition are clear, its implementation is still in its infancy, and it introduces relatively new elements in the sector for both DG ECHO and its partners. The collected evidence indicates that many of these still need to be fully applied and monitored, making the implementation of the HLP a moving target that is difficult to assess. However, there are signs of effectiveness in the strategic and operational work of DG ECHO to achieve the objectives of the policy (see further in section 5.1.2). The mentioned operational guidance published in January 2023 and the HIP for ECHO Transport and Logistics Operation squarely fall under this category. As of early 2023, DG ECHO has carried out both internal and external dissemination activities in support of the policy, including the organisation of:

- An information session to DG ECHO management provided by Kuehne Foundation;
- 8 training sessions for approximately 50 DG ECHO staff responsible for the geographical desks and TAs;
- Dedicated support and analysis to three geographical units to identify logistics or the EHRC;
- 8 training sessions for partners on the HLP, reaching 177 programmatic staff;
- 8 bilateral engagements with other donors
- Participation in humanitarian logistics fora, including the European Humanitarian Forum, the Global Logistics Cluster meetings, and the Logistics Cluster Strategic Advisory Group.

DG ECHO's Emergency Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC). EHRC's most recent activations included the response to the Madagascar Batsirai Tropical Cyclone (2021), the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine (2022), and the Afghanistan crisis²⁴⁴ (2021-2022). The EHRC has been under constant development during the evaluation period. Due to the novelty of the EHRC, this evaluation does not present specific findings on effectiveness, but rather reflects on what DG ECHO should consider in the further development of the EHRC to enable an assessment of effectiveness. The EHRC activation in Ukraine represented a new type of action, with DG ECHO involved more operationally in setting up common logistics services in the form of logistics hubs operated by NGOs in three locations in Ukraine and one in Chisinau, Moldova (see case study 15). The peculiarities of the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine cannot be considered representative of the effectiveness of the EHRC, but the case study does provide lessons for future activations. Although there is evidence in the case study of careful monitoring and a willingness on the part of DG ECHO to learn, there is limited evidence of a more formalised monitoring, evaluation and learning system for the EHRC, with clear indicators to measure progress, including around learning. As DG ECHO takes on a more operational role via the EHRC, this also needs further consideration. At least in Moldova, there is evidence to suggest that DG ECHO is not necessarily set up to handle this type of operation, in terms of management responsibilities for operations in the field. Some of the actions considered in other case studies became part of the set of initiatives under EHRC in 2022, in particular:

- Case Study 11 – DRC (EU HAF)
- Case Study 13 – Afghanistan (EU HAB)
- Case study 14 – Haiti (EU HAB)

These are reported on below.

Operational support

²⁴⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC), n.d. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/european-humanitarian-response-capacity-ehrc_en

EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (EU HAB). The EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (EU HAB) flight operations are intended to help reinforce humanitarian or emergency responses in countries facing fragile contexts,²⁴⁵ with a focus on humanitarian cargo operations with international routing. In the current context, the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge flights have helped to address various constraints faced by humanitarian actors on the ground, including situations where needs far outstrip supply and humanitarian access is limited or hampered by logistical or administrative barriers.²⁴⁶ From 2020 to 2022, evidence from the portfolio analysis (see Annex 8) and case studies indicates that EU HAB has been an effective operation reaching foreseen outputs and constituting an enabling factor for supported humanitarian initiatives.²⁴⁷ Case studies 13 (Afghanistan) and 14 (Earthquake Response in Haiti) also indicate that EU HAB effectively delivered cargo to both crises. Interviews with staff and involved partners show that these services effectively target the needs on the ground, being coordinated with Member States and aid partners to identify the most critical gaps. The EU Humanitarian Air Bridge complements other humanitarian air services that the EU has in place or that it supports to help the humanitarian community continue the effective delivery of assistance.²⁴⁸

EU Humanitarian Aid Flight (EU HAF, previously ECHO Flight). EU HAF operates regular air routes for humanitarian aid passengers in four locations that would be very difficult to access otherwise (including for example North and South Kivu in DRC, North Kenya in Kenya, Mali, South Sudan and Somalia on an ad hoc basis).²⁴⁹ Recently, the location of Madagascar was also covered by the EU HAF²⁵⁰ through a short-term three-month operation.

During the period of the evaluation, it appears that EU HAF (ECHO Flight) has met its objectives to the extent that these were feasible in the context (COVID-19). In time, through this initiative DG ECHO has provided support to many forgotten crises²⁵¹ in the Sub-Saharan African region, including the crises in DRC, Somalia, South Sudan, Cameroon, Madagascar, and the regional crisis in CAR, Cameroon and Chad.²⁵² In this sense, actions carried out under EU HAF can be considered an enabling factor for the implementation of the humanitarian response in the countries where they operate in order to ensure access to very hard to reach areas. However, the data collected does not allow the evaluation team to isolate the impact of the action on the number of beneficiaries reached.²⁵³

At the output level, both contracts reached the HIP targets through their operations of EU HAF. However, documentation shows considerable differences between the DAC Aviation and the WFP contract. The former met most of the targets, including the target of 25,200 passengers and 180 tonnes of cargo per year, as well as the minimum of 70% of priority 1 passengers and 90% of priority 1 cargo. It did not meet however, the target of projects supported, with an expected 300 to 350 projects supported.²⁵⁴ Additionally, user feedback in 2019 indicated that that flights were of low quality, delays and administrative issues. Documentation on the contract with WFP indicates more positive results.

²⁴⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Delivering on the Coronavirus Global Response – AN EU Humanitarian Air Bridge, 2020; European Commission, DG ECHO, Update to HIP for ECHO/WWF/BUD/2022/01000, May 2022.

²⁴⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, EU Humanitarian Air Bridge Factsheet, 2023. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/eu-humanitarian-air-bridge_en

²⁴⁷ Réseau Logistique Humanitaire (RLH), EU HAB Activity Report 2020, 2021, 2022, 2020-2022.

²⁴⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, EU Humanitarian Air Bridge: helping aid reach the people in need during the coronavirus pandemic, 2020. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/eu-humanitarian-air-bridge-helping-aid-reach-people-need-during-coronavirus-pandemic_en

²⁴⁹ Currently, analysis of the context of transport in these four locations reveals that access to these regions is very difficult if not impossible at times in areas such as North Kivu in DRC and Mali. The ongoing conflicts make it very complicated for road transport to be possible, and many of these areas do not have the possibility of access by sea. The specific locations targeted by the EU HAF are especially difficult to access and there is evidence that no other companies or providers are consistently operating air transportation to these from another location except for WFP, for example in Northern Kenya.

²⁵⁰ World Food Programme, Monitoring data for EU HAF operations 2021-2022, 2022; World Food Programme, Modification request – HIP ECHO/FLI/BUD/2020/91001, 2021.

²⁵¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Factsheet on Forgotten Crises, 2022. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/needs-assessment/forgotten-crises_en

²⁵² WFP / DAC Aviation Flight Logs (2018-2022).

²⁵³ European Commission, DG ECHO Interim Reports 2020/00531, 2020; Interview with DG ECHO desk – Aviation, Brussels.

²⁵⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, HIP ECHO/FLI/BUD/2019/91001, 2019.

Even if COVID-19 severely impacted the initiative in 2020, since 2021 EU HAF has regained normal levels of operation. Notes from user meetings seem to suggest that users are satisfied with the service.²⁵⁵ Additionally, it is reported that flights are more regular, and less likely to be cancelled or delayed.²⁵⁶ Further details are provided in case study 10, which investigates the operation in DRC.

DG ECHO's support to the UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS). The evaluation could only assess a sample of interventions supporting UNHAS, that indicate overall positive evidence. In Yemen UNHAS air transport services again proved to be enablers for humanitarian operations, with 93% of the passenger target being reached in 2019.²⁵⁷ In Afghanistan (case study 13), from July 2021 to December 2022, DG ECHO funded operations served 7,412 passengers and carried 23 tonnes of light humanitarian cargo per month, which were both great improvements from their baselines and surpassed all defined targets.²⁵⁸ In South Sudan, UNHAS operations also reached the targets fixed in the country Humanitarian Response Plan, and managed to effectively manage the issues related to location coverage.²⁵⁹ The specific case study for this project (case study 9) shows how the service offered secure field access, gave assistance to humanitarian hotspots, and upheld global humanitarian principles,²⁶⁰ proving to be compatible with the South Sudanese context and with the demands of its beneficiaries (the larger humanitarian community) to offer secure field access, give assistance to humanitarian hotspots, and uphold global humanitarian principles.²⁶¹ DG ECHO is not the first funder of the action (€14M out of €102M), but it is the only funder on the ground that directly leads technical assessment, monitoring and evaluation. As such, it is perceived as more than a donor,²⁶² as an operational partner with the ability to intervene in strategic positioning, carry out advocacy actions both towards institutions and on behalf of DG ECHO partners towards service providers.

Overall, the perception of aviation services supported by DG ECHO is very positive, with a majority of respondents from both internal and external surveys mentioning them as examples of excellence that could be replicated elsewhere (see Annex 9).

DG ECHO's support to WFP logistical services, particularly the Logistics Clusters. The Logistics Cluster's activities represent a key-factor to enable humanitarian actors to effectively implement humanitarian activities, in terms of logistics pre-positioning, common and shared service and coordination and information sharing.

Case Study 9 on the operation in South Sudan, where DG ECHO directly supports both Logistics Cluster and UNHAS operations, concludes that humanitarian air operations can be considered an enabling factor for humanitarian access, while the Logistics Cluster's activities represent a key factor to enable humanitarian actors to effectively implement humanitarian activities, in terms of logistics pre-positioning, common and shared service and coordination and information sharing.²⁶³ The team led by Logistics Cluster Coordinator is very knowledgeable and skilful. Even though the LC had a reduction of funds, it has been capable to increase the quantity transported thanks to the increased use of river and land transportation. The main weakness is related to a general underfunding that does not allow donors to cover all the needs identified, but forces actors to prioritise in the definition of areas/projects/communities particularly vulnerable or in need of assistance²⁶⁴.

As South Sudan is a "long-lasting emergency", this type of logistical services will have to continue to be made available to humanitarian actors to guarantee the necessary assistance to the beneficiary populations over a longer period. In this sense, the programme has continued to operate as expected.

²⁵⁵ World Food Programme, *Notes from user group feedback meetings in Mali, DRC and Kenya*, 2021.

²⁵⁶ Interview with DG ECHO staff member; September 2022.

²⁵⁷ World Food Programme, ECHO/YEM/BUD/2018/91022 Monitoring Report – UNHAS, 2019.

²⁵⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Logframe for the action agreement number: ECHO/-AS/BUD/2021/91024 – Updated on 15/05/2022 and e-single form ECHO/ERC/BUD/2020/9100 and subsequent agreements, n.d.

²⁵⁹ South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan 2021

²⁶⁰ Internal Reporting on UNHAS November 2021. 2021/0737 e-single form, pp. 9-11.

²⁶¹ Internal Reporting UNHAS carried out by DG ECHO Aviation TA in November 2021. 2021/0737 e-single form, pp. 9-11.

²⁶² Interviews external stakeholders, December 2022.

²⁶³ European Commission, DG ECHO, 2021/0737 – HOPE – Interim Report, 2021.

²⁶⁴ Interview DG ECHO staff member – December 2022.

While the action constitutes a crucial enabling factor for the humanitarian response in South Sudan, as mentioned, contributions to impact on final beneficiaries (e.g. number of beneficiaries reached) are not possible to analyse due to the lack of data.

Direct funding to NGOs for targeted logistics operations. The evaluation assessed specific interventions related to shared services developed for DG ECHO's partners, and implemented by NGOs, through two case studies.

In Mali (case study 12), for example, an intervention implemented by Atlas Logistique provided shared transport and storage. The action consistently overperformed, surpassing fixed targets in all its objective indicators and almost all its results indicators, with the only issue being coordination with UNHAS. In the case of the shared service platform servicing organisations in Burkina Faso, DRC and Central African Republic (case study 11), the preliminary data obtained from RLH/Hulo indicate that the supported services contributed to providing a more effective and more efficient logistical response. Although at a slower pace than expected, and with a high variability across crises. Some services (such as joint procurement) generated benefits faster than others (such as common IT solutions), pointing to the need to better understand what are best practices and why, if this type of initiative is to be replicated in the future.

Generally speaking, the evidence collected indicates that the efficiency gains related to the economies of scale created by shared services are heavily dependent on the full engagement of participating partners. In turn, this requires long-term approaches and strategies that might generate benefits beyond the operationalisation of logistics, that still need to be properly understood in their context.

UN Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRDs). DG ECHO supported the establishment of these depots but has not supported them during the evaluation period.²⁶⁵ However, a recent agreement means that the EHRC regional stockpiles will be stored at these HRDs. The data collected through the survey of external partners indicate that compared to INGO respondents (who considered them the least important of logistical services supported by DG ECHO) UN actors consider HRDs important more frequently (43% of UN respondents considered them very important, compared to just 21% of INGO respondents) and aligned to the local needs (57% of UN respondents considered them aligned, against 44% of INGO respondents). DG ECHO staff who answered the survey indicated that the HRDs were very aligned to DG ECHO's strategic objectives and well-tailored to the needs of their users.

Humanitarian Procurement Centres (HPCs) is a concept aimed to ease procedural burdens for partners when procuring goods and services.²⁶⁶ This concept allows partners to buy items from suppliers that have been reviewed and approved by HPCs²⁶⁷ (based on a review of their adherence to the HPC Charter)²⁶⁸ on the basis of a single offer, regardless of the value of the contract. The aim of the HPCs is to provide access for humanitarian partners to high quality products, with good value for money, bypassing complicated procurement procedures.²⁶⁹ In the survey, while both staff and external partners considered them relatively useful, they also raised a series of issues affecting their effectiveness: lists not being up to date, inadequate or late documentation (implying increased administrative costs and delays), limited stocks, and long delivery times. Asked to comment on effectiveness of supported logistics solutions, an INGO respondent listed specific challenges for HPCs:

Main challenges to the medical supply chain in purchases through HPCs:

- *Low responsiveness and constant need for follow-up for HPCs,*

²⁶⁵ Interview with DG ECHO staff members, August 2022.

²⁶⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017: final report*, 2019. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

²⁶⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, *HPC Register*, 2021.

²⁶⁸ The HPC Charter defines common standards of transparent, efficient and ethical procurement and sound financial management shared by the Commission and those HPCs recognised by DG ECHO. The latest version of the Charter dates from 2014 and has been reviewed during the previous evaluation.

²⁶⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017: final report*, 2019. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

- *Low item availability and stocks fluctuations,*
- *Documentation and compliance: HPCs are not always able to provide Certificates of Origin and Certificates of Analysis,*
- *Payment methods: HPCs requested pre-payment as the payment method,*
- *KRI custom clearance regulations partially remains undefined and subject to sudden changes and requests from KRI authorities²⁷⁰.*

ECHO does not provide technical support to assist with facing major challenges/an extraordinary challenging context. All responsibility lies with the implementing partner.

As mentioned above, it is difficult to assess the impact of supporting logistics activities on the effectiveness of the broader humanitarian action. In other words, it is difficult to precisely assess the extent to which the supported interventions contributed to an adequate and effective humanitarian response and ensured that the needs of the most vulnerable were met in times of crisis. However, the evidence collected verifies that most of the assumptions identified in the reconstruction of the intervention logic hold. In particular:

- ECHO has access to expertise to deploy logistics resources within humanitarian aid strategically, based on the greatest need and based on sound financial management, mostly due to an inclusive process of needs assessment, good design of both portfolios and interventions, and effective coordination with partners. Some of the feedback from the survey and interviews from both DG ECHO staff and partners indicate that more technical capacities could improve the way DG ECHO assesses and monitors interventions.
- Humanitarian aid partners are aware of and understand the logistics services that DG ECHO offer. Almost all stakeholders involved in the evaluation consider the supported logistics services relevant and contributing to a more effective humanitarian response, although this varied across both crises and implemented services. There are large differences between the needs of large humanitarian actors (such as the UN) and the needs of smaller, last mile operators (such as NGOs).
- DG ECHO's logistics capacity are only used as a last resort and do not crowd out other logistics options within relief operations. DG ECHO's logistics capacities fill identified existing gaps in the humanitarian response, and there is no evidence that DG ECHO's supported activities hindered the humanitarian response.
- DG ECHO logistics activities are aligned to international humanitarian standards and do not counteract efforts to localise humanitarian aid. As noted above, the overall policy and practice is aligned to humanitarian standards and DG ECHO aims to support localisation through the HLP. However, so far there is limited evidence of this in practice.



5.3.3. Logistics in the UCPM

The logistics and transport assistance provided under the UCPM was mostly effective at the output and results level when taken as a whole. The UCPM was activated approximately 1074 times, to respond to emergencies in 105 countries. This included an estimated 134 activations of the Commission broker, 706 grant applications, and 180 unspecified activations.²⁷¹ There is evidence of increased coordination between Member States and Participating States, gaps in Member States' logistics capacity bridged, a coordinated, faster response, civil protection personnel protected, effective and efficient repatriation, and increased logistics preparedness in the UCPM. Its relative contribution to impact level results is not possible to ascertain, though there are some tentative findings of potential contributions to a fairer resource distribution across the EU, lives saved, human suffering prevented and alleviated, and the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by disasters induced by natural hazards and man-made crises, economic assets at risk of disasters are protected, and improved EU cohesion.

²⁷⁰ This is assumed to stand for Kurdistan Region of Iraq

²⁷¹ Internal records. Transport grants.

