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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

Annual Report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the humanitarian aid operations financed in 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the European Union's main activities and policy outcomes in the field of humanitarian aid in 2025, as carried out through the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO). It has been prepared under Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid, which requires the Commission to submit an annual report to the European Parliament and to the Council, including a summary of the operations financed in the course of the preceding year.

DG ECHO's mandate is to help **save and preserve life, prevent and alleviate human suffering and safeguard the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural hazards or human-induced disasters** occurring inside or outside the EU. Under this overarching objective the European Commission, through DG ECHO, acts as both the EU's humanitarian aid donor and emergency responder. It also coordinates and facilitates civil protection operations at EU level through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). The UCPM also regularly operates outside of the EU to deliver emergency assistance and humanitarian aid. As such, it complements the Commissions humanitarian aid activities as described in this document. DG ECHO's work is helping to achieve the Commission's political priorities: i) a new era for European defence and security; ii) sustaining our quality of life: food security, water and nature and; iii) a global Europe - leveraging our power and partnerships.

The EU provides humanitarian aid to people in need around the globe, guided by the humanitarian principles of **humanity, impartiality, independence, neutrality and non-discrimination**. These are enshrined in Article 214 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid ([1]). EU humanitarian aid is directed to those in the greatest need, irrespective of their nationality, religion, gender, ethnic origin or political affiliation. It also specifically address the needs of women, children, older people, the sick and people living with disabilities ([2]).

2. THE GLOBAL CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH ASSISTANCE IS DELIVERED

2025 was yet another year marked by high levels of humanitarian needs globally. According to the UN Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Global Humanitarian Overview 2025 ([3]), nearly **305.1 million people worldwide** were estimated to be in need of relief assistance and protection. An estimated 117.8 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced, as a result of violent conflict, human-made disaster, natural hazards and the impacts of climate change ([4]). Around 266 million people experienced high levels of acute food insecurity across 47 countries or territories ([5]) ([6]).

([1]) Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission (2008/C 25/01).
([2]) In line with the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to which the EU is a party.
([3]) Global Humanitarian Overview 2025 [EN/AR/FR/ES] | OCHA.
([4]) Global Trends report 2025 | UNHCR.
([5]) FAO, WFP & GNAFC 2026 Global Report on Food Crises – Joint analysis for better decisions
([6]) In the Annual Activity Report (AAR), DG ECHO reports that a total number of 295 million people are experiencing acute food insecurity worldwide. The discrepancy depends on two factors: 1) due to the publishing date of the AAR, the report relies on the 2025 GRFC (referencing 2024 data) and 2) the number of surveyed countries in the 2026 GRFC has decreased compared to 2025. Several countries

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continued to have a devastating impact on the civilian population: more than 12.7 million Ukrainians needed humanitarian assistance ([7]). In the Gaza Strip the humanitarian needs are substantial in all sectors. The entire population of Gaza (2.1 million ([8])) is exposed to security and protection risks and faced the spectre of famine in 2025. Across Sudan, 19.5 million people – two out of every five Sudanese – are facing acute food insecurity ([9]), with famine in at least five areas. The complex crises in Myanmar, Afghanistan, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Horn of Africa, and the protracted crises in the Sahel region, Yemen, Colombia, and Venezuela, further underscore the severe challenges faced by vulnerable populations globally. These conflicts and crises are further fuelled by failed governance, structural poverty and continued widespread **violations of international humanitarian law (IHL).**

Delivering humanitarian aid is more difficult than ever. In 2025, the humanitarian system found itself in the middle of a financial, legitimacy and moral crisis of record proportions. OCHA published a hyper-prioritised Global Humanitarian Overview ([10]), only covering assistance to 114 million people, a third of the total estimated number of people in need. The system has been put under additional strain due to major policy decisions and drastic funding cuts, notably by the United States and some other major donors. This has forced organisations to scale back or suspend operations, reducing life-saving assistance and leaving affected populations even more vulnerable. In numbers, the 2025 global funding for humanitarian aid dropped by 20%, from USD 41.5 billion in 2024 to USD 33.3 billion in 2025 ([11]).

Humanitarian aid workers face increasing dangers every year, due to **unpredictability, volatility, insecurity and disregard for IHL**. 2025 was yet again a deadly and dangerous year with 350 aid workers killed and over 500 wounded or kidnapped worldwide ([12]) ([13]). **Restricted or denied access** hampers the delivery of humanitarian aid to people in need and complicates the implementation of necessary control measures, such as on-site monitoring and need assessments.

