

International Relations Commission Session

11th of March, 2026

Marco Aviotti, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)

Why we act

“

...encourage cooperation between Member States for preventing and protecting against natural or man-made disasters.

(Lisbon Treaty, Article 196)

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To provide...assistance and relief and protection for people in third countries... victims of natural or man-made disasters...

(Lisbon Treaty, Article 214)

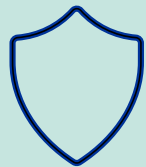
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Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)



ECHO has been providing humanitarian assistance since **1992**. The EU's humanitarian work is guided by the humanitarian principles grounded in **international humanitarian law** and embodies the **principle of solidarity**, as laid down in **the Lisbon Treaty**.



In 2010, our department integrated civil protection for a better coordination and disaster response inside and outside Europe, through the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** and the work of the **EU's Emergency Response Coordination Centre**.



EU Civil Protection Mechanism

- established in 2001 to improve:
 - prevention
 - preparedness
 - response to disasters
- The mechanism aims to strengthen civil protection cooperation between **the EU countries and 10 additional participating states**
- Any country hit by a disaster, in Europe and beyond, can request emergency assistance through the mechanism.
- In 2019, upgraded to “**rescEU**” a strategic reserve of European disaster response capabilities and stockpiles



Our close cooperation with our global network of **over 200 humanitarian partners** ranging from large UN agencies to small NGOs



DG ECHO partners with..

> IOs

IOs are defined as **international public-sector organisations set up by intergovernmental agreements and specialised agencies set up by such organisation** (IFRC, ICRC, UN).

> MSSAs

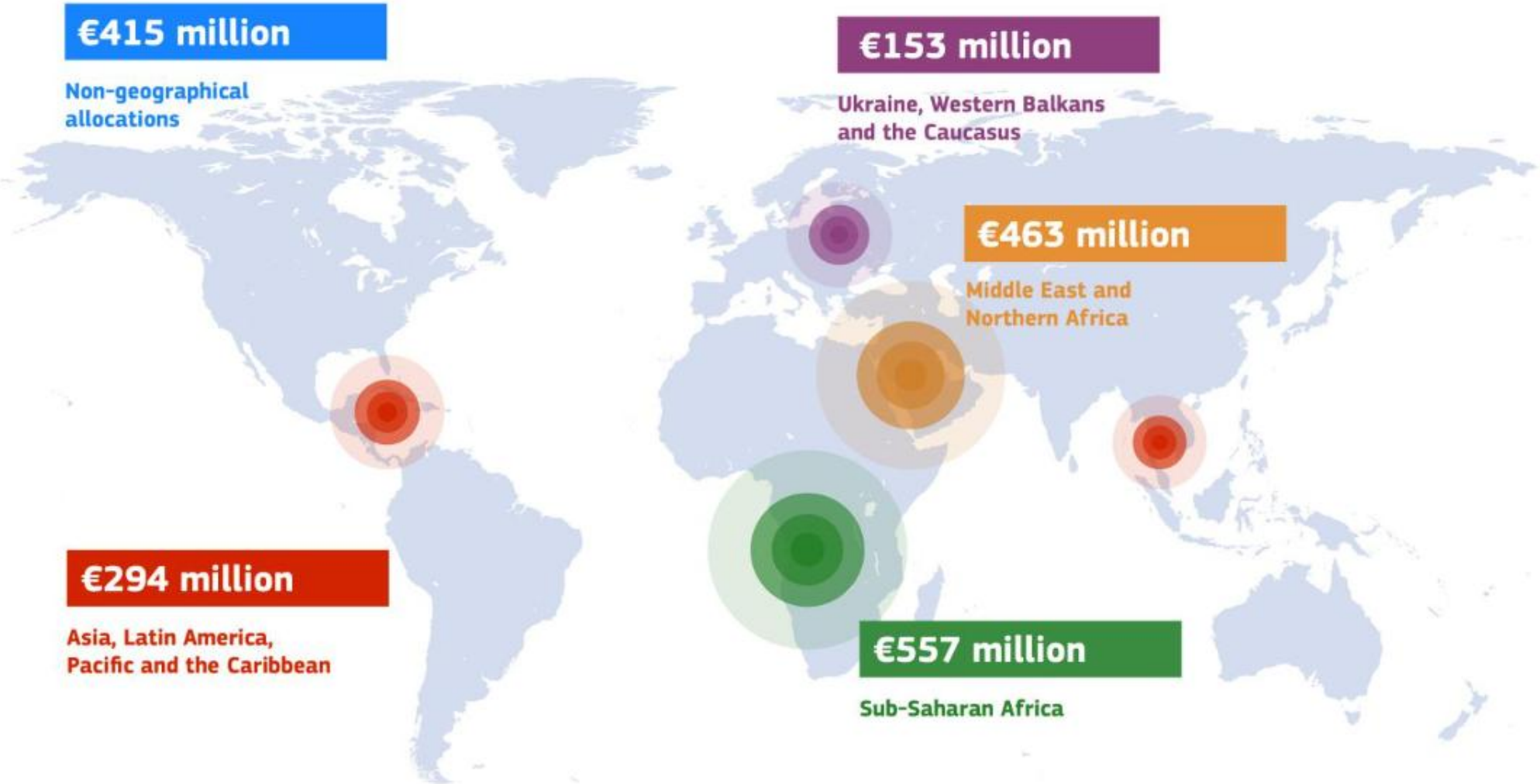
MS Organisations/ Specialised Agencies are entities established in MS as **public law bodies; or bodies governed by private law** entrusted with a **public-service mission and provided with adequate financial guarantees from the Member State.**