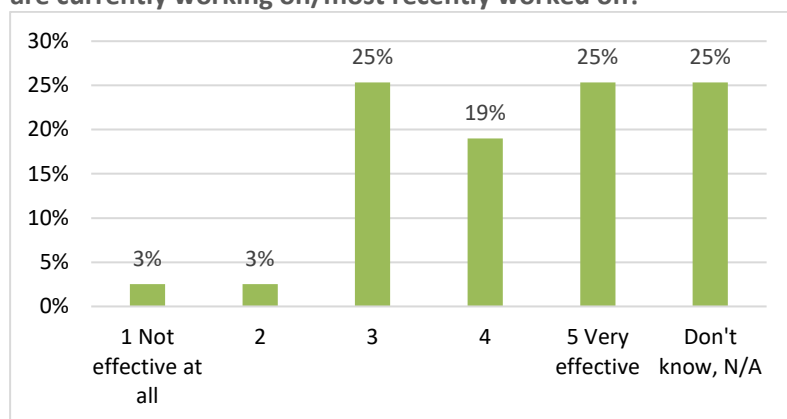
At the output level the assessment is based on data on the proportion and level of transport and operations requests funded, number of crises responded to, use of the transport broker, as well as interviews, surveys and seven case studies. It is important to note that it is not possible to provide an analysis of the number, type, and volume of goods transported at this time, as DG ECHO does not maintain a centralised recording system for this data. The achievements at the output indicators are presented in detail in Annex 8 (portfolio analysis). The portfolio analysis maps the provision of logistics support according to geographical distribution by inside/outside EU, by country, assisting Member State or Participating State, by type of assistance provided and sent, and expenditure by year.

The Civil Protection Mechanism is frequently and exponentially activated to response to cross-border and cross-sectoral needs across the globe. Member States and Participating States demand for logistics and transport support has increased exponentially during the period. As can be seen in Figure 5.4 and Figure 5.5 in section 5.1.3, the number of applications for transport assistance increased by approximately 18 times between 2018 to 2022. During the period over 1,000 logistics support activities were implemented for emergencies concerning around 123 countries, for an expenditure totalling between 78 million EUR (payments) to 224 million EUR (commitments) during the period 2018-2022. The emergencies responded to span disasters induced by natural or man-made hazards to wars, major expenditures include the response to COVID-19, Russia's 2022 war in Ukraine, the tropical cyclone in Mozambique, and forest fires in Europe (see portfolio analysis in Annex 8).

Civil protection logistics operations have become more effective to respond to historic, complex crises. The COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine represented “stress tests” for EU Member States’ individual and collective response capabilities. The response to these two complex and historic crises are successes for the Mechanism, the emergencies have neither crowded out other operations nor encouraged States to adopt national solutions. On the contrary the Mechanism has demonstrated the capacity to continue to provide “standard” logistics operations, at the same as adapting to conduct new logistics operations, such as repatriating EU citizens from around the world (a new activity for the UCPM) (case study 8) and establishing logistics hubs to pool and transport assistance to Ukraine (a new concept for UCPM) (case study 15).

Stakeholders report that the ERCC coordination is very useful and effective and is crucial to the overall effectiveness of the logistics support. Based on the portfolio analysis, desk review, case studies and internal and external surveys, the evaluation team finds that both internal and external stakeholders perceived the ERCC's coordination to be very helpful and was a precondition to delivering effective logistics support. In the internal survey, 44% of DG ECHO staff reported that the coordination of logistics for the emergency response that they were currently working on/most recently worked on was very effective (value of 5) or mostly effective (value of 4). Only 3% rated the coordination as not effective. This includes their activities at headquarters and for some responses, in the field. The importance of the field coordination differs, for instance Sweden (see Annex 10.4: Case study 4), where the ERCC liaison officer was not deemed vital to the in-country coordination of logistics due to the capacity of the receiving country, in comparison to case studies 6,7, and 14 in Indonesia, Mozambique, and Haiti.

Figure 5.12. How effective is/was the coordination of logistics for the emergency response that you are currently working on/most recently worked on?



Source: DG ECHO staff survey

ERCC coordination at headquarters in Brussels is effective. In relation to coordination at headquarters for example, interviewees confirmed that the coordination provided by the ERCC was very helpful during the COVID-19 repatriations/consular support response (case study 8). This was reported to be particularly the case for Member States and Participating States with smaller diplomatic networks and fewer citizens overseas, as it meant they could secure seats for their citizens on flights chartered by other Member States and Participating States and thereby avoid chartering their own plane for only a small number of individuals. For example, Croatian citizens were able to benefit from the flights chartered by Germany. They were often repatriated via plane from outside of Europe to Germany and then travel easily by internal-EU flight or road to Croatia due the countries proximity to each other.

The effectiveness of the ERCC's coordination in the field is dependent on the individual staff's competence, skills, training, preparedness, and experience. The strength of the UCPM's response and the perception of the success of the response often rests with the individual staff deployed to the field. For example, interviews for case study 6 on Indonesia highlighted that a good team leader who spoke Bahasa Indonesian, which assisted them to make good personal connections, was key to implementing the operation. The participation of ERCC liaison officers either with country connections or relevant language skills were also appreciated by stakeholders as expressed in interviews, for instance the deployment of a Creole speaker with Haiti connections for Haiti earthquake response 2021 (see Annex 10.14: Case study 14), or a Polish speaker (this enabled them to be embedded in the appropriate Polish emergency response department) to assist with the Polish-based response to the Ukraine crisis (see Annex 10.15: Case study 15). The inclusion of logistics(s) experts in the EUCP team mission was another factor that was underlined. For example, during the Mozambique Tropical Cyclone Idai response DG ECHO staff were appreciative of the inclusion of a logistics expert in the team, stating that they were able to provide valuable insights, for example in resolving customs issues (see Annex 10.7: Case study 7). The assisting country interviewee noted that the logistics expert was also helpful in contributing to identifying and selecting an appropriate site given the logistics concerns specific to an EMT (regular access and provision of medicine, a water source etc).

However, there were limits to staff preparedness and training. Stakeholder interviews and lessons learned documentation²⁷² identified that staff would have benefited from a pre-deployment briefing (on the country context) from the geographical unit, which would have better prepared them to work in a complex context such as Haiti (Annex 10.14: Case study 14) or where is a distrust of external actors as was the case in Indonesia (Annex 10.8: Case study 8). This could have meant, for example, that the EUCP team would have known to leverage existing relationships with Indonesian government officials

²⁷² European Commission, DG ECHO, Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting 2021 UCPM Activations, Brussels, 2022.

from the early stages of the crisis instead of this delaying the implementation of the response.²⁷³ Effectiveness could further be improved by ensuring that deployed personnel have a clear understanding of the Mechanism,²⁷⁴ and the roles and responsibilities of the EUCP team. Member States and Participating States can facilitate this process by nominating candidates with appropriate skills and experience for each mission so that the ERCC are able to compose a suitable EUCP team, encouraging staff to attend relevant training provided via the UN and EU, and expanding the number of individuals in the pool so that the right person with the right expertise, language skills, training, country and context knowledge is available.

Sustained ERCC engagement throughout the duration of the mission is important for success. Based on the case studies reviewed and mission documentation it is clear that the emphasis is on the beginning of a EUCP team's mission with the focus on a timely deployment and to establish the process and ways of working. As a result, the number of personnel deployed peaks in the first stage of the mission before dropping in subsequent stage(s). This is a valuable approach, nevertheless, it is important that there is sustained engagement throughout the mission and to guarantee an effective handover and exit strategy and to ensure that the overall reputation of the mission is not damaged in the final stages. This was the case in the Haiti earthquake response 2021, where the generally positive perception of a mission that took place in a very complex and challenging environment was undermined by a failed donation process. It is not certain to what degree the EUCP team or the Norwegian national module could have anticipated or reacted differently to this scenario, as the security conditions and ability to move within the country severely deteriorated. As such it is important that the planning and terms of reference for the EUCP team's deployment provides support for developing an exit strategy and handover arrangements. Given the need for continuity in protracted, complex crises that the UCPM is increasingly faced with, the short duration of the EUCP team/liaison officer's mission hinder success according to documentation.²⁷⁵ and interviewees regarding case studies 14 and 15.

Assets-associated barriers to effectiveness identified. A lack of certain assets hindered effectiveness in some case studies and other responses, according to interviewees at the global level. This included a lack of certain aircraft suited to heavy lift transport operations, such as the Antonov 124.²⁷⁶ Or a lack of suitable offloading equipment that meant only specific aircraft could be used (see case study 6 on Indonesia) or that assistance was stranded on the airfield for extended periods. Issues associated with offloading equipment and last mile delivery are a common theme in humanitarian logistics.²⁷⁷

The evaluation team's findings **on results** are based on stakeholders' general impression of response times rather than detailed data and examples of increased coordination between Member States and Participating States, stakeholder feedback on effectiveness of logistics support, increased logistics preparedness.²⁷⁸

There were examples of increased coordination between Member States and Participating States:

²⁷³ An important aspect of the Indonesia earthquake and tsunami context 2018 was that International Organisations were not permitted to deploy non-Indonesian nationals to the disaster affected areas, as was iterated in a letter circulated by the Indonesia Foreign Ministry. Reports from EU UCPM team corroborate that this was the case for the team, the response was highly controlled by the Indonesia government authorities, the number of non-Indonesian responders had to be kept to the absolute minimum and resulted in permissions having to be sought on an individual level for all members of the EUCPT to travel to Palu. European Commission., Final Report – internal communication. 20 November 2018.

²⁷⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, Final Report – internal communication, 20 November 2018, p.2., 2018.

²⁷⁵ Haiti lessons learned report.

²⁷⁶ The Wall Street Journal, *War Sidelines Crucial Ukraine-Made Fleet of Cargo Megaplanes*, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/war-sidelines-crucial-ukraine-made-fleet-of-cargo-megaplanes-11649846506>

²⁷⁷ Salam, Mohammad & Khan, Sami, *Lessons from the humanitarian disaster logistics management: A case study of the earthquake in Haiti*, in *Benchmarking An International Journal*. 27. 1455-1473. 10.1108/BIJ-04-2019-0165, 2020; Tamas Banyai, *Supply Chain Agility in Humanitarian Logistics*, in *Advanced Logistic Systems Vol. 10, No. 1*, pp. 75–81, 2016. <https://www.ft.com/content/79ae9810-6012-11d9-bd2f-00000e2511c8>

²⁷⁸ There were no records for the time of response between activation of broker and delivery, regular monitoring data on the safety and effectiveness of broker transport facilities, or a systematic recording of the response times between grant applications and delivery.

- COVID-19 repatriations/consular support: evidence of increased coordination via the UCPM as the response progressed.
- Russia's war in Ukraine 2022 response: Member States and Participating States agreement to coordinate on procurement suggests enhanced coordination.

Given that both the COVID-19 repatriations/consular support and Russia's war in Ukraine 2022 responses have a longer duration than 'classic' UCPM emergency responses that are usually one to two months, rather than a year, it suggests that there is a willingness to enhance coordination and that the additional time enables Member States and Participating States to find improved ways of working and coordinating.

Evidence that steps were taken to protect civil protection personnel. There were several anecdotal examples of protections in relation to case study 15 on the response to Russia's war in Ukraine, for example, communication with the ERCC clarified that safety concerns are the reason that an EU civil protection team has not been deployed to Ukraine. Another example is case study 14, on Haiti, where a DG ECHO security officer was deployed to conduct a security assessment prior to the mission, due to Member States and Participating State concerns. Further security precautions were also taken during the mission, such as organising a security convoy through the Logistics Cluster to reach the operation site. Furthermore, a security course is also provided as part of the UCPM training programme.²⁷⁹ Lastly, there is no evidence that the safety of civil protection personnel was compromised.

Involvement in the UCPM contributed to increased logistics preparedness in the UCPM. Case studies 4 and 5 in Sweden and Greece provided clear evidence of this. Both case studies highlighted that the UCPM response (including the logistics and coordination support) during the respective forest fires, eventually contributed to Sweden and Greece applying to host RescEU assets according to interviewees. Documentation regarding the Swedish case study noted that the forest fires in Sweden demonstrated the capacity limits of the UCPM and the importance of strengthening these assets, in order to ensure that the rights assets are available in the right time and the right place to enable future effective response to forest fires.²⁸⁰ Increased preparedness in the UCPM was clearly a result of the forest fires in Sweden and Greece as it led both countries to host RescEU capacities that could be deployed through the UCPM for future emergencies.

Logistics support was perceived to be effective based on the feedback from all categories of stakeholders, and from reviews of documents. UCPM transport and logistics co-financing was largely viewed as an effective incentive to encourage Member States and Participating States to cooperate and work in the same way. The significance of the financing itself varied between States and could be essential or symbolically important to signal political solidarity within EU, the EU's commitment and solidarity with a particular emergency-afflicted country, or as part of Member State's foreign policy goals to sustain the EU as a political project. Generally, the financing was especially important for responses outside of the EU and for specific Member States and Participating States within the EU.

Stakeholders unanimously report that the ICT and grant application process limited effectiveness. There is evidence that effectiveness was hampered and could be improved in several ways. The first and most frequently identified issue was the ICT system and grant application process. Both internal staff and Member State and Participating States expressed frustration with the grant application process, reporting that it was administratively burdensome, time-consuming, and deterred them from using the civil protection Mechanism in favour of bilateral options. Several Member States and Participating States reported in interviews that they only went through the UCPM for instances where the amount of co-financing would outweigh the amount of administration involved for their internal staff.

Another key issue noted in interviews is that the CECIS system is not a logistics system and is poorly suited to providing tracing and tracking services. This was reported as problematic for both those

²⁷⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, *The Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Programme*, 2016.
https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/civil_protection/civil/prote/pdfiles/Training%20brochure.pdf

²⁸⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 forest fire season*, Brussels, 30 November 2018.

involved in directly sending and receiving the assistance, and those involved in the emergency but not directly involved in logistics and support coordination. In lieu of a logistics system communication takes place via email or WhatsApp, which although encrypted is not a Commission proprietary system, meaning that its security cannot be guaranteed, and it is also administratively onerous. Interviewees reported that as only a handful of people in the sending State and receiving State or hub are aware of when assistance is arriving/arrived (and the level of detail for this information can vary), they were often overwhelmed with enquiries for when the assistance is sent, when it would arrive, if it arrived, etc, and again for information when Member States and Participating States were doing their internal financial reporting.

Interviewees noted that it was particularly difficult to provide information months after the event as was often the case for financial reporting, and that each Member State or Participating State had different reporting requirements. The lack of widespread information was also reported to be problematic for those outside of this inner circle, such as other DG ECHO staff/EU representatives involved in an emergency, as they may not have this information directly to hand to be able to tell their counterparts. However, some interviewees also highlighted in relation to the Ukraine case study that a more widely accessible tracking and tracing process may not be desirable in some cases due to security concerns.

States and international organisations' awareness of the UCPM is key to success. For instance, the Indonesian government's familiarity with the Mechanism enabled a timely request and response to the tsunami in 2018 (case study 6).²⁸¹ While the Mozambican government's lack of awareness resulted in crucial delays to their request for assistance regarding Tropical Cyclone Idai (case study 7) in 2019.²⁸²

The early deployment of the EU civil protection team to the field is important for effectiveness. The importance of early deployment to enable the EUCP team to assist and facilitate the arrival of national modules and in-kind assistance, as well as come up to date with the context, was highlighted by stakeholders in multiple case studies and in lessons learned documentation.²⁸³

At the impact level, it was not possible to gather robust data. As the data is primarily qualitative, it will be very difficult to assess the relative contribution of logistics services to impacts identified in the intervention logic (see Annex 3).

However, there is good data availability on assumptions in intervention logic, allowing assessment of potential contribution to impact. Beyond what is reported above, in terms of the assumption '*Member States know and understand what the UCPM can offer and how to apply*' and '*UCPM responds to logistics needs and priorities of Member States and Participating States*' it is clear from the portfolio analysis and interviews that they are applying and see benefit in the logistics assistance offered via the UCPM. In addition, in relation to assumption that '*There is sufficient funding for the UCPM*' stakeholders report that they found it difficult to comment on this as they had limited knowledge of the overall budget envelope or proportion of the UCPM in reference to other strands. However, they stated that the previous co-financing rates for the transport grants were insufficient and welcomed the new rates. This a direct implementation of the previous evaluation on humanitarian logistics.²⁸⁴ Case studies 8, and 15, on the response to COVID-19 and Russia's war in Ukraine are strong examples of the assumption that '*The UCPM is sufficiently flexible to change according to changing needs and*

²⁸¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Final Report – internal communication*, 20 November 2018.

²⁸² European Commission, DG ECHO, *Civil Protection – Performance – internal communication*, Brussels, 2022; European Commission, DG ECHO, *Lessons learnt on the 2019 UCPM deployment in Mozambique – internal communication*, Brussels, 2019; European Commission, DG ECHO, *Tropical Cyclone Idai – EU Response*, Brussels, 2019; European Commission, DG ECHO, *Tropical Cyclone Idai – EU Response*, 2019. https://ercportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ercmaps/20190507_DM_Mozambique_EU%20response_wrap-up.pdf

²⁸³ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Lessons learnt on the 2019 UCPM deployment in Mozambique – internal communication*, Brussels, 2019; European Commission, DG ECHO, *Outcome Document of the Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting*, 2020. European Commission, DG ECHO, *UCPM Activations – internal communication*, 20 January 2021.

²⁸⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017: final report*, 2019. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

priorities of civil protection’ as UCPM adapted to address needs that were atypical (engaging in global repatriation and establishing logistics hubs) and represented unprecedented volumes of requests.

There is no evidence of duplication or crowding out as Member States and Participating States simply use their own logistics arrangements and apply for co-financing. In relation to the assumption that *‘Transport and operations grants are distributed fairly among all applicant Member States and Participating States and based on greatest need’* it appears that the majority of the operation grants were fulfilled, and Member States and Participating States needs were at least partially if not fully met. However, the recording system is oriented towards those applications that were granted and there is no systematic recording of those that were not, which is a limitation. Nevertheless, there is no evidence from stakeholder interviews, surveys, or case studies that this is not the case. Finally, there is evidence that *‘Participation in the UCPM transport and operations contribute to increased willingness to collaborate between Member States and Participating States’* from case studies 8, and 15, on the response to COVID-19 and Russia’s war in Ukraine, whereby Member States and Participating States showed an increased willingness to collaborate as the crises progressed. In the case of the Ukraine response, this has even led to willingness to collaborate on a new type of initiative – procurement.