Despite these **challenges**, the Commission **managed to achieve its objectives**, under the priorities and key actions outlined in the Commission Communication on the EU's humanitarian action adopted in March 2021 ([14]). In 2025, EU humanitarian aid provided

including Burkina Faso, the Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Algeria and Ecuador had data available in the GRFC 2025, representing more than 27 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity in 2024. They are not accurately represented in the 2026 GRFC. This is largely due to funding shortfalls and humanitarian access constraints.

([7]) OCHA (2025) Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2025 (April 2025) [EN/UK] - Ukraine | ReliefWeb.

([8]) OCHA (2026) oPt Flash Appeal.

([9]) Sudan | World Food Programme.

([10]) Global Humanitarian Overview 2025 - The Cruel Math of Aid Cuts (Hyper - Prioritized Report) - June 2025 | OCHA.

([11]) ALNAP (2026) Global Humanitarian Assistance.

([12]) Aid Worker Security Database | Aid Worker Security Database. Humanitarian Outcomes (2026). Aid Worker Security Report 2026. What the threat is the state: Detentions of humanitarian workers. https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/AWSR_2026

([13]) Due to the late publication of the 2025 HAR, this report is complete with the full verified set of data on humanitarian aid worker casualties. The 2024 HAR was published before the complete validation of number of casualties for 2024 and only referenced validated cases. Thus, the number of validated casualties for 2024 rose to a total of 383.

([14]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles. COM(2021)/110 final.

needs-based, principled emergency assistance and disaster preparedness support to people in 110 countries worldwide, targeting the most vulnerable ([15]).

Together, the EU and its Member States provide the largest share of global humanitarian funding, around 33.6% of global committed humanitarian aid contributions ([16]). The Commission alone provides 11.5% of global humanitarian funding ([17]). The initial budget was set at **EUR 1.93 billion** in 2025, enabling the EU to intervene in large-scale humanitarian crise, including in Ukraine, Palestine ([18]) and Sudan. This amount also allowed the EU to designate 25% of the initial budget for forgotten crises of a severe and protracted nature, where the level of international aid to affected populations is insufficient, such as in the Philippines, Haiti, Mozambique, Yemen, and to populations caught up in the Sahrawi crisis. Following several budget reinforcements [(10)], the final annual budget for 2025 exceeded **EUR 2.57 billion**. The reinforcements received throughout the year originated from the following sources:

- the **Emergency Aid Reserve** (EAR) for a total amount of EUR 583.53 million, representing 23% of the final EU humanitarian budget. These funds were mobilised to address crises in Africa (notably the Sudan regional crisis and other emergencies in the Greater Horn of Africa and west and central Africa), as well as urgent needs in Palestine, Syria, Ukraine and Afghanistan, including spillover impacts in Pakistan and Iran;
- **redeployments from Heading VI** instruments were used to cater for the crisis in Yemen (EUR 20.34 million) and to help refugees in Türkiye (EUR 20 million);
- transfers in the framework of the **VAH - *Virement d'Aide Humanitaire*** (in line with Article 30.2 FR allowing the transfer of unused appropriations from Heading VI instruments to cater for new crises after 1 December). EUR 1 million was allocated to Ethiopia to address the outbreak of Marburg Virus Disease and EUR 2.67 million was allocated to South-East Asia following the floods there;
- re-assigned revenue from recoveries (EUR 2.82 million).

The Commission works with **around 220 partners,** of which 103 were funded through contracts signed in 2025 (see list in Annex II). Of the 2025 funding, 43.7% was distributed to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), 47.6% to UN agencies, 7.9% to international organisations and 0.8% to governmental organisations. Annex I presents the budget allocated to the main crises covered by the Commission's actions in 2025. The main actions in the different regions of the world can be summarised as follows ([19]):

([15]) To support an evidence-based approach in mapping and contextual analysis of risks and needs, the Commission uses INFORM — an open-source suite of risk assessment tools co-developed with UN agencies and humanitarian organisations under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), developed by the JRC and supported by DG ECHO.

([16]) Total reported funding 2025 | Financial Tracking Service.

([17]) OCHA Financial Tracking Service 2025.

([18]) The designation of Palestine should 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.

