

# [Ebola: EU provides further €5 million in humanitarian aid in Democratic Republic of Congo](#)

The EU is stepping up humanitarian support with an additional €5 million as the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#) continues to experience its biggest Ebola outbreak to date. The confirmed death toll of the epidemic now stands at over 1,000 people. With today's announcement, total EU funding to tackle the disease in the country amounts to €17 million since 2018.

Christos **Stylianides**, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management and EU Ebola Coordinator said: *"The EU is committed to continue helping partners and the authorities fight Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo for as long as it takes. Since the outbreak last year, the EU has provided funding, experts, medical evacuation equipment, our humanitarian flight service and helped neighbouring countries. We are also supporting the health sector in the country and the development of Ebola vaccines and treatments. Yet the disease remains a serious threat and all must be done to curb the epidemic. Aid workers must also be free to do their lifesaving job without the threat of violence."*

The EU funding announced today supports the World Health Organisation as well as other partners to ensure access to health care and infection and prevention measures, working with local communities to promote understanding, acceptance and support of the response, and social protection and nutritional support to survivors and their families.

The Ebola response in the country has had to face a number of serious and continuous challenges, including high population mobility, weak health structures and poor community acceptance of the contagion prevention measures. On top of these is the ongoing conflict in the affected areas, the violent attacks perpetrated on Ebola treatment centres and response teams.

## **Background**

The Ebola virus epidemic in the Democratic Republic of Congo has so far been confined to the eastern provinces of North Kivu and Ituri, both torn by long-standing conflicts, aggravating an already fragile humanitarian situation.

In response to the outbreak, the EU provides financial support to humanitarian partners involved in various actions in the Ebola response. EU humanitarian health experts in the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#) are involved in the coordination of the response and are in daily contact with health authorities, the World Health Organisation and operational partners. Furthermore, the [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#) sent an epidemiologist to Butembo, the second epicentre of the outbreak, between November and December 2018 to provide further technical and specialised support and is closely following the development of the outbreak.

The EU's Humanitarian Air Service, [ECHO flight](#), regularly transports personnel, supplies and equipment to various Ebola-affected areas. It has operated so far over 80 flights.

The [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) has been activated twice in relation to the outbreak, upon request of World Health Organisation. Norway, which is a participating state in the Mechanism, dispatched a specialised team to the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#) to give training to health workers on the use of high-tech isolation units that it had given to support the Ebola response for use in specific medical evacuation cases. Upon a second request by the World Health Organisation, Norway provided three additional isolation units, and is offering further training sessions on their operation. The EU co-finances 85% of the transport costs involved for this assistance deployed through the Mechanism.

The EU has also financially supported Ebola vaccine development and research on Ebola treatments and diagnostic tests.

In addition to the emergency response, the EU is implementing a development cooperation programme to support the health sector.

Outside the DRC, EU humanitarian funds have also been helping in the reinforcement of preparedness and prevention measures in neighbouring countries to avoid a spillover of the outbreak.

#### **For more information**

Factsheet: [EU response to the Ebola epidemic](#)