There is some qualitative evidence that UCPM logistics support potentially contributed to the medium-term impacts outlined in the intervention logic of *‘fairer resource distribution across the EU’*. Fair resource distribution is also suggested by the incidence that smaller states are able to contribute more to civil protection operations due to the logistics capacities offered by the UCPM. In terms of long-term impacts, there are potential contributions to *adequate and effective response to emergencies*, and *lives saved and human suffering prevented*. For instance, the response to Russia’s war in Ukraine 2022 offers examples of effectiveness at the multiple levels.²⁸⁵ The response involved the swift activation and creation of three logistics hubs in the EU Member States of Poland, Romania, and Slovakia in the early stages of the war, which represents an innovation in the UCPM system. The logistics hubs have enabled Member States and Participating States to send a variety of assistance, including non-typical civil protection items such as power transformers and agricultural products, for pooling and onward transport to Ukraine via a simplified border procedure. Stakeholders, including representatives of Ukrainian government, reported that the logistics hubs were essential to delivering an effective response to the emergency and that they couldn’t imagine implementing the response without the hubs. The case studies (4 and 5) on Greece and Sweden noted that the total UCPM response contributed to alleviating the crises, incurring no loss of life, though the logistics part of this is hard to disentangle. There is also a tentative contribution to the long-term impact of *improved EU Cohesion*, where working through the UCPM strengthens feelings of solidarity, the visibility of other EU Member States and Participating States responding to an emergency in the EU reinforces a sense of cohesion in times of need as demonstrated by case studies 4 and 5 on the forest fires in Sweden and Greece. At the same time working through UCPM to address crises outside of the EU cultivates and maintains a Team Europe approach both internally and externally. Finally, there is tentative evidence that *economic assets at risk of disasters are protected* in the Sweden case study which noted though there were large economic damages, there was probably less damage than without the support.



5.3.4. The ESI Mobility Package

The case study of the ESI Mobility Package (1-3) provides some evidence about the general level of effectiveness of the ESI MP as perceived by Member States and hard data on the operations carried

²⁸⁵ Danish Emergency Management Agency, Presentation on Lessons Learnt – internal communication, 15 September 2022; Energy Community, Presentation on Ukraine Support Activities – internal communication, 15 September 2022; European Commission, DG ECHO, Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia’s War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022; European Commission, DG ECHO, Presentation about an Overview of lessons and good practices identified – internal communication, 15 September 2022; French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Presentation on French humanitarian assistance to Ukraine through the UCPM: UCPM Lessons Learnt Meeting – internal communication, 15 September 2022; Polish Governmental Strategic Reserves Agency, Presentation about UCPM logistics hub in Poland – experiences and conclusions, 15 September 2022; Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, Presentation on UCPM Lessons Learnt Meeting Logistical Hub Romania – internal communication, 15 September 2022.

out. While there is some evidence across the output and results areas as shown in the intervention logic, there is little evidence on medium-term and long-term impacts. There is much data on the production of outputs, i.e., support to cargo transport, the transfer of patients, and the transport of medical teams and personnel. The sections below also elaborate on results achieved, namely an improved availability of needs-based emergency support across the EU and an effective transfer of patients. However, there is not enough data to suggest the achievement of medium-term impacts (fairer resource distribution across the EU, adequate and effective civil protection response and preparedness, meeting needs of people during crisis) and long-term impacts (lives saved, human suffering prevented and alleviated, protection of integrity and human dignity, improved EU cohesion).

Regarding the extent to which DG ECHO's logistics objectives have been met, the ESI is very clear on its objective of achieving immediate emergency response and the Mobility Package was designed in a way which allowed for the achievement of this objective. The first call under the Mobility Package was launched already in June 2020, only several months after the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. The first call followed the approved activation of the ESI and its budget by the end of April 2020.²⁸⁶ DG ECHO launched the first full grant under the MP only a few weeks later as one of the first operations to be launched under the ESI, which can be considered very fast for the time. Two follow-up calls ensured continuous emergency support throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, Mobility Package funding could be granted retroactively,²⁸⁷ further facilitating immediate response. The nature of the ESI as an immediate response tool hence does not focus on crisis preparedness but rather on access to much needed medical items and medical teams and the protection of patients through transfer operations.

At the output level, since 2020, the Mobility Package supported the transport of approx. 308 million cargo items such as medical equipment and therapeutics. These items weighed approx. 76 739 tonnes and had a volume of 2,6 million m³.²⁸⁸ Moreover, this cargo was transported in 2 136 operations via air, land, and sea:

Table 5.2. Overview of cargo operations supported by ESI 2020-2022

Mode of cargo transport	Total number of routes ²⁸⁹
Flights	1 951
Trains	43
Seacrafts	970
Cars, trucks	196
Total	3 160

Source: Calculations by the evaluator based on documentation provided by DG ECHO

The Mobility Package has also supported the transport of over 650 people since 2020, covering both medical personnel as well as patients. The total demand for such operations in the applications submitted (852 people to be transported/transferred) surpassed the number of people actually transported/transferred. While the number of patients transferred was actually lower compared to the number of patients requested to be transported in the applications, the number of medical personnel in fact transported slightly exceeded the number requested in Member States' applications.

²⁸⁶ Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020 activating the emergency support under Regulation (EU) 2016/369, and amending its provisions taking into account the COVID-19 outbreak; European Commission (2020), Commission Decision of 24.4.2020 on the financing of the Emergency Support under Council Regulation (EU) 2016/369, C(2020) 2794 final.

²⁸⁷ Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020 activating the emergency support under Regulation (EU) 2016/369, and amending its provisions taking into account the COVID-19 outbreak.

²⁸⁸ Based on internal documentation provided to the evaluator by DG ECHO.

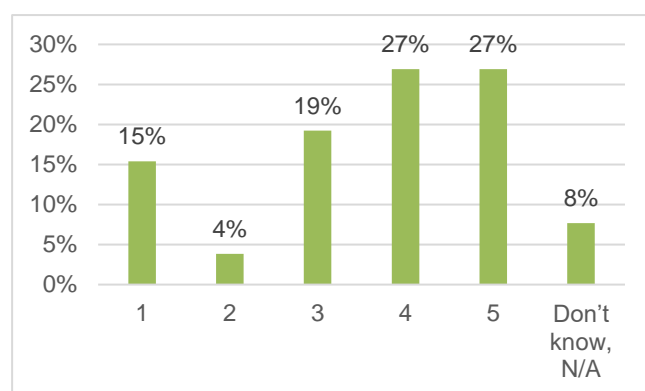
²⁸⁹ One operation can consist of several routes. Especially in the case of flights, one operation can include more than one route. For trains, sea crafts, trucks, and cars operations and routes are essentially the same.

Table 5.3. Overview of person transport operations supported by ESI 2020-2022

Operations	Total number of persons actually transported	Total number of persons to be transported, based on applications
Medical personnel transported	517	506
Patients transferred	135	346
Total	652	852

Source: Calculations by the evaluator based on documentation provided by DG ECHO

Stakeholders viewed the ESI MP as an important instrument to support an effective pandemic response. No clear targets for the number and level of outputs to be produced were defined, due to its emergency-response nature. As such, it is difficult to assess the balance between inputs and results achieved based on reviewing the numbers alone. The results of the survey and stakeholder interviews provide further evidence to make judgements. Generally, stakeholders viewed the ESI MP as an important instrument to support an effective civil protection and pandemic response, as the survey results in Figure 5.13 illustrate.

Figure 5.13. Perceived importance of ESI MP for the effectiveness of civil protection and pandemic response (n=26)

Source: Stakeholder survey

The coordination and communication with DG ECHO were generally considered effective by the Member State authorities. Interviews with German and Romanian authorities confirmed that DG ECHO staff was supportive when helping Member States understand which information or documents to submit to ECHO, especially when the application was evaluated by DG ECHO and when the final report was prepared. The survey confirms that most respondents (80%) found DG ECHO's coordination of logistics services for the emergency response effective. In the survey conducted with DG ECHO staff, opinions concurred with those of stakeholders; the majority of the 14 respondents with knowledge of the ESI MP agreed that the coordination of logistics for the emergency response that they are working on/were most recently working on was very effective.

Aiming to ensure effectiveness, the application process was modelled after the UCPM to increase familiarity and engagement with the ESI Mobility Package, which was an entirely new instrument. To support Member States in their engagement with the ESI Mobility Package and ensure its effectiveness, DG ECHO made the administrative processes as straight-forward and simple as possible.²⁹⁰ The Mobility Package was a new instrument and some administrative burden was inevitable, since Member States had to familiarise themselves with it. This generally did not hamper the MP's effectiveness. There was, however, a risk of a very small number of Member States not engaging with the instrument, with some implications for effectiveness. DG ECHO's survey report describes that 15% of Member States' focal points experienced an excessive workload in their role to channel applications to the Commission and to support applicants in the process, "especially in

²⁹⁰ Interview with DG ECHO on 13/03/2023.

decentralised States where they had to coordinate with many different actors in a short space of time”.²⁹¹ In the worst case, the administrative effort led to disengagement from the ESI MP: the Swedish focal point interviewed noted that the administrative burdens were partly the reason why they chose to be less proactive in communicating information about call 2 and as result Sweden did not submit any applications in call 2. In the Netherlands, interviewed authorities stated that the financing received did not compensate for the administrative effort, resulting the decision to not apply again.²⁹² However, as further elaborated in the findings on effectiveness below, the ESI MP was a very ad-hoc based emergency instrument which did not allow for refinements in administrative efficiency besides the efforts already made by DG ECHO.

When it comes to results and impacts, there is less evidence. Interviewees consulted gave very few examples of concrete results, including those that had been anticipated in the intervention logic, in terms of the ESI Mobility package contributing to improved availability of therapeutics, medical items, medical expertise, and vaccine equipment across EU. It has been impossible to verify how much the ESI Mobility Package contributed compare to what Member States organised themselves. However, on the transfer of patients and medical teams, where the case study unfortunately has very limited data, it was noted that the tool enabled Belgium and Denmark to jointly transport a medical team to Slovakia, which had requested support. This type of operation was seen as effective.

At the impact level, the case study finds evidence of a contribution to adequate and effective response to COVID-19 at the country level, but only tentative evidence of a specific contribution of the ESI Mobility Package towards fairer resource distribution across the EU and no evidence of actual lives saved and human suffering prevented. However, by providing financing to all Member States on a fair and equal basis, it can be argued that there was a fairer resource distribution across the EU as a result of the mechanism.

As such, the design of the ESI Mobility Package suggested that there was a contribution to the results and impacts identified, but the extent of this contribution is not possible to measure. In addition, overall effectiveness was hampered by an application procedure some Member States struggled with and possibly also insufficient funding. While the ESI MP provided a vast amount of funding, the financial needs of Member States during the pandemic far exceeded the available amount. Therefore, Member States considered the MP to be helpful but not enough to cover the entirety of their needs.

5.4. Efficiency

In this section, the extent to which DG ECHO's support to logistics delivers results in an economic and timely way is assessed. This section also explores the extent to which funds were appropriately allocated for logistics.

A primary test of logistics is how well it helps to translate inputs into outputs and then outcomes, efficiency is one of the most important evaluation criteria for humanitarian logistics. The assessment of efficiency is based on the cost-effectiveness guidance for DG ECHO, which considers economy (getting the right inputs at the lowest cost), efficiency (how well inputs are converted into outputs) and cost-effectiveness (the achievement of intended outcomes in relation to costs). The assessment includes analysis of cost-effectiveness at the level of DG ECHO as a donor and the cost-effectiveness of DG ECHO-funded partners and actions. The analysis of the efficiency of DG ECHO's logistics activities should start from several caveats:

- In the emergency response, reaching beneficiaries and ensuring timely delivery of humanitarian aid and civil protection is primary compared to efficiency. In turn, this implies

²⁹¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package*, 2021.

²⁹² Also based on internal ESI MP monitoring data provided by DG ECHO to the evaluator.









that apparently inefficient logistical solutions are chosen given the emergency context and urgent needs.²⁹³

- On the humanitarian aid side, the directly supported logistics initiatives constitute a fraction of DG ECHO's support to logistics, which is mainly "embedded" in sectoral project interventions, with in turn involve different degrees of logistical complexity. As such, the analysis of the interventions included in this evaluation is different than analysing the efficiency of sectoral humanitarian interventions.
- The data available for all three evaluation components varies and there is very little quantitative data on costs at portfolio level.

Despite these constraints, the evaluation provides qualitative evidence against the judgment criteria in the evaluation matrix.

5.4.1. Overall key findings

EQ9. To what extent were DG ECHO's logistics activities efficient and cost-effective?

	<p>As noted under relevance, DG ECHO considers the actions of other donors and partners meaning that there is very little evidence of funding overlaps across humanitarian aid, civil protection and the ESI Mobility Package.</p> <p>With regards to efforts to consider economy, efficiency and cost-effectiveness, there are differences as to what can be said for humanitarian aid, civil protection and the ESI Mobility Package:</p>
 	<p>For humanitarian aid, it is possible to provide an assessment for a sample of interventions. This shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs are in line with standards, and overall, adequately monitored in documentation. • There is increased attention paid to the costs of embedded logistics solutions. • There are also examples of cost savings through support to joint procurement and common services. However, there is more potential for these types of activities. • In some cases, there is evidence that more efficient alternatives might be explored, although this is strongly dependent on context.
	<p>For the UCPM, there is an emphasis on timeliness and effectiveness over cost-effectiveness. DG ECHO does not take a strong role in scrutinising the budgets proposed by Member States and Participating States. As a result, there is evidence of both cost-savings through shared and common services, and examples of comparatively quite expensive transport options being used.</p>
 	<p>For the ESI Mobility Package, DG ECHO took a number of actions to ensure cost-effectiveness throughout the project cycle. However, the ESI MP would also have been more efficient if the application procedure had been simplified.</p>
 	<p>With regards to the transport broker, there is some evidence across humanitarian aid, civil protection and the ESI Mobility Package. However, due to lack of time series on the and the contextuality of operated flights (security issues, lack of alternatives, absence of market benchmarks in specific crises) it is not possible to see whether the use of the broker represents any cost savings. There is conflicting information on whether the broker was more efficient than other forms of transports. Some interviewees and survey recipients reported that it was cheaper and faster when they used it under the auspices of the UCPM and the ESI Mobility Package, while others stated the opposite. Using the same transport broker across the three strands, presents other opportunities for efficiency in that the broker becomes familiar with Member States and Participating States needs and responding to them.</p>

²⁹³ CHS Allcance, Groupe URD & Sphere, Core Humanitarian Standards (commitment 9), 2023. <https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard>

!	Finally, the lack of reliable data on costs at portfolio level and the lack of clearly developed benchmarks for costs are findings in themselves as this makes it difficult for DG ECHO to make claims that it aims to support more efficient and cost-effective logistics solutions
EQ10. To what extent were funds appropriately allocated?	
	There is no evidence of funding competition between humanitarian aid and UCPM, or the ESI Mobility Package as these are funded through completely separate instruments. As such, logistics services are not comparable, and it did not make sense to assess whether there was appropriate allocation of funding between these three parts of the portfolio. With regards to allocation of funding within each evaluation component:
!	For humanitarian aid , needs generally outstrip available funding for logistics, and there is evidence that limited budgets mean that funds to logistics are allocated with efficiency considerations in mind.
!	For the UCPM , there is no evidence of a lack of funding for logistics and there is general feedback that the increased transport and co-financing rates are appreciated. Nevertheless, stakeholders reported that inflexibility of the financing procedures were problematic as they were designed with 'classic' short UCPM operations in mind and limited DG ECHO's ability to be able to adapt to different crises situations, such as the large-scale and protracted crises constituted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. For example, in relation to the response to the Ukraine crisis, the way that transport co-financing is currently set up means that only 75% of the cost for transport from the logistics hubs in Romania, Slovakia, and Poland to Ukraine is co-financed by ECHO. This places a high burden on the states hosting the logistics hubs and undermines the principle of solidarity and sharing responsibility across Member States and Participating States.
👍	For the ESI Mobility Package , DG ECHO's budget allocation method was based on Member States' pandemic situation and needs, with a formula for allocation (total population - 20%, number of COVID-19 cases - 40%, number of COVID-19 deaths - 40%) that ensured an equitable distribution of available funds between Member States.



5.4.2. Logistics in humanitarian aid

Efficiency as a donor

As the third largest humanitarian donor,²⁹⁴ a significant share of the logistical support provided by DG ECHO is funding, be it specifically to logistics services or to integrated humanitarian interventions where logistics solutions are embedded into standalone project logic and serve as a means to reach broader humanitarian results. Besides the provision of funding, DG ECHO works in collaboration with other donors and humanitarian actors to coordinate humanitarian aid efforts. It also monitors, evaluates, and provides technical assistance to its funded interventions and partners.

As illustrated under relevance, there is strong evidence of the fact that DG ECHO's budget allocations are based on needs and consider the actions of other donors:²⁹⁵ the HIP are developed by involving other humanitarian actors (this includes logistics activities too), the appraisals of partners proposals for single actions are developed on the basis of a needs assessment and on the careful consideration of the humanitarian context (including other organisations and donors in the area). Both HOPE documentation and interviews with DG ECHO staff indicate that DG ECHO considers the economy, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of logistics in selecting partner proposals and negotiating contracts in

²⁹⁴ UNOCHA, Humanitarian aid contributions, 2023. <https://fts.unocha.org/>

²⁹⁵ See Needs assessment https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/needs-assessment_en and Consultations with partners on financing decisions https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/funding-evaluations/funding-humanitarian-aid/consultations-partners-financing-decisions_en and HOPE Single Forms for Activities

area of logistics. The new e-single forms²⁹⁶ put even more emphasis on risk assessment and identifying beneficiaries, with a revised section (10.3) where considerations of logistics must be made. Interviews with DG ECHO's desks²⁹⁷ indicate that while funding is based on a relatively rigid project framework, there is flexibility in the face of changes, be they in the context of the crisis or in the intervention itself. This being said, a majority of respondents to the external survey agreed on the fact that DG ECHO can improve the coordination of its funding of humanitarian logistics. DG ECHO's respondents were divided on the statement *"DG ECHO uses a method that is simultaneously robust, effective, and needs-based to allocate funding for humanitarian logistics"*, with the most common answer being neither agree nor disagree (option 3, 32%). Detailed evidence on the efficiency of specific logistics services is presented below.