([19]) Differences in numerical data, people in need, internally displaced, refugees etc. between the Annual Activity Report and the Humanitarian Aid Report may occur due to the continuous 2026 publications of 2025 Final Reports from DG ECHO partners.

2.1. Eastern Neighbourhood and Türkiye

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has had a devastating impact on millions of Ukrainian citizens, resulting in civilian deaths and suffering, and large-scale destruction of towns, villages and critical infrastructure. This has prompted large humanitarian needs and meant that almost 3.4 million Ukrainians were internally displaced in 2025 ([20]). The situation in areas closer to frontlines and those under Russia's military control remains extremely volatile. As for the Eastern Neighbourhood, in 2025, Moldova hosted around 139 000 Ukrainian refugees and Türkiye hosted some 2.3 million Syrians under temporary protection ([21]). In response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the Commission made a total of EUR 220 million available in 2025, with an additional EUR 44.4 million for Moldova, Türkiye, the Eastern Neighbourhood, the Western Balkans and central Asia.

2.2. Middle East and north Africa

The year 2025 began with the continuation of the relentless war and destruction in the Gaza Strip that has been ongoing since 2023, resulting in another year of catastrophic humanitarian crisis, unprecedented in scale and severity. Throughout 2025, the entire population of Gaza lacked access to food, water, or basic services such as healthcare and shelter. A ceasefire went into effect on 10 October 2025 which, despite being frail and breached regularly, contributed to a reduction in violence and some improvement in the flow of humanitarian aid, albeit of limited scope and duration, as administrative constraints severely impede humanitarian support. Furthermore, in 2025, the Commission continued to address the humanitarian needs in Syrian and Lebanon, as well as the needs of Syrian refugees and vulnerable host communities in neighbouring countries (Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq). North Africa is also experiencing several hotspots of forced displacement. In Libya, the south-eastern region of Al Kufra experienced a significant influx of Sudanese refugees. Recent data estimates that there are more than 514 000 refugees there. Similarly, Egypt hosts over 1.1 million refugees, with Sudanese refugees constituting 76% of all registered refugees ([22]). By the end of 2025, the Commission had allocated EUR 550.4 million in relief assistance to the Middle East and north Africa.

2.3. South-West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula

The humanitarian situation in Afghanistan remained dire, with 21.9 million ([23]) people in need of humanitarian assistance at the end of 2025. Amidst severe food insecurity and lack of basic services, girls are denied access to school beyond primary level, affecting over 2.6 million adolescent girls. The Afghanistan crisis is also affecting neighbouring countries. Iran was hosting up to 4.4 million Afghans, and Pakistan an estimated 2.3 million Afghani people. Pakistan's implementation of the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan and Iran's increased forced returns of undocumented Afghans significantly worsened regional humanitarian pressures. On the Arabian Peninsula, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen sharply deteriorated in 2025, with 19.5 million ([24]) people in need of humanitarian assistance and 4.8 million people displaced, often repeatedly. Amid some of the highest levels of food insecurity globally, the risk of famine re-emerged for the first time since

([20]) Ukraine | Displacement Tracking Matrix.
([21]) Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Türkiye | UNHCR Turkey
([22]) Registered Population (Refugees and Asylum Seekers) as of 31 December 2025 | UNHCR Egypt.
([23]) Afghanistan: Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2026 (December 2025) [EN/Dari/PS] | OCHA.
([24]) Yemen Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2025 (January 2025) [EN/AR] | OCHA.

2022, with nearly half of all children under five acutely malnourished. To respond to the crises in the two regions, the Commission allocated EUR 324 million in 2025.

2.4. East and southern Africa

The east and southern Africa region was marked by violent conflicts, population displacements, cyclical extreme weather events, climate-related shocks and recurrent epidemics. Additionally, the significant reduction in global humanitarian and development funding in 2025 led to scaling down of life-saving operations in countries experiencing the worst food security and nutrition crises. Sudan continues to face the world's largest displacement crisis, with more than eight million people forcibly displaced inside the country. A staggering 19.5 million ([25]) people, or two out of every five Sudanese, experienced acute food insecurity and famine was confirmed in at least five areas. The conflict triggered widespread violence, including sexual and ethnic violence, as well as major violations of IHL. In South Sudan, where over 70% of the population need humanitarian assistance, over a million people have arrived fleeing the neighbouring conflict. This was exacerbating an already fragile situation. The intensification of conflict in South Sudan led to a new influx of refugees into Ethiopia, a country still grappling with over a million refugees and protracted internal displacement due to unresolved internal conflicts. In southern Africa, violence continued in northern Mozambique and three tropical cyclones hit the region between December 2024 and March 2025. The effects of the 2023-2024 El Niño-induced drought continued to be felt with some 20 million people across the region still facing acute food insecurity. A budget of over EUR 484.5 million was allocated to address these and other pressing humanitarian needs in the region in 2025.

