



EU launches new European Medical Corps to respond faster to emergencies

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The European Union has set up a European Medical Corps (EMC) through which teams and equipment from the EU Member States can be rapidly deployed.

1. What is the European Medical Corps?

The European Union has set up a European Medical Corps (EMC) through which teams and equipment from the EU Member States can be rapidly deployed to provide medical assistance and public health expertise in response to emergencies inside and outside the EU.

The Medical Corps is part of the existing [European Emergency Response Capacity](#) (also known as Voluntary Pool), established under the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism**.

2. Why was the European Medical Corps set up?

A key difficulty during the response to the Ebola virus outbreak was to quickly deploy medical staff and deal with logistical and management challenges. This led Germany and France in late 2014 to propose a "White Helmets" initiative, which laid the foundation of the European Medical Corps.

The European Medical Corps will be Europe's contribution to the Global Health Emergency Workforce being set up under the helm of the World Health Organization (WHO). The European Medical Corps will significantly increase the availability of doctors and medical equipment in response to emergencies, and will also allow for better planning and preparations for response to emergencies.

3. What kinds of equipment will the European Medical Corps include?

The European Medical Corps will include emergency medical and public health teams, mobile biosafety laboratories, medical evacuation capacities, medical assessment and coordination experts and logistical support teams. These teams could be mobilised for any type of emergency with health consequences, at short notice, when needed.

4. Which EU Member States are taking part?

Currently, as of 15 February, nine Member States have already offered teams and equipment to the European Medical Corps (BE, LU, ES, DE, CZ, FR, NL, FI, SE).

Any country participating in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism can make medical teams and assets available to the European Medical Corps.

5. How can Member States commit to the European Medical Corps?

To be part of the European Medical Corps, teams need to undergo a certification process to ensure they meet strict quality criteria and are trained to work in an international response operation.

In order to meet the criteria, they can benefit from EU financial support.

This support can include:

- 100% financing from the EU budget: adaptation grants for upgrading the teams to an enhanced status of readiness, quality and availability are available
- Up to 100% or 100% financing from the EU budget for activities related to the certification of teams, including training, exercises and workshops.

Teams may be developed at national or regional level by public authorities or other organisations. Their commitment to the European Medical Corps can only be done by the relevant Member States authorities.

Following a successful certification process, the medical response capacity is registered in the European Medical Corps, and it becomes available for deployment in EU emergency response operations.

Once certified and part of the European Medical Corps teams can benefit for up to 85% for transport grants for deployments of the teams to emergencies

6. How does the European Medical Corps operate during an emergency?

Following a successful certification process, the medical response capacity is registered in the European Medical Corps, and it becomes available for deployment in EU emergency response operations.

The deployment of the medical teams is coordinated by the European Commission's [Emergency Response Coordination Centre \(ERCC\)](#), the operational hub of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Member States retain the final decision on deployment and can opt out of a mission if necessary.

In the field, teams will be coordinated through the overall coordination platform set up for the situation in question, be it under the leadership of an affected state or under the UN coordination system.

Once a response capacity is registered in the European Medical Corps, it is expected to be available for coordinated EU missions. Having these teams and experts registered in the European Medical Corps will increase the predictability of EU assistance and will allow for better planning and preparation beforehand.

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