



## Forest fires: EU continues to mobilise assistance for Greece and other countries in region

Brussels, 8 August 2021

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism continues to channel support to help combat unprecedented forest fires in Greece and the rest of the Mediterranean. Following requests from Greece, North Macedonia, Albania, Italy and Turkey, the European Union has now helped mobilise 14 firefighting planes, 3 helicopters, some 1,300 rescuers and 250 vehicles.

In Greece alone, 9 planes, close to 1,000 fire fighters and 200 vehicles are currently being deployed. The latest offers over the weekend came from France, Germany, Poland, Austria and Slovakia, who are sending ground firefighting units. They will join forces already operating in the country: ground firefighting units from Cyprus, France, Czechia and Romania as well as planes from Cyprus, Sweden, France, Croatia and Spain.

This comes in addition to help already deployed last week to help fight forest fires in Italy, Albania and North Macedonia:

- Two Canadair firefighting airplanes from France which were sent to affected areas in Italy.
- Two helicopters to support operations in Albania which were equally dispatched from Czechia and the Netherlands.
- Ground forces from Slovenia, Bulgaria and Austria which were deployed to help North Macedonia. On Saturday, Romania sent an additional plane.
- Ongoing EU-coordinated firefighting operations in Turkey.

Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez **Lenarčič** said: *"We are mobilising one of Europe's biggest ever common firefighting operations as multiple fires affect several countries simultaneously. This shows the need to prioritise crisis response also at European level. The EU stands in full solidarity with Greece, North Macedonia, Albania, Italy and Turkey, at this difficult time. I am very thankful to all the countries who have offered help for their tangible solidarity. Our thoughts are with all those affected and with the first responders who are risking their lives to battle the fires."*

In addition, the EU's emergency Copernicus satellite is helping to provide damage assessment maps of the affected areas in North Macedonia and Greece.

The European Union's 24/7 [Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#) is in regular contact with the relevant national authorities to closely monitor the situation and channel the EU assistance.

### Background

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism strengthens cooperation between the EU Member States and 6 Participating States in the field of civil protection, with a view to improve prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. When the scale of an emergency overwhelms the response capabilities of a country, it can request assistance via the Mechanism.

### For more information

MEMO 'Fighting forest fires in Europe – how it works'

[Forest fires](#)

[European Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

[RescEU](#)

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