2.5. West and central Africa and the Great Lakes

Several regional and interlinked conflicts affect west and central Africa. The Lake Chad Basin crisis, impacting Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger, was characterised by significant protection threats and large-scale population movements. In central Sahel, violence against civilians fueled forced displacement in that region and into the coastal countries of the Gulf of Guinea as well as in Mauritania. The conflict in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo escalated further due to a major offensive by the M23 armed group in early 2025. Violations of human rights and IHL occurred daily in these different crises, as did widespread sexual and gender-based violence. To respond to crises in west and central Africa and the Great Lakes the Commission allocated a budget of EUR 396 million in 2025, aimed at addressing food insecurity, malnutrition and multisectoral needs.

2.6. South-East Asia and the Pacific

Since the Tatmadaw military coup in 2021, hundreds of thousands of people have fled Myanmar into neighbouring countries to seek refuge. This includes the Rohingya population. Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh hosts over one million aid-dependent stateless Rohingya refugees. With almost 21 million people already in need of humanitarian assistance, the 7.7-magnitude earthquake in March 2025 impacted an additional two million people. Furthermore, Myanmar, being the second most violent context worldwide, reported the highest number of landmine casualties in 2024-2025 ([26]). In the Indo-Pacific

([25]) FAO | Risk of Famine persists as nearly 19.5 million people face acute food insecurity in Sudan.
([26]) Conflict Index | ACLED, Landmine-Monitor-2025-Final-Online-updated.pdf.

region, the EU responded to a growing number of climate-related disasters in 2025. This includes Tropical Cyclone Ditwah in November, which caused major destruction in Sri Lanka. The budget for the region amounted to EUR 105.4 million in 2025.

2.7. The Americas and the Caribbean

Central and South America face high exposure to violence, natural hazards, poverty and inequalities in the context of a transcontinental mixed migration crisis. Venezuela remains one of the largest forgotten crises worldwide, with 58.6% of the population living in extreme poverty and around 70% lacking regular access to health services and clean water. The humanitarian response has been severely affected by the deep fiscal crisis plaguing the sector. The EU acted as leading donor, providing around 43% of total humanitarian funding to Venezuela. The impact of the Venezuelan migration and refugee crisis continued to be felt in the whole region. People on the move are among the most vulnerable victims, and often survivors of violence, including of organised crime. In Haiti, gangs control 80% of the capital Port au Prince and their influence reaches deep into many other parts of the country. In 2025, six million people required humanitarian assistance. The Commission allocated EUR 153.7 million in relief assistance to the Americas and the Caribbean in 2025.

3. DELIVERY OF ADEQUATE AND EFFECTIVE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

To **champion multilateralism** and a rules-based global order through a more active role and a stronger voice for the EU in the world, the Commission maintained strong strategic and operational partnerships both bilaterally and multilaterally. It advocated a substantially increased humanitarian financing effort and a better sharing of responsibility among donors. The Commission continued to engage in the **Grand Bargain** ([27]) process, in particular on the implementation of quality funding and localisation commitments.

The European Humanitarian Response Capacity, the Commission's in-house emergency humanitarian response tool, was refashioned into **ReliefEU Capacities and Funding** ([28]) by combining operational capacity with the Emergency Toolbox. Together they support partners to provide humanitarian assistance, by delivering humanitarian goods and transporting humanitarian workers to hard-to-reach areas where assistance could not otherwise be put in place. In 2025 the ReliefEU Capacities responded to 20 crises affecting 17 countries ([29]), deploying a range of transportation services, including chartered flights, and a variety of logistics services.

- A total of 6 780 metric tonnes of humanitarian aid materiel were shipped via 127 chartered flights, sea, and land transportation through the ReliefEU.
- A total of 32 641 humanitarian workers were transported by EU Humanitarian Aid Flights (EU HAB).

([27]) The Grand Bargain.
([28]) ReliefEU - European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations.
([29]) Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Laos, Lebanon, Mali, Niger, Palestine, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Somalia, Sudan and Syria.