For the sample of interventions considered, project-level monitoring reports are regularly shared and available, and detail logistical constraints when necessary. However, the perception among both DG ECHO staff and partners is that monitoring and technical assistance needs to be accompanied by better technical capacities, both within DG ECHO and among partners: about half of respondents to the staff survey indicated how last mile distribution is often delayed because of incapacity of DG ECHO's partners to handle the logistics difficulties of humanitarian crises. Still about a half of staff respondents suggested to improve support to in-country logistical capacities, and 63% agreed on the need of trainings at HQ level how to identify and apply good logistics practices. Among partners responding to the survey, 59% does not think that DG ECHO partners have sufficient logistics expertise, and capacity building emerged in one sixth of comments on how to improve logistics support.

There is less evidence on the adequacy of the resources assigned to logistics, compared to the actual demand for logistics funding. Generally speaking, global requirements for humanitarian aid (including other sectors than logistics) are increasing, and have almost never been met.²⁹⁸ As logistics makes up a consistent share of humanitarian expenditure, it is unlikely that the funding requirements for logistics will be completely met in the crises where DG ECHO is present. The evaluation faced even more limitations in assessing the adequacy of funding allocations to logistics within DG ECHO's portfolio of funded actions. Even limiting the analysis to the interventions funded exclusively by DG ECHO, the evaluation found it impossible to isolate the funds allocated to logistics at portfolio level, as there is no marker within DG ECHO's monitoring system to disaggregate the proportion of funding dedicated to the area of logistics within a portfolio.

In the case where specific logistics services were funded, more evidence is available. In the case of aviation services, the limited budget available has often been allocated with efficiency considerations in mind: for EU HAF in DRC, coordination with WFP led to the homogenization of booking systems and to the adoption of more efficient procedures.²⁹⁹ While the budget allocated was still not enough to cover most identified needs, the overall cost of the operation decreased. On the contrary, for the aviation services in Afghanistan, the choice to adopt the less efficient but more rapid air transport was dictated by effectiveness rather than efficiency considerations.³⁰⁰

One of the key ambitions of the HLP is to increase the efficiency of DG ECHO with regards to humanitarian logistics, by supporting more shared services and joint procurement. However, as is discussed in section 5.1, this work has only just begun. The HLP and its implementation plan do however lack a detailed framework for monitoring efficiency savings.

Cost effectiveness of DG ECHO funded activities

²⁹⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Single Form 2021 - What has changed*, 2020. <https://2014-2020.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/download/referencedocumentfile/147>

²⁹⁷ Interviews with DG ECHO staff members.

²⁹⁸ See World Economic Forum, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023*, 2023. <https://www.unocha.org/2023gho>, and <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/01/humanitarian-needs-share-responsibility-funding-humanitarian-response-wef23/>

²⁹⁹ 2020/00531 Flight CPB Budget – UNHAS and UNOCHA: South Sudan Humanitarian Snapshot – September 2021

³⁰⁰ See Afghanistan LogCluster Meeting Minutes – 04/01/2023

Another limitation related to efficiency is related the enabling nature of logistics. For most of the humanitarian interventions funded by DG ECHO, logistics solutions are fundamental to ensure access to beneficiaries. This means that in most of the evaluated interventions, the support on logistics can be considered an enabling factor, without which the operations would not have functioned at all. In turn, this implies that is very difficult to assess the contribution of logistics to the realisation of outputs and outcomes in more detail, and as such cost-effectiveness. For most analysed interventions, the investigation is limited to costs analysis.

Considering these limitations, in general the costs associated with the logistics activities supported by DG ECHO are in line with international standards and market benchmarks:

- **EU HAF and UNHAS.** The hourly operating costs of EU HAF are the same as UNHAS, which is the reference service provider, and are aligned with the costs of general aviation.³⁰¹
- **EU HAB.** The costs per kg of goods transported by air with dedicated aircraft from the EU HAB program (Haiti,³⁰² Afghanistan.³⁰³) vary between € 7.5 and € 12/kg, depending on the aircraft and the route, in line with the costs of chartering air cargo services in the sector for transoceanic or intercontinental routes. In some cases, evidence was found that more efficient alternatives might be explored, although this strongly depended on context. In South Sudan, road and river transport modes might reduce the reliance on costly air cargo movements³⁰⁴. In Haiti, a volatile situation of gang-related insecurity means that access to road transport could be at times be negotiated, and sea transport became more relevant. As mentioned above, in Afghanistan the choice to deliver emergency medical equipment via air was made in light of timing considerations. Generally speaking, it is important to note that the cost of aviation must often be weighed against potential benefits, particularly in situations where other forms of transport may be unavailable or inadequate.
- **Regarding cargo,** the information on the value of the transported goods has not been collected, therefore, despite having the data relating to the value of the transport (kg / ton / unit of volume), it is complicated to trace the value of the logistics component compared to the value of the goods, which should normally range between 11% and 38%.³⁰⁵
- **Common and Shared Services.** Logistics activities often include the provision of common or shared services which by their very nature are meant to increase the efficiency of logistics. DG ECHO is funding projects to spearhead the provision of logistics services for NGOs, either as a standalone initiative (Atlas Logistique in Mali) or to complement the offer of the Global Logistics Cluster (RLH/Hulo in Burkina Faso, DRC, and Central African Republic). These service providing interventions are intended to generate several advantages related to the standardization of service levels and prices offered to less structured NGOs, especially for road transport, warehousing and last mile distribution activities. While there is some evidence of cost savings,³⁰⁶ at the moment of writing the evidence is too scarce to assess whether these pilot projects are scalable to other contexts.
- **Development of logistics preparedness and pre-positioning,** through support to Humanitarian Response Depots (HRD) and Humanitarian Procurement Centres (HPC): Potential cost-savings

³⁰¹ ICAO, Airline Operating Costs and Productivity Tehran, 20-23 February 2017

<https://www.icao.int/mid/documents/2017/aviation%20data%20and%20analysis%20seminar/ppt3%20-%20airlines%20operating%20costs%20and%20productivity.pdf>; US Federal Aviation Administration, Economic Values for Investment and Regulatory Decisions, Aircraft operating costs, n.d. https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/policy_guidance/benefit_cost/media/econ-value-section-4-op-costs.pdf

³⁰² Lloyd's List Group, Air freight charter \$1.5m, Lloyd's Loading List, London, 2021. <https://www.lloydsloadinglist.com/freight-directory/news/Air-freight-charter-prices-soar-to-1.5m/79964.htm#.Y9ID2HbMJAR>

³⁰³ World Food Programme, Detailed budget 08/12/2022, 2022; European Commission, DG ECHO, EUHAB Operations Tracking Summary 2021, 2021.

³⁰⁴ Logistics Cluster, South Sudan - Logistics Efficiencies and Pre-positioning Strategy 2020-2021, 2021.

<https://logcluster.org/document/south-sudan-logistics-efficiencies-and-pre-positioning-strategy-2020-2021>

³⁰⁵ Mutlu, Fatih, The transporter's impact on channel coordination and contractual agreements, 2006.

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Ratio-of-Transportation-Costs-to-Total-Costs-and-Total-Sales_tbl2_26900780

³⁰⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Interim Report for action 2021/00070/IR/01/01, 7 October 2022.

through HPCs are not systematically realised by partners (again, with high variability among contexts).

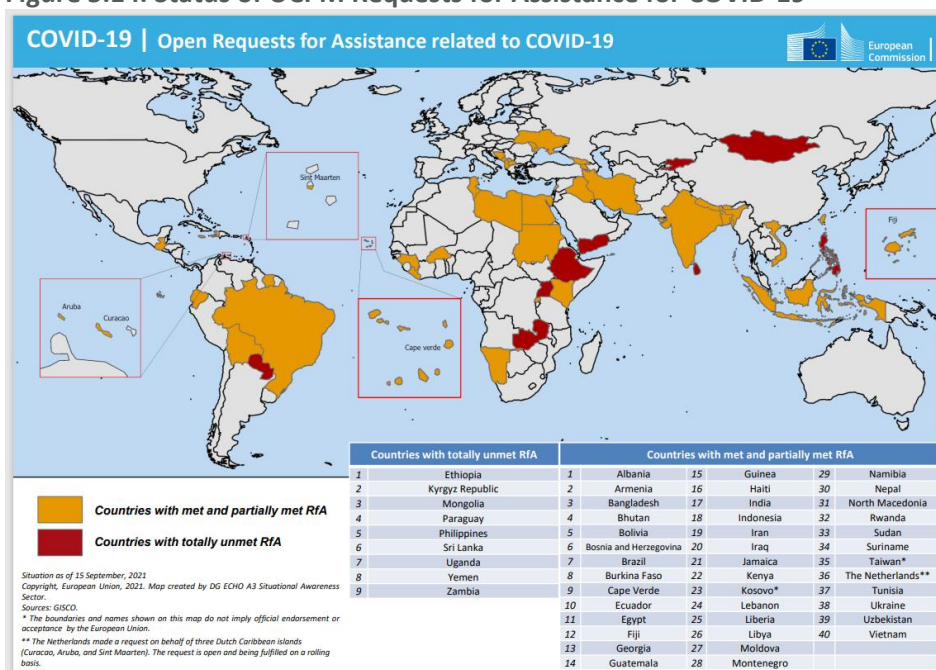


5.4.3. Logistics in the UCPM

There are limitations to the analysis that could be made for efficiency due to lacks in the availability and quality of data across portfolio. There is also limited information available on response times. Although data may be recorded for when the request for assistance is received and when the first national module or in-kind assistance but that is intermittent and not recorded in a centralised database that enables regular cross-emergency analysis. There is no data available for response times per delivery or for the broker. The cost per output envisioned in the tender was not possible as the UCPM data was not recorded to this level of detail. The main source of financial data available to the evaluation team (the transport grants) can be best described as working documents, which makes analysis precarious. The analysis is supplemented with qualitative measures of efficiency and cost-effectiveness from case studies, and qualitative data on the appropriateness of resource allocation from interviews.

Stakeholders consider that DG ECHO's budget allocations to logistics under the UCPM are appropriate and sufficient for DG ECHO objectives. In general interviewees were not aware of the overall envelope for logistics under the UCPM but rather focused their comments on the co-financing rates. Stakeholders appreciated the increase in the co-financing rates and reported that the previous rates were too low. They were generally satisfied with the co-financing percentages though some pointed out that not all of their costs were eligible for co-financing so a co-financing of 75% or 100% may be less in reality. Further there was a lack of evidence in the documentation and interviews that the budget was not appropriate. That some crises may go underfunded is due to the decisions of the Member States and Participating States not to offer assistance rather than a shortage in the budget for co-financing support (see the graphic below on the status of Requests for Assistance related to COVID-19). An interviewee reported that the budget was replenished as necessary to fulfil DG ECHO objectives.

Figure 5.14. Status of UCPM Requests for Assistance for COVID-19



Source: European Commission

The UCPM places an emphasis on timeliness and effectiveness over cost-effectiveness. The documentation and liaison with DG ECHO allude to the intention to implement cost-effectiveness. For example, two parts of the documentation on grant application assessments relate to efficiency. There

is a specific bullet point on 'Economy, efficiency and effectiveness', which places an emphasis on timeliness:

*"Due to the urgency of the situation in the affected country, an efficient response was the one saving lives, alleviating suffering and supporting the country and its population in the aftermaths of the crisis. The response is considered in accordance with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the Financial Regulation as the alternative would be no response at all with costly consequences for the affected country."*³⁰⁷

There is a further provision in the checklist, that the grant application assessment (evaluation report) should take into account "the efficiency and effectiveness of transport solutions designed to ensure the timely delivery of CP assistance"³⁰⁸

However, it became clear during the case studies phase that the emphasis on timelines meant that DG ECHO does not take a strong role in scrutinising the budgets proposed by Member States and Participating States. Given that these budgets are largely unchecked and there is limited guidance and subject specific expertise on how to assess whether they are reasonable there is substantial potential for losses in efficiency. Nevertheless, interviewees reported that the ERCC did take measures to encourage cost-effectiveness by advising and coordinating Member States and Participating States to share transport where possible (this potential is flagged on a case-by-case basis when a member of the ERCC team reviews the individual grant applications).

The case studies provided evidence of cost-effective activities. There was evidence of some degree of pooling and sharing of transport for goods and passengers across all case studies. However, this was most prominent for case study 8 on COVID-19 repatriations and 15 on Russia's war against Ukraine. During the COVID-19 pandemic Member States and Participating States increasingly cooperated to share transport for the repatriation of their citizens. In the case of the Ukraine response, the UCPM finances the shared warehousing of UCPM user assistance in three logistics hubs and pooled onward transport to Ukraine. Local procurement was highlighted as a cost-effective activity by interviewees, particularly for emergencies outside of the EU, that has the added value of contributing to the local or regional economy. One interviewee suggested that it was common practice for some Member States, such as Austria. Interviewees reported that local procurement was used for case study 7, in relation to Mozambique. There is, however, conflicting evidence on whether this is in line with how the UCPM co-financing is envisaged to be used, as it was designed for the transport of assistance from the assisting to requesting state rather than a third location. The last, noted cost-efficient activity was the choice to use cheaper, slower transit options chosen for the return route. For instance, sea transport rather than air. Due to the importance of a swift response during a crisis, these routes would not be appropriate at the outset however they may be a suitable transport option after the civil protection mission has ended and time is less of a critical factor. Examples of this are found in case studies 6 and 7 where Germany and Denmark shipped their cargo back from Mozambique and Indonesia for significantly reduced costs compared to other Member States and Participating States who sent similar volumes of cargo back to Europe via airport.³⁰⁹



5.4.4. The ESI Mobility Package

The evaluation provides some evidence related to the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of DG ECHO's logistics activities under the ESI Mobility Package as detailed below.

DG ECHO's budget allocations were based on Member States' needs for funding through the ESI Mobility Package. Implementation documents from the first call states that the European Commission reserves the right to decide the final allocation for each action according to an assessment made by

³⁰⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Annex to Award Decision Individual Evaluation Report, p. 3, 2022.

³⁰⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Annex to Award Decision Individual Evaluation Report, p. 3, 2022.

³⁰⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Internal documentation - Transport summaries, n.d.

the Commission of the needs received from Member States, in line with the conditions for eligibility and available funding, as well as the right not to allocate the full amount available.³¹⁰ In the notification letters received by applicants requesting funding support for cargo transport activities in the first call the European Commission further explain the decision criteria's for the final allocation. It states that eligible projects were awarded funding based on a formula which allocated available funds between Member States that have applied and for which at least one application met the conditions for eligibility. The formula ensures an equitable distribution of funds between Member States, in line with needs resulting from the COVID-19 emergency, taking into account total population, number of cases, and number of deaths. For Member States where there were more eligible applications than funding available under this formula, projects will receive only a percentage of the funds applied for, in line with the allocation to the Member State.³¹¹

DG ECHO also considered other support actions of the EU. This is clearly stated in the guidance notes of all three calls under the Mobility Package which demand that, to receive support, operations must not have received any other EU funding.³¹² ³¹³ ³¹⁴ No evidence from the field work suggests that there were overlaps of fundings between the ESI Mobility Package and other EU instruments. However, as noted under coherence above, it is not clear whether there is a risk of overlap in funding with different national funding mechanisms.

DG ECHO took a number of actions to ensure cost-effectiveness throughout the project cycle. Call documents refer to financial regulations.³¹⁵ and DG ECHO had plans in place for cases in which calculated budgets were exceeded. When requests for reimbursement via Mobility Package grants totalled more than the allocated amount for a Member State, Member State authorities were only reimbursed for a part of the amount requested. At the same time, DG ECHO could decide whether or not to proceed with a payment for transport broker even if the actual costs surpassed the estimated amount so long as the operation was based on sound financial management.³¹⁶ Costs were managed across the different calls, with DG ECHO deciding that it would not distribute the entire budget at once in this one call, to ensure that funds would be available for future needs.³¹⁷ This allowed DG ECHO to support Member States through two additional calls in 2020 and 2021 (second and third call). Before each call, DG ECHO also described in the documentation that it had determined a specific budget that could be spent on that call.³¹⁸

To monitor and track expenditures, Member States receiving Mobility Package funding were also required to submit to DG ECHO a final report on implementation of the action ('final technical report'), a final financial statement, a summary financial statement and a certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts ('certificate on the financial statements') for the beneficiary and for each

³¹⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, "2. Conditions for Awarding Grants Activation of ESI in Response to the COVID-19 pandemic", Implementation document 1st call, 19 June 2020.

³¹¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Notification letters served by the European Commission to applicants of funding support of cargo transport in the first call, 2020 (included in Grant documentation received by DG ECHO, 30/11/2022).

³¹² European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, June 2020.

³¹³ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2, June 2021.

³¹⁴ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4 (November 2021) – call 3, November 2021.

³¹⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, June 2020; European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2, June 2021; European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4 (November 2021) – call 3, November 2021; Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32018R1046>

³¹⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, June 2020.

³¹⁷ Based on interview with DG ECHO on 25/08/2022.

³¹⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 4 (November 2021) – call 3, November 2021.

affiliated entity, if the maximum grant amount indicated for the beneficiary and its affiliated entities in the estimated budget as reimbursement of actual costs was EUR 750,000 or more. ³¹⁹

In terms of cost per output, DG ECHO spent approx. EUR 48,000 per cargo output and approx. EUR 7,600 per transfer of patient and transport of medical personnel (see Table 5.4). Cargo outputs refer to the number of cargo routes taken via flight, train, sea crafts, cars, and trucks. Output in terms of transfer of patients and transport of medical personnel refers to the cost per transported/transferred person. However, this figure is relatively meaningless as the evaluation has not been able to find useful benchmarks to compare this figure against, including transports activities within the UCPM and humanitarian aid.