> NGOs

Non-governmental non-profit-making autonomous organisations (NGOs) must be **established in the EU/EEA**. They must also gain an **EU Humanitarian Partnership Certificate** and sign a **model grant agreement**.



EU's Initial Humanitarian Aid for 2026



Total ➔ **€1.9 billion**



Ukraine Snapshot



10.8 million Ukrainians in need of humanitarian assistance in 2026.

The European Commission is coordinating its largest ever operation under the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism**.

EU humanitarian funding includes cash assistance, health care, emergency and winterised shelter, food and water, essential household items, and education.

Since February 2022, the European Commission has allocated over **€1.4 billion** for humanitarian aid programmes in Ukraine. This includes:

€485 million in 2022

€300 million in 2023

€165 million in 2024

€220 million in 2025

€220 million in 2026



Communication on the EU's Humanitarian Action 2026

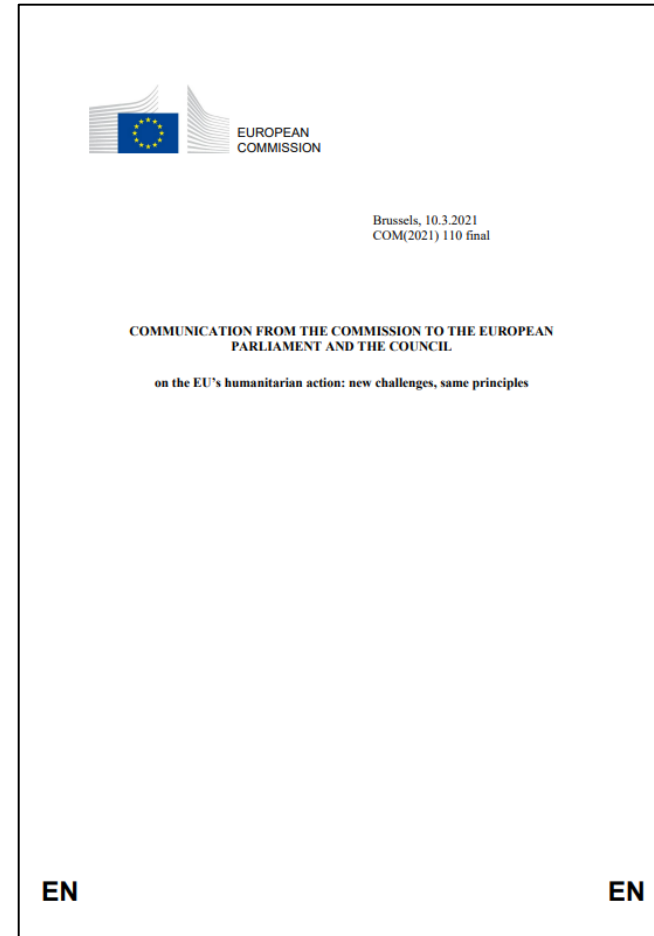
> The European Commission has announced a new **Communication on Humanitarian Action** for the second quarter of 2026.

The Communication will reaffirm the EU commitment to:

> *'remain a strong advocate and champion of **international humanitarian law** and **principled humanitarian aid across the world**'.*

The Communication includes three elements:

- >
- (1) Protect:** towards people-centered and safe humanitarian delivery
 - (2) Perform:** Enhancing cost-effectiveness for a greater impact
 - (3) Partner:** Harnessing strategic alliances to support those in need



Grazie!

