

EU channels extra support for Portugal to help with forest fires

This morning President **Juncker** and Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** immediately offered the EU's full readiness and capacity to do all possible to help and expressed their condolences to all those affected.

The European Commission is in constant contact and coordination with the Portuguese authorities. Earlier this morning Commissioner Stylianides called Portugal's Minister of Interior de Sousa to express the Commission's solidarity to the people of Portugal and its authorities.

In addition to immediate EU support mobilised already this morning, further assistance is now on its way.

"Portugal is not alone in these difficult times. Europe is about solidarity and we have acted quickly to send concrete support since the early hours. Following France's three firefighting planes dispatched this morning, let me now thank Italy and Spain who have also offered four additional planes through the EU's Civil Protection Mechanism.

This vital support will help the heroic Portuguese firefighters who are risking their lives to bring the fires under control. I encourage participating states to now also offer firefighters to Portugal, following their latest request for assistance. The EU continues to be ready to provide additional emergency support Portugal requires," said Commissioner **Stylianides**.

Portugal activated the EU's Civil Protection Mechanism today, requesting firefighting aircraft. It has now requested firefighters.

The European Commission, through its 24/7 Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), has been in constant contact with EU Member States to channel support through the EU's Civil Protection Mechanism.

A liaison officer from the ERCC has arrived in the country to help coordinate offers of assistance.

Background

The planes channelled through the Civil Protection Mechanism will operate in the affected areas such as Vila Real, Coimbra and Leiria.

Through the mechanism France has offered three planes, Spain two and Italy two. Spain also offered four on a bilateral basis.

The European Commission coordinates voluntary offers made by participating

states through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, and can co-finance the transport of relief items and experts to the country in question.

The mobilisation of assistance is coordinated through the Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), which closely monitors developments and offers the possibility of transport co-financing for the offered assistance.

The assistance can consist of items for immediate relief as well as experts and supporting intervention teams. In the case of fires, this can include fire-extinguishing aircraft. The Commission cannot send planes or equipment itself via the Mechanism.

Overall, the Mechanism facilitates the cooperation in disaster response among 34 European states (28 EU Member States, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Norway, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey).

[EU Civil Protection Mechanism Factsheet](#)