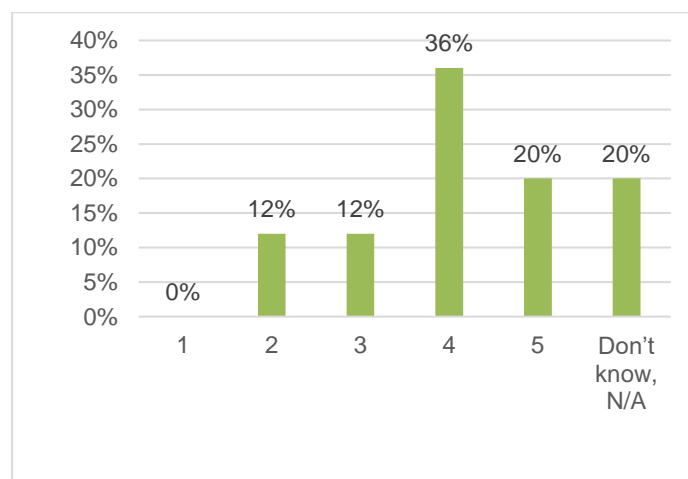
Table 5.4. Overview of operations costs and costs per output

Type	Total amount spent in EUR	Cost per output
Cargo operations (routes for flight, trains, sea crafts, trucks, cars)	152 180 986	€ 48 159 per route
Transport of medical personnel and transfer of patients	4 962 331	€ 7 611 per person transported or transferred

Source: Calculations by the evaluator based on documentation provided by DG ECHO

In the stakeholder survey, a majority of respondents confirmed that DG ECHO had used a robust, effective and needs-based method to allocate funding (see Figure 5.15). The survey with DG ECHO staff also confirmed that the ESI MP was generally found to be simultaneously robust, effective, and needs-based in terms of the method applied and timely and effective in terms of the provision of services (see Annex 9).

Figure 5.15. Perception about DG ECHO's method to allocate funding under the ESI Mobility Package (n=25)



Source: Stakeholder survey

The preparation and processing of documentations presented some administrative burden for applicants and DG ECHO, but the emergency nature of the ESI Mobility Package did not allow for significant improvements. DG ECHO was conscious of the pressure that the pandemic put on Member States' authorities and tried to deliver a smooth experience for applicants/beneficiaries. An assessment of the applications forms shows that they are relatively straight-forward, short, and focus

³¹⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Call 1: Model grant agreement for an action under the Emergency Support Instrument, 2020; European Commission, DG ECHO, Call 2: Model grant agreement for an action under the Emergency Support Instrument, 2021; European Commission, DG ECHO, Call 3: Model grant agreement for an action under the Emergency Support Instrument, 2021.

on collecting only essential information. However, since the ESI MP was a new instrument, familiarisation with the process and documentation among Member States' authorities could not be avoided. To increase familiarity, the ESI MP was modelled after the UCPM. While the UCPM has been well known among Member States, not all applicants were familiar with the UCPM procedures and working with DG ECHO (most notably health authorities, as compared to humanitarian or civil protection authorities which may be more familiar with the UCPM). To address this issue and answer questions, DG ECHO had meetings, calls, and email exchanges with Member States and prepared a variety of supporting information, including FAQ documents, an infographic, and PowerPoint presentations.³²⁰ DG ECHO regularly shared this with focal points; the dissemination of this information among applicants was in the hands of focal points.³²¹

Inevitably, the novelty of the ESI MP and the emergency nature of the situation resulted in some administrative burdens. Applicants in four of the six Member States analysed who received ESI MP support (NL, SE, DE, RO) found the preparation and processing of documentation somewhat difficult or burdensome. The survey conducted by DG ECHO with focal points and applicants/beneficiaries in 2021 to assess call 1 also concluded that 23% of respondents found the application process complex and 33% of respondents found the final reporting complex.³²²

Despite these findings, it should be noted that the administrative process could not have been much more efficient for Member States. The ESI regulation (Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521), by nature, is an ad hoc-based emergency response framework which does not permit longer-term preparation and fine-tuning of administrative processes. The purpose of the ESI MP was to provide fast and efficient support with the tools and knowledge available at that very moment. Since the COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented emergency and challenge for the EU, administrative processes and documents had to be newly developed, and DG ECHO was conscious of the need to create a simple and swift process.³²³ This was especially a challenge for DG ECHO internally, since there was no permanent, dedicated team working on the ESI MP alone but instead staff was rotated and involved in other tasks at the same time.³²⁴ Additionally, there was no dedicated lawyer in the DG ECHO team working on the ESI MP which made steps towards the launch of the ESI MP less efficient.³²⁵

If fit-for-purpose systems for the longer-term future were developed, DG ECHO could increase the efficiency of its emergency response even more, both internally and for Member States. However, it is important to re-iterate that this was impossible for the ESI MP during the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.5. EU added value

This section assesses the extent to which the results achieved could or could not have been reached through the interventions of participating countries alone, in terms of scope (the types of logistical activities supported), scale (the quantity of logistical activities supported), and coordination and gap filling (the ability to contribute to better coordination). The strength of evidence for this criterion is relatively high.

³²⁰ Based on the analysis of application and communication documents provided by DG ECHO to the evaluator.

³²¹ Interview with DG ECHO on 12/05/2023.

³²² European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021.

³²³ Meeting with DG ECHO on 25/04/2023.

³²⁴ Meeting with DG ECHO on 25/04/2023.

³²⁵ Meeting with DG ECHO on 25/04/2023.

5.5.1. Overall key findings

EQ12. What is the EU Added Value of DG ECHO's logistics activities?	
	All logistics activities evaluated are specifically designed to support the added value of the EU, and the evaluation finds many specific examples.
 	Common across logistics in humanitarian aid and civil protection is the added value provided by the EU due to its role in humanitarian advocacy and raising the profile of crises. As a political actor that has developed strong diplomatic relations around the world, the EU can use these relationships to open doors and humanitarian access during a crisis. However, there are also drawbacks to this political role, as it is perceived that it may create issues in some cases for INGOs and NGOs that rely on their neutrality to operate.
 	As evidenced above, during the evaluation period, the DG ECHO has developed a number of new instruments in logistics, in many cases giving DG ECHO more of an operational role. In civil protection , this is through the increased focus on the ERCC at country level and the logistics preparedness through the RescEU and on the humanitarian side , through the EU HAB and the EHRC. However, the evidence of the added value of this "evolution through crisis" is conflicting and is very much dependent on different stakeholder perspectives of the role of the EU. This varies across Member States and humanitarian actors. For some, this development is welcomed with the EU perceived to be filling a crucial gap in logistics, but there is also hesitation and suspicion about the future of DG ECHO taking a more operational role in logistics.
	Added value specifically on the humanitarian aid side, as a large actor DG ECHO can provide or support harmonised, common services (as evidence through its support for humanitarian air services), but also be innovative and try new things. This includes initiatives such as the RLH/Hulo platform and the EHRC. The development of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy is evidence that DG ECHO has used its position to spearhead humanitarian logistics principles in the humanitarian sector. There is also some scope for DG ECHO to provide specific technical assistance on logistics, particularly in air services.
	For UCPM the added value comes from coordinating the assistance and national modules of the Member States and Participating States to provide a cohesive, whole of EU response. Although Member States and Participating States appreciate the transport and operations co-financing provided by DG ECHO, it is the coordination provided by the ERCC at headquarters in Brussels and in the field that was most often recognised as providing EU added value. This is because the deployment of an EU civil protection team ensures that the crisis-affected country benefits from the assistance provided without being overwhelmed by the need to coordinate with all of the States involved. The ERCC also provides a valuable role in establishing ways of working at the beginning of a crisis and maintaining formal systems to draw and implement lessons learned from previous crises.
	When it comes to the ESI Mobility Package , EU added value generally stems from the financing of transport operations itself which relieved some financial pressure from Member States and allowed them to direct funding to other COVID-19 response costs. EU added value can also be found in the collaboration between authorities within a Member State, between Member States, and between Member States and the EU institutions. Linking to this collaborative aspect, some evidence suggests that the transfer of patients and the transport of medical teams and personnel had more direct EU added value.
	With regards to the transport broker , there is some evidence across humanitarian aid, civil protection, and the ESI Mobility Package that DG ECHO's ability to engage and maintain this service is of benefit to Member States, Participating States and partners. It provides an extra layer of added support to able to respond effectively and quickly to international crises that the individual State and NGO partners do not have themselves.

5.5.2. Logistics in humanitarian aid

By design, DG ECHO and able to achieve results that single participating countries could not achieve, both because of its resources and because of its mandate. On one hand, it has more resources than



any bilateral actor in Europe,³²⁶ allowing it to support logistical solutions that are both larger in scale and more innovative. On the other hand, if compared to bilateral donors it is less dependent on the political interests of national states.

The evidence collected through desk review, interviews and survey indicates that the value added of DG ECHO in humanitarian aid takes several forms:

- **Humanitarian advocacy.** There is some evidence that, through its reputation and position, DG ECHO is able to establish and maintaining good working relationships with the governments of crises-affected countries, supporting the smooth implementation of logistics. This was the case for aviation in South Sudan, where it advocated for easier access to airports and airstrips (see case study 9), and of Mali, where ECHO contributed to facilitate negotiation for the rehabilitation of runways.³²⁷ DG ECHO external partners responding to the survey also recognised this and suggested to increase efforts in humanitarian advocacy. Other examples of this are found in forgotten crises such as logistics operations provided in the context of the regional Central African crisis (CAR, Burkina Faso, Mali) (in 2020 and 2021), the Afghanistan crisis (since 2019), the Ukraine crisis (since 2021), the Yemen crisis (from 2019), DRC (since 2018), Myanmar (since 2018), and Haiti (since 2018).³²⁸
- **Scale.** As a large humanitarian donor, DG ECHO can afford to support logistics actions that are both better targeted and able to support a broader set of logistical needs (the whole humanitarian community, rather than actors of a certain nationality). This is clear in the case of aviation services, recognised as a success both by external partners and other donors as evidence in case studies 9 and 10, surveys and interviews, but also in the case of the support to Logistics Cluster, UNHRD and through the EHRC emergency field services (see Annex 9). By funding a large number of actors and actions, DG ECHO also can condense in the same organisation the knowledge of various actors, further increasing its adherence and flexibility against logistical needs. This is made explicit in DG ECHO's Humanitarian Logistics Policy.
- **Innovation.** Continuing its work from the previous evaluation period, DG ECHO has kept funding improved systems for humanitarian logistics, including continuing to partner with GLC on projects such as the development of methodologies for logistics operations, and promoting the use of more common services and methods for partners to improve their efficiency and effectiveness in operations. Its sheer scale allows DG ECHO to experiment with pilot initiatives (such as the RLH/Hulo platform) with relatively low risks related to failure in comparison to smaller actors. The development of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy and the EHRC is evidence that DG ECHO has used its position to spearhead humanitarian logistics principles in the humanitarian sector.³²⁹
- **Capacity to provide technical assistance.** In some cases (and especially aviation), DG ECHO has been able to provide exceptional logistical services because these were accompanied by good technical capacities on the ground. This allowed DG ECHO to both better target the needs and to monitor interventions, adapting them to the often volatile situations of humanitarian emergencies.

Much of this added value is being consolidated in the development and implementation of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy, where DG ECHO is using its position to spearhead humanitarian logistics principles in the humanitarian sector.

In comparison with the previous evaluation period, DG ECHO has taken a more proactive and operational role in logistics. This is specifically evident through the setup of the EU HAB and the EHRC. On the one hand, this seems to be completely in line with the needs brought about by emergencies

³²⁶ See UNOCHA, *Humanitarian aid contributions*, 2023. <https://fts.unocha.org/>

³²⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, *2021/00070 e-single form*, 2021; interview with DG ECHO Team leader for Transport and logistics.

³²⁸ Monitoring data for all activities from HOPE.

³²⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017: final report*, 2019. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf ; European Commission, DG ECHO, *DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document - Humanitarian Logistics Policy*. January 2022. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

such as COVID-19 and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. From another perspective, this could be seen as DG ECHO stepping beyond its function as a donor and also encroaching on the mandate of the UN, specifically logistics services provided by WFP as leader of the Logistics Cluster.

While some services are perceived as important and useful (and particularly aviation and the consolidation of EU HAF and UNHAS), others are seen as an incursion on the consolidated functions of the humanitarian system, and as a source of fragmentation.

In this sense, there are very diverse perception of DG ECHO's role and what it should be among its staff and its partners. While 62% of DG ECHO staff working in humanitarian aid responding to the survey agrees that DG ECHO should be directly concerned about how its partners deal with logistics, the figure drops to 45% among partners, and to just 33% among UN respondents. There is support for DG ECHO to do more to support coordination of logistics. 81% of external respondents believed that DG ECHO should be doing either something more (option 3, 27%), considerably more (option 4, 36%) or much more (17%) in the specific crises they were working on.³³⁰ 74% of DG ECHO respondents working on humanitarian aid either chose option 3 (moderately, 27%), option 4 (more 28%), or option 5 (much more, 20%).

Commenting on the relevance of existing logistics solutions, staff answering the survey highlighted gaps that sometimes affect operations: lack of human resources, technical expertise, and lack of coordination and communication. For some humanitarian actors there is also a clear gap in the services provided by the Logistics Cluster. When asked to agree or disagree with the sentence "Logistics clusters provide all the logistics coordination required at country level", the most common answer chosen by INGO respondents was "nor agree nor disagree", with many comments indicating high variability in the effectiveness of these services and that they are biased towards the needs of more powerful UN agencies without considering needs of smaller, local operations.

Still, through survey some partners expressed their doubts about DG ECHO's ability and the desirability to scale this type of support and fill this gap. This is also the case for DG ECHO's staff who highlighted how different perceptions of the relevance of logistics services depends on two factors:

- Questions around the desirability of DG ECHO's getting involved more directly with logistics services outside of consolidated mechanisms (such as UNHAS and Logistics Cluster),
- the absence of experienced field logisticians, especially in light of the need to apply the Humanitarian Logistics Policy (see further below).

This view is also repeated through key informant interviews with external stakeholders that note that as DG ECHO continues to develop the common logistics services operated/supported by DG ECHO, it should carefully consider its complementarity and specific mandate and role with regards to WFP operated common services.

Another potentially divisive issue related to DG ECHO's added value in humanitarian logistics is visibility. While in most cases DG ECHO is welcomed as a partner,³³¹ in two of the examined crises the role of the EU as a political actor either affected or posed a risk to humanitarian access. In Afghanistan, the perception of Western actors in the country and the increasingly strained relationship between the EU and the Taliban regime³³² have inescapably posed limits for European actors to access beneficiaries, especially in hard-to-reach areas. In Ukraine, the EU as a whole is acting as a partisan

³³⁰ INGO respondents chose these options more frequently than UN agencies (18% of INGO respondents chose "much more" compared to 13% of UN respondents).

³³¹ This was the case in the examined humanitarian interventions in South Sudan, DRC and Mali, both also in Mozambique, Haiti and Indonesia.

³³² See European External Action Service, *Afghanistan: Statement by the Spokesperson on EU's engagement*, Brussels, 2022.

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/afghanistan-statement-spokesperson-eu%E2%80%99s-engagement_en and European External Action Service, *Afghanistan: Statement by High Representative Josep Borrell on the latest decisions by the Taliban on the participation of women in public life*, 2022. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/afghanistan-statement-high-representative-josep-borrell-latest-decisions-taliban-participation_en

political actor, and several interviewees highlighted the risk that the EU flag might indicate that humanitarian storage and delivery is not neutral and impartial, or even subject to Russian military attacks. More details are included in the case studies.

5.5.3. *Logistics in the UCPM*



There is evidence from the portfolio review, case studies and survey that the UCPM logistics and support provides different types of EU added value. There is no confirmed evidence of “free-riding”, namely there is no evidence that funds were provided to states without need. One interviewee reported rumours that some Member States had overused the Mechanism for specific emergencies or had received payments for services provided for free by the EU. However, this was not corroborated by other interviewees and Member States and Participating States use of the Mechanism was consistent with the relevant legislation and policy.

Support via the UCPM enhanced EU cohesion and solidarity. There is evidence that the logistics response to recent intra-EU and external crises, contributed to increased cohesion. In terms of intra-EU emergencies, in case study 8 several interviewees noted that the UCPM activation for COVID-19 required a global European response and supported an increased feeling of solidarity within the EU. This sentiment is also supported by the evidence from case studies 4 and 5 on the forest fires in Greece and Sweden where interviewees report that the operation strengthened the feeling of EU solidarity in their respective countries. In addition, Swedish interviewees noted that the value of the UCPM was highlighted politically in Sweden as a result of the EU support received during the forest fires, and that this has led to an increased willingness in Sweden to support and strengthen preparedness within the EU framework and offer more when other countries are in crisis. In relation to emergencies outside of the EU, at least one of the case studies (case study 7 in Mozambique) evidenced that the UCPM response contributed to fostering a feeling of EU cohesion and solidarity amongst Member States and Participating States by coordinating assistance and supporting Member States and Participating States modules in-country to provide a united and synchronised EU response rather than several separate Member States/Participating States activities.

ERCC coordination of Member State and Participating State contributions at the headquarters in Brussels, and in the field provides added value. The first is that it can be vital to ensure that local government agencies are not overburdened. This was found to be particularly important in emergency-affected states that were outside of the EU, where additional on the ground coordination by the ERCC was often required for last mile delivery. There were often also further logistics and customs complications, compared to emergencies in the EU. Stakeholders highlighted consistently in interviews that the ERCC coordination maximised the value of the assistance provided by ensuring that the beneficiary state only dealt with one counterpoint rather than up to 37.

The presence of ERCC coordination in the field (in the form of an EU civil protection team) also enabled better coordination between the national modules and across civil protection and humanitarian strands. For example, in case study 14 Haiti, the Dutch military vessel co-financed under the UCPM was able to assist in transporting materials for other national modules when the security situation meant that land transport was not feasible. In terms of synergies between the UCPM and humanitarian portfolios, the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge not only delivered assistance from humanitarian partners, but also pooled and delivered Slovenia’s assistance that was offered under the UCPM alongside these goods. Another instance of complementarity is that the French team (deployed and coordinated via the UCPM) purified water in Les Cayes, which was distributed by IOM and UNICEF (humanitarian actors supported by DG ECHO).

