

## Article – MEPs call for at least €1.4 billion for EU disaster management



### **EU defence mechanism to save lives**

Since its creation in 2001, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, a collaborative system of mutual aid, has been activated more than 330 times to respond to natural and man-made disasters, inside and outside the EU, such as forest fires, floods, marine pollution, earthquakes, hurricanes, industrial accidents and crisis situation, including health crisis.

During the **current coronavirus outbreak**, it has been used to coordinate and co-finance the delivery of emergency medical supplies to China and protective material to Italy.

It has also helped to repatriate EU citizens from the Wuhan area, China, and the Diamond Princess cruise ship docked in Yokohama, Japan.

## Strengthening emergency response capacity

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

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

MEPs want to allocate a larger amount of the funding to preparedness in the 2021-2027 programme, including funds to purchase needed new *RescEU* equipment and materials, such as forest fire-fighting planes, special water pumps, field hospitals and special medical equipment.

### Next steps

After a debate and vote in plenary on the 2021-2027 programme for the Civil Protection Mechanism, Parliament will start negotiations with the Council of Ministers.