Forest fires are a serious and increasing threat throughout Europe. They have a high socio-economic impact and lead to a tragic loss of life. Each year in the EU:

- 65,000 forest fires
- 95% are caused by humans
- 34 firefighters and other people killed (611 killed 2000-2017)
- €3 billion – economic damage from wildfires
- €2.2 billion – spent by EU governments and public agencies to fight forest fires
- 680,000 ha of forest areas burned – 1 million ha in 2017

Challenges:
- Ineffective fire management and suppression strategies currently result in human injuries and fatalities.
- Landscapes and communities need to become more resilient to forest fires.
- New wildfire patterns require better forest fire prevention and preparedness.
- Effective forest fire management and decision-making require science-based information.
- EU-funded research stimulates advances in fire knowledge, operational management and decision-support mechanisms, while improving cooperation among key actors.
- Firefighting and rescue services need better coordination.

The EU is investing in research for better prevention, suppression and integrated management.

- The EU is investing in research for better prevention, suppression and integrated management with €103 million over 20 years in 56 forest fire-related research projects.
- EU-funded research contributes to the development of science-policy advice for risk management, including for forest fires.
- Firefighting and rescue services need better coordination.
- EU assistance to an affected country.
- Natural and social sciences need to be better integrated.
- New wildfire patterns require better forest fire prevention and preparedness.
- Effective forest fire management and decision-making require science-based information.
- Landscapes and communities need to become more resilient to forest fires.

Recommendations for policymakers:
- Make fire prevention, suppression and integrated management an integral part of forest management.
- Develop predictive capability.
- Improve cooperation and coordination.
- Implement forest fire prevention through participative, multi-level governance.
- Support the implementation of science-policy advice.