ERCC coordination provides added value through its role in knowledge-exchange and establishing ways of working. Stakeholders reported that ERCC coordination at the headquarters and in the field fulfils an important role at beginning of an emergency to establish procedures and ways of working and to distribute these amongst Member States and Participating States, and at the end of/after an emergency to identify and process lessons learned. During the COVID-19 consular assistance/repatriation response covered in case study 8, one liaison officer was deployed to Finland,

one to France, one to Germany and one to Slovakia to streamline coordination with consular authorities and Member States and Participating State's embassies. Stakeholder feedback emphasised the liaison officers not only assisted with contributing their knowledge of international coordination, but also that the deployment of multiple officers in various European countries, and the creation of a specific emergency cell in Brussels with relevant DGs and authorities meant that lessons and ideas could be shared across locations in regular UCPM meetings on an ongoing basis. From an ICT perspective it was noted by stakeholders that although the systems available were not best tailored to this purpose, the existence of an UCPM-wide electronic portal for Member States and Participating States to provide updates on flights available for European citizens and information on European citizens in need of repatriation was nevertheless helpful. For example, the deployment of an ERCC Liaison Officer(s) alongside a UCPM response is a good on-ongoing practice. This is enhanced by the early deployment of an ERCC liaison officer. An ERCC liaison officer can support in establishing how the UCPM can meaningfully contribute to response operations. Those interviewed noted that the response was important and that it would have been very difficult to organise without ERCC support – bilateral arrangements would have been possible, but it would have taken a lot more effort and time.

DG ECHO co-financing via the UCPM worked as a force multiplier. There was evidence that it would not be possible to reach the same scale of logistics operations in the absence of EU's funding and support. The importance of the co-financing and logistics support differs by country, with those with a larger overseas development budget and widespread diplomatic network less dependent on the UCPM. Nevertheless, the case studies, interviews, and open comments in the survey suggested that the support offered via the UCPM added particular value:

- for emergencies outside of the EU where the transport costs were more expensive and Member States and Participating States were less familiar with transport modalities and routes.
- by lowering the threshold for Member States and Participating States to participate in a response.
- in long-lasting crises such as COVID-19 and Russia's war in Ukraine where co-financing is important to sustaining efforts over a longer period.

The EU added value through the UCPM by playing a role in humanitarian advocacy and raising the profile of crises. In terms of scope, the UCPM played a role in encouraging other donors and Member States and Participating States to fund activities that would otherwise not be funded/would receive less funding. In alignment with the previous evaluation,³³³ this includes the EU's focus on forgotten crises, and hard-to-reach locations with poor security. This is manifested in several ways. The first involves taking a political decision to respond to a request for assistance through the UCPM, whereby the ERCC maintains a transparent system where Member States and Participating States can see the assistance provided by other States and feel pressured to also respond. Furthermore, the ERCC actively engages with Member States and Participating States to encourage them to provide assistance. The second role identified by the interviews and case studies was where the EU promotes visibility and demonstrates attention and leadership externally, for instance, visits by political figureheads can keep a crisis on international donor agenda and combat donor fatigue by highlighting both the needs but also the progress that is being made. The value added by this role was underscored by interviewees in relation to case study 14 (Haiti) that has been on a deterioration trend, and 6 (Indonesia).

The EU added value via the UCPM by playing a role as a 'path forger'. Several interviewees noted that by engaging actively in a crisis, the EU can play a significant role in not only raising awareness of a specific crisis but by establishing relations with a given country and showing other donors how they can engage in the response. This role is particularly important in complex and fragile contexts where other Member States, Participating States, and donors have a willingness to engage but are uncertain

³³³ European Commission, DG ECHO, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics within EU civil protection and humanitarian action, 2013-2017: final report*, 2019. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

of an entry point. Interviewees noted that the EU's existing commitment to Haiti and engagement via the UCPM architecture, facilitated Member State and Participating State involvement.

DG ECHO has evolved its approach to logistics in response to crises. There was conflicting evidence on if DG ECHO's rapid development in response to recent crises, such as COVID-19 and Russia's war in Ukraine, was beneficial or problematic. For some respondents the use of the UCPM to respond to consular assistance and repatriations during COVID-19, or to establish logistics hubs in Member States as part of the Ukraine response in 2022 was positive and demonstrated DG ECHO's ability to adapt and deliver under pressure. However, some interviewees noted concerns that DG ECHO was developing too quickly, without taking the Member States and Participating States along with it. Observers of the EU, such as commentators at the thinktanks Carnegie and Notre Europe, note similar concerns and the tightrope that the EU must walk with regard to being able to act decisively on the one hand, and on the other ensure that changes have the trust and support of the Member States and their broader populations.³³⁴ Nevertheless, there are signs that extensive engagement or assistance through the UCPM tends to temper any reluctance. This can be seen through increased use of the transport broker or the hosting of RescEU capacities in Member States that were previously hesitant (e.g. Sweden, see case study 4).

5.5.4. The ESI Mobility Package

The added value varied according to the type of support provided and the evidence is mixed across different Member States.

The ESI Mobility Package was designed with the clear intention of producing EU added value. The documentation indicates that the Commission's approach for deploying the ESI was "Maximising EU added value – the ESI acts strategically and proactively, mobilising resources in a sufficient scale to deploy them in areas where intervention at EU level will add value over what Member States can do individually."³³⁵ While this refers to the ESI overall, evidence suggests that the Mobility Package also aims to create EU added value. The guidance notes for all three calls under the Mobility Package required that, to be eligible for support, operations must be cross-border (both within the EU as well as between third countries and the EU),^{336 337 338} highlighting that the funded operations should go beyond national endeavours alone and demand a higher-level support and coordination from the EU.

There is evidence to suggest that the ESI Mobility Package as a funding instrument provided some added value to Member States at a general level. The report of the survey conducted by DG ECHO in spring 2021 concludes that a vast majority of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the ESI MP had brought an EU added value to its own Member State's/region's COVID-19 response.³³⁹ Two types of EU added value experienced by the survey respondents were that:

- the EU financing of transport operations is an EU added value in itself as it allowed Member States to direct resources to other COVID-19 response costs; and
- the ESI MP assisted Member States in highlighting the importance of collaboration between both national authorities within a Member State, between Member States as well as between a Member State and EU institutions.³⁴⁰

³³⁴ Carnegie Europe, *The EU and the Creative and Destructive Impact of Crises*, 2022. <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2022/10/18/eu-and-creative-and-destructive-impact-of-crises-pub-88145>; Chopin, T., *European Union Governance in Response to Crises - What are the conditions for effective and legitimate European political leadership?*, 2021. <https://institutdelors.eu/en/publications/la-gouvernance-europeenne-face-aux-crises/>

³³⁵ European Commission, DG ECHO, Questions and Answers on Emergency Support Instrument (updated 26/06/2020), 2020.

³³⁶ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of transport support under the Emergency Support Instrument (19/06/2020) – call 1, June 2020.

³³⁷ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2, June 2021.

³³⁸ European Commission, DG ECHO, Guidance note on the implementation of the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package – Version 3 (June 2021) – call 2, June 2021.

³³⁹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021.

³⁴⁰ European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021.

However, the specific added value of the ESI Mobility Package varied across Member States. The evidence from the interviews at country level conducted as part of this evaluation provides a more complicated picture. The added value of funding cargo transport to specific Member States varied across those consulted. This financing was focused on transport from third countries to EU Member States, without any requirement for Member States to coordinate the transport. For instance, the Netherlands and Sweden, who only applied in call 1, had already organised procurement of medical equipment and PPE, including for transport. While the financing was seen a welcome contribution, it was not seen as vital. Neither country applied again, partly due to the administrative tasks required to apply and receive funding, suggesting that the added value was low for these countries. However, Germany and Romania noted that it relieved financial pressure on logistics operations and those countries also applied in future rounds.

There is some evidence to suggest that funding support for transfer of patients and medical personnel and teams contributed to more direct EU added value. This is also noted by DG ECHO staff interviewed, who stated that the transfer of patients and medical teams was specifically initiated to ensure that the ESI Mobility Package provided specific EU added value, in terms of cross-border operations. For example, the tool enabled Belgium and Denmark to jointly transport a medical team to Slovakia, which had requested support. A stakeholder participating in the evaluation stated that the countries did not have enough medical personnel on their own to meet Slovakia's needs and that the composition of the medical team consisting of personnel from both countries would not have been possible without DG ECHO. On the other hand, responses from the DG ECHO survey states that, based on the experiences from both Member States and DG ECHO in managing the implementation, “joint operations between Member States can be difficult to organise and do not necessarily maximise the EU added value”³⁴¹. However, due to limitations mentioned above, the evaluation did not include sufficient number of these types of activities to draw general conclusions.

The level of EU added value, or at least the perception of added value, depended on the specific context of the Member State in question. This includes the organisation of its health care system (with additional administrative burdens for those with decentralised systems that had to handle many applications), the specific impact of the pandemic on the national health care system at different times (with Italy perceiving that the ESI Mobility Package was initiated too late), and the national pandemic response, including available funding (with Sweden and Netherlands not seeing the funding as vital). The level of familiarity with DG ECHO processes was also a variable (with Netherlands focal point unused to applying for EU financing).

³⁴¹ European Commission, DG ECHO, Report on the results of the survey on the Emergency Support Instrument Mobility Package, 2021.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This section presents the overall conclusions by evaluation criterion, across the three examined strands: humanitarian aid, UCPM, and ESI Mobility Package. This section draws broader conclusions, but also notes where there are significant differences across the different components evaluated. Comparisons are not made due to the limitations mentioned under section 4 and in Annex 1.

6.1. *Relevance*

A key dimension of the relevance of logistics operations is their responsiveness to the needs of participating countries, key stakeholders and ultimately also of the affected populations/ or areas. This, in turn, has a number of dimensions: the extent to which the logistics portfolio was designed to respond to the specific crises that occurred during the period of the evaluation, the level of consultation in the design of activities, their perceived usefulness within a given context, the demand for activities, and whether their design has changed in response to the changing context.

The evaluation concludes that DG ECHO has shown flexibility in adapting to needs arising during the evaluation period, by developing new logistics services across the civil protection and humanitarian aid portfolios to respond to emerging crises, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic - the ESI Mobility Package a specific example, and Russia's war in Ukraine, and adapting to protracted crises. The logistics portfolio has to a large extent been designed and tailored to the needs of humanitarian partners, Member States, Participating States, and final beneficiaries, but the level of relevance depends on the specific context.

6.1.1. *Humanitarian aid*

In humanitarian logistics examples of flexibility and adaptability include the consolidation of the EU HAF prioritisation system with UNHAS procedures, which aligns with an explicitly recognised need for increased coordination. Several new activities and mechanisms were also developed, including the EU HAB and the EHRC. There is high strategic and operational relevance of the logistics portfolio. There is a consolidated stakeholder engagement mechanism and thorough assessment of needs for all logistics actions. Technical assistance provided is seen as relevant to the needs of partners when offered.

Further, it can be concluded that DG ECHO has integrated the lessons learned and recommendations from the 2018 evaluation to a large extent. The development of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy was delayed largely due to the pandemic, but it has now been launched and is being implemented. In the HLP, DG ECHO reconfirms its commitment to support coordination on logistics, and ambitiously proposes to take a more active role in directly supporting logistics at crisis level.

The introduction of the HLP, with a dedicated HIP, the EHRC (including common services within it, EU HAB and EU HAF) and LOGIS and LOGIS + networks seem to all be relevant to push the objectives of effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and environmental friendliness. HLP is in its infancy, only now starting to percolate through the ranks and files of the organisation and among logisticians/partners. There is a range of reactions to it, both positive and negative. The negative reactions indicate resistance to change, with the policy being perceived by some as yet another top-down donor requirement. At the same time, it is impossible to promote innovation and change without some disruptive action, and its objectives are widely shared across humanitarian actors. The evidence collected points in the direction of relevance; however, it is not sufficient to establish causal links between the still emerging effects of the HLP to measurable outcomes. In this sense, solid monitoring data will be needed to demonstrate that the support of DG ECHO to logistics is effective. To some extent, resistance to organisational change is natural to be expected.

With regards to supporting more effective humanitarian logistics, this largely depends on the specific approaches and tools adopted, and also on the buy-in from partners and other donors (e.g., adopting mandatory standards/procedures). However, it is likely that the HLP will bring attention to logistics when DG ECHO as a donor evaluates proposals and logistical choices. In turn, this should support the strengthening of DG ECHO's internal capacities. In terms of more cost-effective logistics, while



theoretically economies of scale can be created with the use of common approaches and resource pooling, this still needs to be explored and tested in different contexts. Currently the focus on monitoring, evaluation and learning through a formalised system is insufficient, however as mentioned above, a set of Key Performance Indicators is being developed for the implementation of the HLP.

With regards to more environmentally friendly logistics, the HLP itself considers environmental sustainability as an issue. However, it is less ambitious than some other humanitarian actors, DG ECHO's minimum environmental requirements (for now, it does not formally require partners to adopt any measures), and those of the Commission as a whole.³⁴²

As one of the latest tools adopted by DG ECHO, the EHRC does provide a unique tool to respond to many logistics challenges identified in the HLP. However, several questions remain around its future operation and how it fits into the humanitarian system and specifically the cluster system and the Logistics Cluster. This is fully realised by DG ECHO who are making continued efforts to clarify its position through engagement with for instance the GLC.

As such, following the recommendations of the previous evaluation, it is clear that DG ECHO is increasingly taking a more strategic and deliberative approach to logistics. While a strategy is defined and operational guidelines are being disseminated, given the ambitious approach of achieving a paradigm shift, this has yet to translate into practice, be it in grants management, monitoring or technical support. At the same time, it is important to notice how the ambitious aim of a paradigm shift will only be realised if there is enough support from other donors and the larger humanitarian community in the medium term.

6.1.2. UCPM

In civil protection, there has been increasing demand for logistics support, particularly for emergencies outside of the EU. For emergencies outside the EU there is a direct linear demand progression from 2018 to 2022. Although this trend can be attributed in part to the occurrence of unprecedented, large-scale emergencies (COVID-19 and Russia's war against Ukraine) during the period, this evaluation concludes that Member States and Participating States continue to find UCPM logistics and coordination support relevant and valuable. They favour the Mechanism as a tool to respond to crises faced in the evaluation period.

When it comes to the 'standard' civil protection operations that the UCPM has typically addressed, such as short-term crises in and outside the EU, the UCPM is a well-oiled machine with a developed lessons learned-process that enables it to constantly adapt and improve. The evaluation period however spanned two unprecedented crises in the form of the pandemic and the response to the invasion of Ukraine, and also reflects the trend that there is an increase in the severity and frequency of the 'standard' civil protection crises. The evaluation concludes nevertheless that DG ECHO was able to adapt well and increase its capacity to manage the dramatic surge in requests for transport and operations co-financing generated by the pandemic and the response to the invasion of Ukraine, and to support the establishment of the logistics hubs to streamline the delivery of assistance to Ukraine and alleviate the burden on the neighbouring Member States.

However, as noted under effectiveness, the UCPM's ability to continue to respond to large-scale, complex, and protracted crises is limited by its human resource heavy application process, co-financing set-up, IT systems (particularly for goods tracking), short rotation of staff in some instances, and access to specific transport resources (such as offloading and unloading equipment). A strength of the UCPM is the trust and support bestowed on it from the Member States and Participating States. While changes are necessary to ensure that the UCPM stays relevant in today's crises, it is important that this process engages with and ensures the buy-in of the Member States and Participating States.

³⁴² See for example the European Commission's Green Public Procurement, n.d. https://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm



6.1.3. *ESI Mobility Package*

Overall, the ESI Mobility Package was relevant to the needs of the Member States in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The MP fit well into the financial needs of the Member States, providing additional funding in light of the vast financial resources needed to address the pandemic. The MP provided prompt and time-conscious support, as it was launched soon after the start of the pandemic and made retroactive support possible to cover the time before it was launched. It also demonstrated flexibility in addressing Member States' needs throughout the three calls, e.g. application periods were prolonged to meet applicants' need for more time, transport of COVID-19 vaccine-related equipment and therapeutics was made eligible for funding when COVID-19 vaccines were released on the market. While the transport broker was viewed positively by consulted Member States, it was not used.



6.1.4. *Transport broker*

The services of the transport broker for logistics operations in humanitarian aid and civil protection were tailored to needs. For humanitarian aid this consisted of services to NGO partners to access hard-to-reach locations. In relation to the UCPM, the broker was reported to be most relevant for operations outside of Europe where Member States and Participating States were less familiar with the transport routes and modalities or for transporting particular items such as energy transformers.

6.2. *Coherence and complementarity*

There is strong internal coherence within each of the three evaluation components: DG ECHO's humanitarian logistics, logistics within the civil protection mechanism and ESI Mobility Package's logistics portfolios. When it comes to external coherence and coherence within the house, this has increased over the evaluation period, however the extent of coherence varies and there does not appear to be an agreed understanding of what complementarity should look like, exactly how it should be achieved or if it is even always desirable.



6.2.1. *Humanitarian aid*

In humanitarian aid, DG ECHO has made clear efforts to increase internal coherence during the evaluation period. The HLP, the new HIP for Transport and Logistics Operations and initiatives such as the EHRC and the LOGIS and LOGIS+ groups indicates that as an organisation DG ECHO is aware of the need to increase the coherence and complementarity of its portfolio, and that it has taken steps at the strategic level to respond to crises more efficiently and effectively. There are also initiatives that aim to support increased coherence between specific logistics services and those embedded in HIPs.

With regards to external coherence, the evaluation concludes that at the same time there are efforts to increase harmonisation of some activities, contributing to increased coherence (e.g. the takeover of EU HAF operations by WFP/UNHAS), while new initiatives providing direct support have the potential for duplication of logistics support (e.g. EHRC logistics hubs in Ukraine and Moldova with operations run by the Logistics Cluster and UNHRC). Nevertheless, very few specific overlaps have been identified and at this stage it is too early to conclude whether such initiatives would rather support increased complementarity, by providing more niche logistics services to very specific target groups, such as smaller NGOs.

At any rate, the evaluation concludes that there are efforts to increase coordination at a centralised, strategic level between for instance DG ECHO at headquarters in Brussels, and between the Logistics Cluster in Rome, and at the operational level between the humanitarian aid and civil protection components of DG ECHO as well as the Logistics Cluster and other humanitarian actors. However, the lack of an overview of DG ECHO logistics funding and a proper monitoring system makes could make coherence challenging, particularly as the documentation and insight is limited to a small number of individuals rather than integrated into DG ECHO systems.

