

## European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

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### Ukraine: the first rescEU medical evacuation plane enters into service to help transfer Ukrainian patients



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Among the millions of people fleeing the war in Ukraine, chronically ill patients are the ones that urgently need specialised medical care. To coordinate the best possible care for these patients, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism expands its reserve with a new medical evacuation airplane. The airplane has been financed by the EU and is hosted by Norway, a Participating State to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

The new medical evacuation plane has been developed to address shortcomings in case of emergency needs for patients affected by highly infectious diseases and is part of rescEU, the common European reserve of resources.

Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez **Lenarčič**, said: *“I thank Norway for the swift implementation of the agreement. The new airplane enters into service when we need it the most. This brutal war in Ukraine has forced millions to flee, including vulnerable patients whose lives depend on urgent medical care. With this new addition to the rescEU fleet, the EU ensures that we have an increased capacity to help people across the continent, in today’s and future crises.”*

In addition to the medical evacuation to Norway, using the rescEU capacity, the EU has transferred chronically ill Ukrainian refugees from Poland to Italy and Ireland.

These evacuations have been financially and operationally supported by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and the EU Early Warning and Response System. More evacuation operations of Ukrainian patients are underway, for example from Poland to Germany and Denmark.

## Background

The strategic medical evacuation plane for patients with highly infectious diseases is part of the wider rescEU reserve, which includes other capabilities such as firefighting airplanes and helicopters, stockpiles that include items for medical emergencies as well as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear.

rescEU constitutes an extra layer of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, reinforcing cross-border disaster preparedness and contributing to boost the EU’s ability to better respond to emergencies.

Following the activation of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, rescEU ensures a faster and more comprehensive response to disasters. rescEU capabilities are 100% EU-financed and the European Commission, in close cooperation with the country hosting the reserve, is coordinating the operation.

In an emergency, the rescEU reserve provides assistance to all EU Member States and the Participating States to the Mechanism, and can also be deployed to EU neighbouring countries.

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## Details

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**Author** [Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations \(ECHO\)](#)