



Humanitarian material being loaded onto an aircraft of the European Union Humanitarian Air Bridge bound for Bangui, CAR © EU, 2020

FACTS & FIGURES

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, many countries all over the world restricted traffic or closed their borders

EU Humanitarian Air Bridge facilitated **66** flights to **21** countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas

More than **1,100** tons of vital medical and humanitarian equipment and **1,700** medical and humanitarian staff transported

The European Commission is funding Air Bridge flights with a total of **€10 million**

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European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

European Union Humanitarian Air Bridge 2020

What is it?

The European Union Humanitarian Air Bridge is an integrated set of services enabling the delivery of humanitarian aid to countries affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The air bridge carries medical equipment, and humanitarian cargo and staff, providing humanitarian assistance for the most vulnerable populations where the pandemic imposes constraints on transport and logistics.

The air bridge flights are fully funded by the European Union. They are operated in coordination with Member States and humanitarian organisations sending material and in cooperation with the receiving country. The Humanitarian Air Bridge is a temporary initiative that complements the logistics services of the United Nations Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

Why is this important?

The coronavirus pandemic has brought about huge logistical challenges for the humanitarian community. The delivery of vital assistance is held up due to absence of commercial flights, while needs remain high in many critical areas.

The EU Humanitarian Air Bridge brings aid to some of the most fragile countries and forms part of the EU's global coronavirus response actions. This service is, thus, helping the continuity of humanitarian aid in these challenging times.

Through its return flights, the initiative also helps with the transport of humanitarian teams on rotation and assists in passenger repatriation flights organised by EU Member States.

How are we helping?

The European Union Humanitarian Air Bridge has global coverage and focuses on areas where humanitarian emergencies are the most difficult to access.

Since the start of the operations on 8 May 2020, with the first flight to the Central African Republic, the EU has now coordinated and financed the delivery of over 1,124 tons of medical equipment to critical areas in Africa, Asia and the Americas.

Countries supported include Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Sao Tome & Principe, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Yemen.

The 66 Air Bridge flights have also transported 1,712 medical and humanitarian staff since its launch. The decision to deploy EU Humanitarian Air Bridge flights is driven by needs on the ground, in consultation with Member States and aid partners to identify the most critical gaps, and in cooperation with the receiving countries.

The air bridge is at the service of humanitarian actors. Its implementation brings together a number of actors: the European Commission, EU Member States, national authorities of the destination countries, civil society, humanitarian NGOs and United Nations agencies. The Member States, together with humanitarian stakeholders and the support of the European Commission, ensure the selection and quality control of cargo.

Coronavirus transport restrictions have created many logistical challenges for aid projects over the past months. The air bridge is helping aid reach vulnerable people in the current context where these restrictions are creating critical needs in the transport of humanitarian aid material and workers.

The humanitarian teams and supplies carried aboard the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge help in supporting the humanitarian response in the receiving country. They also support the health system and the coronavirus response, in cooperation with the health ministries of the countries involved, international organisations and humanitarian NGOs. Health workers, patients and health centres receive protective equipment. This assistance also reaches the most vulnerable, including internally displaced people.

The European Commission finances 100% of the transport costs. The users of the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge operations provide the cargo and supplies that are transported on board.

The Humanitarian Air Bridge complements other humanitarian air services that the EU has in place or that it supports to help the humanitarian community in its work. In addition to providing transport capacities, the EU has also provided diplomatic support to facilitate humanitarian access.

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