Recent initiatives through the HLP and the EHRC mean that DG ECHO logistics services covers more of the supply chain than before, but there are areas where DG ECHO do not intervene much, including in

procurement, market/needs assessments, customs clearance and tracking and tracing. However, this evaluation does not suggest that DG ECHO would provide specific added value by focusing more on these areas, but rather that a better analysis of where DG ECHO should intervene is required. For this, a better overview of the portfolio and a proper M&E system is required (see further below).

When it comes to coherence with international humanitarian standards, specifically the Universal Logistics Standards (ULS), there is evidence of alignment in principle, but effective implementation of the standards in the field has not been a focus of this evaluation.



6.2.2. UCPM

For the UCPM, there is strong internal coherence within the logistics support provided, with a clear logic between different measures. There is also strong coherence between logistics activities the broader portfolio of UCPM actions. Logistics activities and coordination have a crucial enabling role for the response pillar of the UCPM.



6.2.3. ESI Mobility Package

The ESI Mobility Package was by design internally coherent and there is no evidence of overlaps or gaps in activities. The ESI Mobility Package was also largely coherent with Member States' own pandemic instruments.



6.2.4. Coherence of logistics in humanitarian aid, UCPM and ESI Mobility Package

Pertaining to coherence between civil protection and humanitarian aid, there is evidence of a meaningful improvement in complementarity during the evaluation period. The deployment of EU liaison officers and logistics officers within civil protection teams are recognised to have been a catalysing factor in this regard.



The choice to contract one transport broker to provide services across the three strands is evidence of coherence and joined up thinking. It provides opportunities for coherence in responses to emergencies, internally within DG ECHO and the various humanitarian aid, civil protection, and ESI Mobility Pack portfolios, as well as with Member States and Participating States using the service. This service has contributed to coherence across the strands.



Nevertheless, there is a lack of formal structures for knowledge exchange and lessons learned processes between the two sides of the DG ECHO house. Knowledge sharing and common lessons learned processes would not only facilitate an improved ability to work together across strands but would also allow cross-fertilisation from each strand's expertise and could improve their own respective operations. For instance, as the UCPM continues to intervene more outside of Europe, the contextual experience on operating in fragile and conflict-affected areas from the humanitarian aid side becomes more salient.

With regards to coherence between the UCPM and the ESI Mobility Package, the evaluation finds no overlaps between the ESI Mobility Package with UCPM instruments nor overlaps with Member States' own pandemic instruments. However, there are some indications of confusion between the MP and the UCPM activities on the part of Member States representatives.

Notably, the RescEU has integrated elements that the ESI MP provided in terms of cargo transport. Originally, RescEU was initiated to address forest fires and mainly focused on stocks and resources for firefighting and emergency shelters. This adaptation shows that DG ECHO has considered how to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the UCPM is hence expanding logistics activities to better prepare for future pandemics. Even if the ESI MP only covered cargo transport, RescEU provides for the medical stockpiles and their transport will be co-financed through the UCPM.

6.3. Effectiveness

The objective of DG ECHO's support to logistics can be broadly summarised as aiming to facilitate rapid, effective and efficient response in the event of disasters or imminent disasters, leading to a better coordinated, faster and wider response, optimised use of resources, and making sure that humanitarian relief and civil protection is distributed based on need and that aid workers are safe. Additional objectives of DG ECHO's interventions in this area are to support increased logistics preparedness and coordination.

While there are limitations to the analysis, it can be concluded that DG ECHO's support to logistics enables the effective delivery of humanitarian aid and civil protection and there are no specific examples where DG ECHO's efforts on logistics have hindered an effective response.

For all activities evaluated, the analysis has been hampered by a lack of monitoring data. Firstly, the data available on the HOPE platform and for UCPM activations and directly linked to logistics is limited to single interventions rather than portfolios, so that transversal analysis on logistics support and its effects are difficult. (The exception here is the ESI Mobility Package where portfolio level data was available.) Given the nature of the supporting services analysed, without such data it is hard to assess both their effectiveness and efficiency. On behalf of DG ECHO, this lack of information may result in suboptimal decision-making and resource allocation. Secondly, and because of the available monitoring infrastructure, the same available data is mostly limited to the level of output and to single interventions, rather than outcome or impact. This hinders an assessment of effectiveness at these levels and, potentially more seriously, makes it harder to identify areas where unexpected factors generate opportunities or threats. In the analysed interventions, the lack of monitoring data is also compounded by a relative scarcity of technical analyses (by DG ECHO or its partners) on the interventions that are most innovative or disruptive, and that might constitute good practices for replication.

6.3.1. Humanitarian aid



DG ECHO has introduced strategic initiatives of importance for the future effectiveness of humanitarian logistics: the Humanitarian Logistics Policy and the European Humanitarian Response Capacity. In terms of more direct operational support for logistics, the logistics interventions considered for this evaluation achieved the set outputs, especially when they had been set in an explicit way such as for EU HAF and UNHAS. All logistics services analysed can be considered enablers for humanitarian access, including in forgotten crises. Across contexts and sectors, the most important factor influencing effectiveness has been the flexibility and ability of DG ECHO and partners to meet changing demands and adapt to emerging needs. At the same time, there is a gap in the information collected by DG ECHO on the types of initiatives that work best in specific contexts, including innovative initiatives that might be replicated and scaled up.

6.3.2. UCPM



In civil protection, it can be concluded that the logistics activities and support provided by DG ECHO was effective as it contributed to the effective delivery of civil protection. However, it is important to note that what constitutes an effective response is not explicitly set out in terms of response times, assistance delivered, or beneficiaries reached. Effectiveness is based on the perception of Member States, Participating States, third states, and deployed staff who have witnessed what the assistance contributed too with their own eyes in the field.

DG ECHO'S coordination support was effective and the ERCC's role as a coordinator and facilitator was particularly appreciated by Member States, Participating States and third states (though the importance of this support depended on the context). The ERCC and deployed DG ECHO staff (both liaison officers and the full civil protection teams) facilitated and improved the delivery of the civil protection response in the field and coordination support from the ERCC at headquarters was viewed positively. Although stakeholders voiced frustration with the IT system used by DG ECHO, they

nevertheless highlighted that it was beneficial to have a common portal where all Member States and Participating States could communicate.

UCPM transport and logistics co-financing can be seen as valuable in its own right. However, it also provided an effective incentive to encourage Member States and Participating States to cooperate and work together and therefore to provide a cohesive EU response. There is also some evidence of increased coordination between Member States and Participating States. In doing so, civil protection operations contributed to strengthening solidarity within the EU and to signal the EU's commitment to assisting third states in times of disaster.

However, there are also a number of barriers to effectiveness. Particularly if DG ECHO will continue to respond to large-scale, complex, and protracted crises or simultaneous short 'classic' civil protection emergencies. The UCPM is limited by the human resource heavy application process (which is intensive for both internal staff and Member States and Participating States), the relatively rigid co-financing set-up that prevents DG ECHO from adapting based on the context (for example in the case of a protracted crisis such as the Ukraine response where the burden is heavier on some Member States and Participating States and sustaining financing is more difficult), IT systems (particularly for goods tracking), short rotation of staff in some instances, and access to specific transport resources (such as offloading and unloading equipment).



6.3.3. ESI Mobility Package

The ESI Mobility Package was important to an effective pandemic response. It mainly produced results by providing financing for transport; however, there is no concrete data on the lives saved and suffering prevented at impact level, as presented in the intervention logic. Stakeholders considered DG ECHO's coordination to be very effective, reporting that DG ECHO supported them in understanding which information or documents to submit.

While the Mobility Package was an entirely new instrument, the UCPM had been well known among many Member States. With this in mind, DG ECHO made efforts to ensure effectiveness by modelling the Mobility Package after the UCPM to increase familiarity and engagement with it and reduce administrative burdens for Member States.



6.3.4. Transport broker

The transport broker has been an effective tool to support common transport provision across the logistics portfolio. For humanitarian aid, the involvement of the transport broker in EU HAB has been vital for its operation. For the UCPM, the transport broker offered a number of advantages, particularly for locations outside of Europe and to remote locations, as well as to transport unusual or particularly large items. There are suggestions that the type of services provided through this or similar framework contracts with other private partners could be extended, to cover services, such as logistics resources (heavy lift transport options and onloading and offloading services). For instance, the broker was used to procure a warehouse for the EHRC activation in Moldova (case study 15), where the broker was able to find a suitable warehouse quickly.

6.4. Efficiency

The assessment of efficiency was based on a consideration of how well inputs were converted into outputs and the achievement of intended outcomes in relation to costs (cost-effectiveness). To the extent that it was possible, the assessment was conducted at the level of DG ECHO as a donor and intervention level.

It did not make sense to assess whether the funding was allocated appropriately between humanitarian aid and UCPM, or the ESI Mobility Package, as they are funded through completely separate instruments. There was no evidence of funding competition and they are used in different

ways for different purposes. As such, the evaluation found that the logistics services are not comparable.



6.4.1. Humanitarian aid

As was noted under relevance, there is very little evidence of funding overlaps. DG ECHO considers the actions of other donors and partners and adjust its funding appropriately.

With regards to efforts to consider economy, efficiency and cost-effectiveness, there is some evidence to suggest that the need to act quickly and decisively sometimes overrode cost considerations, but the evidence varies across different types of logistics activities.

It was possible to provide an assessment for a sample of interventions for humanitarian aid. This showed that costs are generally in line with standards and are adequately monitored in documentation. In some cases, there are suggestions that more efficient alternatives could have been explored, although this varies depending on the specific context. In general, such cost saving are often only possible after the initial stages of an emergency. Cost-saving practices such as pre-positioning stocks, local procurement, and market competition knowledge are promising options that have been used, but they are dependent on gaining familiarity with a given context which requires time. There are also examples of costs savings through support to joint procurement and common services. However, there is more potential for these types of activities. Finally, DG ECHO are increasingly paying attention to embedded logistics costs.

Nevertheless, the lack of reliable data on costs at portfolio level across different logistics services and the lack of clearly developed benchmarks for across all types of logistics costs are findings in themselves as this makes it difficult for DG ECHO to claim that it aims to foster more efficient and cost-effective logistics solutions when it is not actively monitoring costs and adapting accordingly. Attention to this will be an important feature of the implementation of the HLP, which has large ambitions in terms of contributing to efficiency savings.

With regards to allocation of funding for humanitarian aid, needs generally outstrip available funding. However, this is an issue that concerns the whole humanitarian sector (including logistics), and there is limited evidence as part of this evaluation that indicates that logistics suffers disproportionately compared to other types of humanitarian activities.



6.4.2. UCPM

For the UCPM, there is an emphasis on timeliness and effectiveness over cost-effectiveness. DG ECHO does not take a strong role nor have the subject expertise necessary to scrutinise the budgets proposed by Member States and Participating States. As a result, there is evidence of both cost-savings through shared and common services, and examples of quite expensive transport options being used.

Again, there is a lack of reliable data on cost at portfolio level and lack of benchmarks, making any assessment of efficiency difficult in this evaluation and for DG ECHO in the future.

For the UCPM, there is no lack of funding for logistics. While the increased co-financing rates were appreciated by stakeholders, there is some emerging evidence that the administration associated with the co-financing set-up makes the process unnecessarily complicated. The response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, has also raised questions about the need for a more flexible co-financing set-up to be able to adapt to different crises. In the case of Ukraine, the scale and protracted nature of the crisis means that the current set-up is impossible to sustain.



6.4.3. ESI Mobility Package

DG ECHO took a number of actions to ensure cost-effectiveness throughout the project cycle. The ESI MP was also efficient, given its circumstances. This evaluation and the survey conducted by DG ECHO in 2021 demonstrate some administrative burdens for Member States; however, it can be concluded that the ESI regulation (Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521) and the emergency nature of the pandemic constrained further improvements in the efficiency of the MP. The evidence shows that DG ECHO was

conscious of providing the fastest, most efficient support, while maintaining due diligence and transparency obligations. Efficiency could only be further improved with longer-term preparation, which was not possible for the ESI MP during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the COVID-19 response, DG ECHO used a budget allocation methodology that took into account Member States' situation and needs, specifically by considering the total population (20%), the number of COVID-19 cases (40%), and number of COVID-19 deaths (40%) in the applicant country. This method also ensured an equitable distribution of funds between Member States.



6.4.4. Transport broker

Due to the lack of data across the strands it is not possible to see whether the use of the transport broker represents any cost savings or if potential higher costs were justified due to gains in timeliness. Furthermore, there is conflicting evidence from interviewee and survey respondents with reports that the broker was both more expensive and cheaper than other options. This seems to depend on what other options are available to stakeholders. Some larger Member States have established their own framework contracts with transport brokers, whereas others have not.

6.5. The added value of the EU

All logistics activities evaluated are specifically designed to support the added value of the EU, and the evaluation finds many specific examples.

Common across logistics in humanitarian aid and civil protection is the added value provided by the EU due to its role in humanitarian advocacy and raising the profile of crises. As a political actor that has developed strong diplomatic relations around the world, the EU can use these relationships to open doors and gain humanitarian access during a crisis. However, there are also drawbacks to this political role, as this may create perceived issues for INGOs (this has been the case for example in Ukraine and Afghanistan, where the EU is inevitably seen as a partisan actor).



6.5.1. Humanitarian aid

On the humanitarian aid side, as a large actor DG ECHO can create added value by providing or supporting harmonised, common services (as evidenced through its support for humanitarian air services), but also be innovative and try new things. This includes initiatives such as the RLH/Hulo platform and the EHRC. The development of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy is evidence that DG ECHO has used its position to spearhead humanitarian logistics principles in the humanitarian sector. There is also some scope for DG ECHO to provide specific technical assistance on logistics, particularly in air services.

In comparison with the previous evaluation period, DG ECHO has taken a more proactive and operational role in logistics. This is specifically evident through the setup of the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge and the EHRC. On the one hand, this seems to be completely in line with the needs brought about by emergencies such as COVID-19 and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. From another perspective, this could be seen as DG ECHO stepping beyond its functions and encroaching on the mandate of the UN, specifically logistics services provided by WFP as leader of the logistics cluster (excluding support to UNHAS and EU HAF, where integration is clear and well-established). Historically, DG ECHO has focused more on its role as a donor than as a doer, and stakeholders appear to be concerned about who will hold DG ECHO accountable if DG ECHO is more than a donor. Such perceptions on the role and mandate of the EU in humanitarian logistics largely depends on the perspective of different stakeholders but was especially confirmed by interviews and feedback from some UN partners.

In any case, it seems that DG ECHO's future relevance as a more active logistics actor inescapably faces a trade-off: on one side, innovation and increased efficiency can only happen by testing new processes and ideas; on the other, these ideas inevitably need to replace existing systems and might create

uncertainty, displacing established procedures and ways of working. Once again, this trade-off is extremely contextual and might be more accentuated in certain contexts and sectors than others.



6.5.2. UCPM

For UCPM the added value comes from coordinating the assistance and national modules of the Member States and Participating States to provide a cohesive, whole of EU response. Although Member States and Participating States appreciate the transport and operations co-financing provided by DG ECHO, it is the coordination provided by the ERCC at headquarters in Brussels and in the field that was recognised as providing EU added value. This is because the deployment of an EU civil protection team ensures that the crisis-affected country benefits from the assistance provided without being overwhelmed by the need to coordinate with all of the States involved. The ERCC also provides a valuable role in establishing ways of working at the beginning of a crisis and maintaining formal systems to draw and implement lessons learned from previous crises.

In comparison with the previous evaluation period, DG ECHO has also taken a more proactive and operational role in logistics in civil protection to respond to emerging crises. This is specifically evident through the setup of the logistics hubs via the UCPM to support the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and the logistics preparedness through the RescEU. The extent to which DG ECHO taking a stronger role was seen as a welcome development varies across Member States and their overall view of the role of the EU, but there are signs that extensive engagement or assistance through the UCPM tends to temper this reluctance. This can be seen through increased use of the transport broker or the hosting of RescEU capacities in Member States that were previously hesitant (e.g. Sweden).



6.5.3. ESI Mobility Package

When it comes to the ESI Mobility Package, the added value of the EU is less evident in comparison to logistics services in humanitarian aid and for the UCPM and it varied between Member States, depending on their health care system, the specific impact of the pandemic on the national health care system at different times, and the national pandemic response, including available funding and the level of familiarity with DG ECHO. However, as a whole, it can be concluded that the instrument provided added value to Member States own pandemic response as it allowed Member States to dedicate financial resources to other COVID-19 response costs. Additionally, there is some evidence that the MP had EU added value in terms of facilitating cross-border collaboration between Member States.



6.5.4. Transport broker

With regards to the transport broker, there is some evidence across humanitarian aid, civil protection, and the ESI Mobility Package that DG ECHO's ability to engage and maintain this service is of benefit to Member States, Participating States, and partners. It provides an extra layer of support to enable a quick and effective response to international crises that the individual State and NGO partners do not have themselves. Its increased use shows that it will be an important service for the future.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations have been discussed and revised with inputs from the evaluation steering committee. They are presented by evaluation component.



7.1. Humanitarian aid

As some recommendations below relate to ongoing work of implementing of the HLP, some are already being actioned by DG ECHO at the time of writing.



1 Create better management systems for the set of supported logistic solutions, including for monitoring, evaluation, learning and decision-making.