- A total of 1 205 metric tonnes from EU stockpiles were donated to partners.

ReliefEU funding, composed of the All Emergencies Response Tool (ALERT) and support to the IFRC's Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), provides additional financial support to partners responding to sudden-onset disasters, including a growing number of climate- induced disasters. ReliefEU Funding was mobilised a total of **118 times** in **60 countries**, providing a total of **EUR 53.5 million** in first-line humanitarian funding.

- ALERT was triggered 38 times for the immediate response to conflict and population movements in multiple countries, including Ethiopia, Myanmar and Sudan; to epidemics in Uganda and Central African Republic, floods in Mexico, Pakistan and Thailand; and to tropical cyclones in Cuba, Mozambique and the Philippines.
- The EU replenished 77 DREF operations implemented in 51 countries by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), including in response to floods, droughts, epidemics and population movements.

Additionally, in 2025 the Commission provided policy application and development, offering recommendations to partners for high-quality, coherent and accountable EU-funded humanitarian operations.

Food insecurity is at an all-time high. **Famine** remained present in Sudan and was officially declared in Gaza. To respond to growing global hunger, the Commission allocated around **EUR 600 million** for **food assistance and nutrition and famine prevention** in 2025. In addition, the Commission also updated its **Humanitarian Food and Livelihood Assistance Policy** ([30]).

The Commission's **humanitarian health assistance** accounted for **EUR 400 million** worldwide in 2025. This funding supported existing health systems where possible. It also ensured access to basic medical care, epidemic response, maternal and newborn health, trauma care and mental health and psychosocial support. During 2025 the Commission responded to address the **cholera, Ebola and yellow fever** outbreaks on the African continent and released new guidelines ([31]).

The Commission's advocacy efforts to promote respect for **IHL** and the protection of aid and health workers continued through public statements and interventions in multilateral fora and at high-level events. The Commission also provided funding for **IHL-related projects**. This included **EUR 30 million** in support for the programme for the prevention of IHL violations of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and strengthening the monitoring of IHL violations.

Protection remains a priority across all humanitarian sectors, with the Commission allocating **15% of its overall humanitarian envelope to sectoral protection activities**. Humanitarian crises impact women, girls, boys and men differently and individual vulnerabilities will affect the lived experience of a crisis. In 2025, the Commission

([30]) Humanitarian Food and Livelihood Assistance (HFLA).
([31]) DG ECHO Health Policy Guidelines.

increased its funding to support sexual and reproductive health and combat gender-based violence to **EUR 114 million**, from a previous yearly average of EUR 70 million.

More than **234 million children and young people** affected by crises worldwide urgently require access to learning ([32]). This includes 85 million who do not go to school. In 2025 the Commission continued to place an emphasis on **education in emergencies**, maintaining investment in education at the ambitious level of 10% of the annual initial EU humanitarian aid budget, equivalent to over **EUR 180 million**.

One of the main multipliers of humanitarian needs today is climate change. The number and severity of natural hazards are increasing as a consequence of our world getting warmer. The Commission is dedicated not just to providing a response, but also to increasing preparedness for when disaster strikes. To this end, a third of all Commission-funded humanitarian projects include a preparedness component and the designated **disaster preparedness** budget line stood at **EUR 81 million** in 2025.

In support of advocacy and to raise the profile of EU humanitarian aid, the Commission generated a variety of media products and engaged in a broad range of **communications activities**. Highlights included the **campaign #VoicesofHumanity,** which reached over 75.2 million people in 10 Member States, more than double the figure of campaigns in previous years. The fourth edition of the European Humanitarian Forum brought together 2 300 participants from across the world.

4. REVIEW OF ANY OUTSIDE ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED ON SPECIFIC OPERATIONS

The Commission's evaluation services are responsible for steering, coordinating, monitoring and reporting on the evaluation function. They produce timely, high-quality evaluation results to provide evidence for informed decision-making and accountability. The evaluations can be geographic, thematic or focused on a specific partnership. Annex III provides a list of evaluations completed in 2025 and of ongoing evaluations.

5. RELEVANT LINKS

- General information on DG ECHO
- Financing decisions for the EU humanitarian aid activities in 2025
- Operational information from previous years
- 2025 Annual Activity Report
- 2026 Management Plan

([32]) Global Estimates 2025 Update | Education Cannot Wait.