



European
Commission



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FACTS & FIGURES

More than **1.6 billion** people (22% of the world's population) lack access to basic healthcare (World Health Organization)

Largest EU humanitarian health interventions in 2018: Syria, Iraq, Palestine*, Jordan, and Mali

EU humanitarian health funding: **€220 million** in 2018

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European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

Health

What is it?

Health is a core sector of humanitarian aid interventions. The European Commission aims to provide high-quality humanitarian health assistance to people in need. This includes emergency medical assistance but also vaccination, hygiene promotion, and screening for malnutrition. As a result, health is an area closely tied to other humanitarian sectors, such as [water and sanitation](#), [nutrition](#), and [food](#).

Why is this important?

Each year, millions of people are in need of humanitarian health assistance due to natural disasters and conflicts. Many medical needs during emergencies are context-specific.

The most frequent medical needs arise from acute respiratory diseases, diarrhoea, complications during pregnancy and delivery, injuries (including from sexual and [gender-based violence](#)), under-nutrition, malaria, and other communicable diseases. The lack of prevention and treatment for non-communicable diseases is often another problem. Crises also often have a significant impact on mental health and psychosocial well-being.

In addition to context-specific causes, prolonged conflicts can have a devastating impact on healthcare provision, especially when health facilities and health workers come under attack.

How are we helping?

The European Commission provides around €200 million every year to support humanitarian health programmes. The European Commission's humanitarian health funding is governed by its [Consolidated Humanitarian Health Guidelines](#), which help ensure coherence between the departments of the European Commission, EU Member States and other donors providing health assistance.

Recent examples funded by the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (ECHO) include:

- improving access to primary healthcare,
- preventing and responding to disease outbreaks (such as cholera, measles, and [Ebola](#) outbreaks) in [Yemen](#) and the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#),
- providing mental health and psychosocial support in [Afghanistan](#), [Libya](#), and [Syria](#),
- supporting adapted and culturally sensitive healthcare services to refugees and migrants in [Turkey](#).

In addition, EU humanitarian aid also ensures the treatment of severe and moderate [malnutrition](#), and access to [safe water](#). To help mobilise medical and public health teams and equipment for sudden emergencies, the European Commission and countries participating in the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) have launched the [European Medical Corps](#). Countries can offer their specialised health units in support of populations hit by disasters inside and outside the EU.

The European Commission is also actively involved in the [Global Health Cluster](#), which is the main international forum for coordinating humanitarian health assistance led by the World Health Organization (WHO).

* The designation of Palestine shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

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