Through the Humanitarian Logistic Policy, DG ECHO is promoting innovation in a space that has lagged behind in the past years, at least compared to advances in the private sector. Generally speaking, implementing the changes set out in the HLP and positioning DG ECHO as a more active actor in humanitarian logistics will require decisions on which solutions works and which do not, what investments make sense given specific objectives, while at times balancing trade-offs between effectiveness and efficiency. The evaluation highlighted how a large part of these decisions depend on the peculiar geographical, humanitarian and even political contexts in which DG ECHO operates. As such, the evaluation recommends creating the tools and systems to ensure that these decisions are based on evidence and documented for the benefit of potential scaling and replications. More in detail, this will entail ensuring that innovations linked to the HLP and the EHRC (such as the support to common and shared logistics services) are regularly monitored and evaluated with a growth mindset – failure is part of the process. Part of DG ECHO's added value as an implementer is that it is big enough to fail and can therefore be innovative. Innovation is essential to improve the products, processes, positions or paradigms in the humanitarian system or a particular humanitarian sector and thereby improve humanitarian practice.³⁴³ Nevertheless, innovation is an iterative process that is characterised by uncertainty. Attentive, regular monitoring and evaluation enables teams to design, refine and adapt the innovation at key milestones.³⁴⁴ A robust monitoring and evaluation system ensures that no innovation is a wasted opportunity. This can consist of a successful innovation which improves humanitarian performance or a “measurable, comparative improvement in effectiveness, quality or efficiency over current approaches to the problem addressed by the innovation”.³⁴⁵ Or a ‘good fail’ where new knowledge is “generated or the evidence base enhanced around the area the innovation is intended to address or performance of the innovation itself”.³⁴⁶ This exercise can be demanding on DG ECHO's limited monitoring resources. As such, it would be advisable to prioritise the interventions that seem more likely to generate useful knowledge on desired changes.

More concretely, the recommended measures could include the following:

- **Define a clearer intervention logic to identify the elements of desirable change in logistics and their relationship with internal and external factors**, starting from the HLP. While changes at result and impact level are clear, explicitly identifying milestones and how to reach them will hugely help both the implementation of the policy and the overall coordination of DG ECHO's work on logistics, both internally and externally.

³⁴³ Francis, D. and Bessant, J., Targeting innovation and implications for capability development, In *Technovation*, 25(3), pp.171–183, 2005. www.alnap.org/resource/11303.aspx; Warner, A. T. and Obrecht, A., *Monitoring Humanitarian Innovation*, 2017. <https://www.elrha.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/hif-alnap-monitoring-humanitarian-innovation-2017.pdf>

³⁴⁴ Obrecht, A., Warner, A. and Dillon, N., *Evaluating Humanitarian Innovation: HIF-ALNAP working paper*, 2017. <http://www.alnap.org/resource/23903>

³⁴⁵ Warner, A. T. and Obrecht, A., *Monitoring Humanitarian Innovation*, 2017. <https://www.elrha.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/hif-alnap-monitoring-humanitarian-innovation-2017.pdf>

³⁴⁶ Warner, A. T. and Obrecht, A., *Monitoring Humanitarian Innovation*, p.8, 2017. <https://www.elrha.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/hif-alnap-monitoring-humanitarian-innovation-2017.pdf>

- **Connect the intervention logic to DG ECHO's monitoring system**, identifying and developing KPIs to measure the desired changes in efficiency, sustainable practices, and promoting the position of logistics as a priority in the humanitarian sector. This process is already ongoing. The indicators should not need to be too rigid and stifle innovation but should provide some indication of what can be considered a success. Some examples could include benchmarks for efficiency and effectiveness (e.g. response times per delivery item, cost per output), measures of carbon emission reduction and waste management, or visibility of humanitarian logistics in coordination fora.
- Relatedly, it would be beneficial for this monitoring exercise to **integrate a marker on funding and resources allocated to logistics in the budgets of supported interventions**, for direct and embedded logistics services. This would allow DG ECHO to get a broader overview of the logistics it funds, which would be beneficial for learning around innovative practices by partners. An added benefit would be for increased coherence with other actors. Given the uncertainties across humanitarian sector about the definition of logistics, the earmarking system will have to be accompanied by training for partners (see Recommendation 2);
- **Focus direct monitoring activities on logistics interventions with more promising prospects to generate knowledge**. This includes innovative and disruptive activities that might be interesting for replication, with a specific focus for practices that make particular actors, initiatives or sectors likely to function elsewhere, and where DG ECHO can take a direct innovation role. Once innovation is documented, DG ECHO can leverage its broad network of stakeholders to act as a knowledge broker. The following areas seem particularly promising:
 - Common and shared services.
 - Digitalisation, including to automate processes, improve coordination and tracking.
 - Localisation initiatives.
 - Environmentally sustainable practices.



2 Strengthen the plan to apply and disseminate the Humanitarian Logistics Policy.

In order to better disseminate the policy and professionalise the sector on logistics, DG ECHO should strengthen its support to logistics for both partners and staff. A system should be established based on a global assessment of logistical capacities or needs (taking into account for example the suggestions from this evaluation's surveys)³⁴⁷, including the following components:

- **External advocacy**. The change identified by the HLP will require the involvement and support of other actors, including donors. To ensure that this paradigmatic transition is successful and sustained over time, it is necessary to engage in advocacy efforts at all levels to promote the benefits of the logistics policy and secure the buy-in of other stakeholders. The evaluation recommends continuing to fund the HLP implementation plan and accompany it with advocacy efforts at all levels to secure buy-in from other actors, including other donors. This should be accompanied by active dissemination of funding opportunities under the HLP HIP, leveraging existing logistics fora and tools, such as the GLC newsletter.
- **Internal advocacy** is also required, terms of continuing to push for increased focus on logistics in the work of the DG, e.g., inclusion of humanitarian logistics topics in dialogues with donors and partners or mainstreamed through the geographical work/HIPs.
- **A set of knowledge management tools** based on the HLP and environmental sustainability in logistics. The system can build on existing elements within DG ECHO, and include:
 - Guidance and specific information on key policies, procedures, designed to be easily accessible and understandable for all stakeholders, including project managers, logisticians, and administrators.

³⁴⁷ See Annex 9, in particular questions 20 and 30 in the external partner survey, and question 25, 45 and 46 in the internal staff survey.

- A semi-interactive repository of good practices to showcase successful approaches to managing humanitarian logistics operations in an environmentally sustainable manner. This repository would allow other humanitarian actors to contribute with case studies, success stories, and other examples of best practices.
- Regular updates to inform stakeholders about changes and to promote its usage.
- DG ECHO could also choose to do this together with some of its partners that focus on research and knowledge dissemination in the logistics space.
- **A detailed training plan** led by a task force that should support logistics across DG ECHO.
 - The task force would ideally be composed of field logisticians, procurement, environmental and market localisation specialists (with experience in the field and within NGOs, as the gaps in logistics capacity seem to be concentrated among them). They could be involved in DG ECHO's work as consultants.
 - The training plan should cover the whole duration of the HLP plan, and prioritise countries identified in the needs assessment, with the choice of countries based on previously agreed criteria.
- **A logistics help desk**, led by the same task force and potentially involving short-term specialists as needed for any specific expertise not existing in-house. The idea is to have expertise on call for both staff and partners (previous approval of DG ECHO desks) whenever there is a need to design complex logistics solutions. While a detailed conceptualisation of such a project transcends the scope and capacities of this evaluation, similar projects have been implemented with success in other European Commission DGs, including DG INTPA and DG NEAR. These include:
 - Helpdesk on Green Public Procurement (GPP) - <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/helpdesk.htm> ;
 - Access2Markets to Trade Helpdesk users - <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/content/welcome-access2markets-trade-helpdesk-users> ;
 - European IP Helpdesk - https://intellectual-property-helpdesk.ec.europa.eu/regional-helpdesks/european-ip-helpdesk_en ;
 - Africa IP SME Helpdesk - https://intellectual-property-helpdesk.ec.europa.eu/regional-helpdesks/africa-ip-sme-helpdesk_en ;
 - INTPA Evaluation Support Service - <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/devco-ess> ;



3 Formalise a strategic partnership with the Global Logistics Cluster and support tailored logistics interventions complementing WFP's work

An area for improvement for DG ECHO's work in logistics includes finding the balance between disruptive innovation and integration with the existing system. For this purpose, it is recommended that DG ECHO develops and formalises a strategic partnership with the Global Logistics Cluster (GLC), as the key player in the coordination of logistics activities in humanitarian operations. This should draw on a previous Letter of Intent signed between WFP and DG ECHO on logistics.³⁴⁸ This partnership should clarify how DG ECHO and WFP complement each other, and how they should coordinate different services, such as EU HAB, EU HAF, EHRC. A formal partnership with GLC/WFP will allow both organisations to improve coordination, fill gaps in logistics service delivery, and leverage the added value of both organisations. The partnership should formally identify the type of DG ECHO interventions that can complement WFP's work, in areas such as last-mile logistics and low-value operations in hard-to-reach areas. By supporting such interventions, DG ECHO can contribute to filling gaps in service delivery that are not met by the Logistics Cluster, while enhancing the overall logistics

³⁴⁸ Letter of Intent. Strengthening Operational Cooperation between the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection of the European Commission and the United Nations World Food Programme. Signed March 2016

response for its partners. These interventions should be aligned with the objectives of the EHRC and should be made more explicit to ensure effective coordination and collaboration between all stakeholders. Another feature of such a partnership could be to consolidate the UNHAS and Logistics Cluster agreements at a more central level. This would also allow DG ECHO to get a better overview of the WFP funding at a central level. It is understood that this is being discussed. At the time of writing, it is understood that there are already ongoing discussions with WFP to action some of these recommendations.

7.2. UCPM

The recommendations are addressed to DG ECHO and the Member States and Participating States of the Civil Protection Mechanism. They recognise that DG ECHO's ability to implement an effective response and make necessary changes are dependent on the support of the Member States and Participating States. As such, it is encouraged that DG ECHO maintains a regular and robust dialogue with Member States and Participating States.


4

Create better management systems for the UCPM, including for monitoring, evaluation, learning and decision-making, including improvement of IT and administration systems.

These should consider the following:

- An online database for all UCPM documentation, more similar to HOPE than the current system.
- Consider developing benchmarks for efficiency and effectiveness of transport operations (e.g. response times per delivery item, cost per output).
- More automated forms and recording to lessen the administrative burden on the Member States and Participating States and ERCC. At this stage, the evaluation has not been able to assess the extent to which CECIS 2.0 provides for these needs.
- A system for tracking and tracing transport through UCPM, ensuring that this system is available for a broader set of stakeholders than CECIS.
- Incorporate collaboration on lessons learned between civil protection and humanitarian aid at operational level into the existing civil protection lessons learned structure. This would enable the civil protection and humanitarian aid components of DG ECHO to showcase examples of how to create synergies as well as exchange knowledge on topics that are relevant across DG ECHO. For example, the lessons learned meeting could include a session on best practices for efficiency in logistics that covered local procurement and different transport options.


5

Consider ways to expand and support development of the European Civil Protection Pool.

This could include:

- More experts with suitable country and regional experience, experience in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, appropriate language skills, more experts with logistics capabilities. This could be done through additional cross-fertilisation between civil protection and humanitarian aid.
- Ensure that experts are trained on the UCPM and the humanitarian aid assistance for emergencies outside of the EU, so they are aware of their roles within the UCPM, what it has to offer, and similarly on the UN and Logistics Cluster system. As this evaluation did not include evaluation of the training in the UCPM, it has not been possible to establish the extent to which this is already taking place. It is however understood that there already is a training programme that involves the Logistics Cluster in some way.


6

Consider expanding partnerships with the private sector for specific logistics services and assets.

This could include services for tracking and tracing, airport management, offloading and unloading equipment.

- DG ECHO's internal systems were not developed, nor are intended to be sophisticated tracking and tracing logistics systems. Nevertheless, the ability to be able to accurately trace and track assistance throughout all phases of the transportation cycle, from pick up to delivery is important for DG ECHO to be able to implement a timely response and for the knowledge of both sending and receiving countries. There are numerous private companies in the logistics industry that have specialised in providing these services. DG ECHO should consider engaging these services to improve and streamline tracking and tracing, particularly for large, complex, and or protracted crises.
- DG ECHO also lacks certain assets that are needed in most responses, such as offloading and unloading equipment. To date this equipment is generally sourced on a spontaneous, ad hoc basis for each individual crisis, either drawing on Participating States' own assets or a partner in the field. Given the consistent need for such services and assets, DG ECHO should consider engaging a regular service provider for these services.



7 Consider reviewing the UCPM legislation to allow for:

- Changes in co-financing in light of protracted emergencies and to simplify the application process. Enable a financing rate of 100 % in such circumstances.
- Extending RescEU for operations outside of Europe. This could allow procurement of required assets for responding to emergencies outside of the EU. For instance, suitable aircraft or asset for offloading equipment (as detailed in recommendation 6 above).
- Changes to deployment length and timing for EUCPT and ERCC Liaison Officers. Longer deployments are potentially required, particularly for protracted crises. The emphasis for EUCP teams deployments tend to be at the beginning of the crisis when they are vital for coordinating the arrival of in-kind assistance, and national modules. However, there are other key points when the extra support of the LO would be beneficial. For example, in supporting the development and implementation of exit strategies, or to assist with supporting financing reporting as understood to be required for Ukraine.



8 Adopt relevant approaches from the Humanitarian Logistics Policy.

Internal DG ECHO stakeholders primarily viewed the Humanitarian Logistics Policy as being relevant to the humanitarian assistance component of DG ECHO's work. Nonetheless, the core principles and approaches embodied in the policy should also be adopted and applied to civil protection. For example, the policy's emphasis on raising the profile of logistics and on a greener delivery of humanitarian aid are equally relevant to civil protection.



7.3. ESI Mobility Package

No recommendations are provided on the ESI Mobility Package specifically, since it was a one-time instrument activated to specifically address the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, it is unclear what the next activation of the ESI will look like and if DG ECHO will be involved. The development of recommendations was considered during the research; however, they may not necessarily be relevant or useful for the next activation due to these factors. Therefore, best practices are presented instead in the section below. However, the evaluation includes one recommendation for an upcoming evaluation of the whole of the Emergency Support Instrument.



9 Evaluate the appropriateness of ESI legislation in emergency settings.

As noted in the evaluation, the emergency nature of the pandemic coupled with specific financial and administrative requirements in the ESI legislation and the EU financial regulations caused a high administrative burden for DG ECHO and Member States' focal points and applicants. A future evaluation of the ESI as a whole should consider the extent to which the legislation could be adapted to allow operations under emergency settings to be more streamlined.



8. BEST PRACTICES: ESI MOBILITY PACKAGE

The presented best practices reflect on lessons learnt from the implementation of the ESI MP and can be further explored and referred to in case of future need:



1 Adequate resourcing

A dedicated, more permanent team working on the MP in DG ECHO would have made the work more efficient. The rotation of staff in DG ECHO complicated the work and most team members were not fully dedicated to the MP alone but were involved in other tasks at the same time, often depending on other units in DG ECHO. Additionally, the availability of a lawyer within the team responsible for the MP would have positively impacted the efficiency of the work, especially in the early stages of designing the procedures with the aim of ensuring a solid yet simple process for the implementation of the MP.



2 Retro-active eligibility for support

To ensure that Member States could benefit from the activation of the MP in the weeks before it was launched, DG ECHO opted for a retro-active eligibility of funding for operations.



3 Continuous support over the course of the emergency

DG ECHO used the budget available under the ESI MP strategically, ensuring that support could be made available over a longer period of time. This was important since, at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was unclear how long it would last. Hence, when designing the MP, DG ECHO decided to not disperse the entire available budget in the first call in 2020, making the second and third calls in 2021 possible. DG ECHO also opted for keeping the application period for the transport of patients and medical teams open-ended to make more continuous support possible during the pandemic.



4 Supportive communication and information

DG ECHO prepared and shared information about the MP and the application process on its website to inform Member States and support them in the application process. For applicants – especially those who were not familiar with DG ECHO and had not applied for other DG ECHO support before – access to this information was important since the MP was a new instrument, requiring some familiarisation.



5 Improved IT and administration systems

This links to recommendation number 4 for the UCPM. To allow DG ECHO to further improve its efficiency in responding to unprecedented emergencies, an online platform could be created with some space dedicated to new emergency situations, such as the ESI MP. This space could allow DG ECHO to automate the submission of call applications, documentations, and reports. It could also host a section with guidance and useful information, e.g. FAQ documents, infographics, PowerPoint presentations, completed templates to help applicants, and other communication materials. This could simplify and centralise the sharing of information and relieve some administrative burden off focal points acting as intermediaries who disseminate information at Member State-level.

9. ANNEXES

All compiled annexes are available in a separate document. The annexes are as follows:

- Annex 1: Detailed methodology
- Annex 2: List of documents reviewed
- Annex 3: List of stakeholders consulted
- Annex 4: Intervention logic
- Annex 5: Evidence matrix
- Annex 6: Key informant interview guides
- Annex 7: Context analysis
- Annex 8: Portfolio analysis
- Annex 9: Survey results
- Annex 10.1-3: Case study 1-3: ESI Mobility Package
- Annex 10.4: Case study 4: UCPM – Sweden Forest Fires
- Annex 10.5: Case study 5: UCPM – Greece Forest Fires
- Annex 10.6: Case study 6: UCPM – Indonesia Earthquake & Tsunami
- Annex 10.7: Case study 7: UCPM – Mozambique Tropical Cyclone
- Annex 10.8: Case study 8: UCPM – COVID-19 repatriations/consular services
- Annex 10.9: Case study 9: Humanitarian aid – Provision of Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) and Logistics Cluster (LC) Common Services in Support of the Humanitarian Community in South Sudan
- Annex 10.10: Case study 10: Humanitarian aid – Evolution of ECHO flight/EU HAF – from DAC Aviation to WFP Aviation – The DRC case 2018-2021
- Annex 10.11: Case study 11: Humanitarian aid – Enhancing and Strengthening Collaborative Approach and Resources Pooling of Humanitarian Supply Chain and Operational Logistics
- Annex 10.12: Case study 12: Humanitarian aid - Supporting the Humanitarian Response in Mali through the Expansion of Shared Logistics Services
- Annex 10.13: Case study 13: Humanitarian aid - Overview and Focus on Humanitarian Air Services in Afghanistan 2021-22
- Annex 10.14: Case study 14: Humanitarian aid/UCPM – Haiti Earthquake 2021
- Annex 10.15: Case study 15: Humanitarian aid/UCPM – Ukraine response 2022
- Annex 11: Terms of reference

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The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - ECHO

ECHO Mission

The primary role of the Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) of the European Commission is to manage and coordinate the European Union's emergency response to conflicts, natural and man-made disasters. It does so both through the delivery of humanitarian aid and through the coordination and facilitation of in-kind assistance, specialist capacities, expertise and intervention teams using the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)

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