



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **West Africa: EU boosts its immediate aid to contain Ebola outbreak**

The European Union is increasing by an additional €8 million its efforts to contain the spread of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. This is the fourth increase of EU assistance for this crisis. It brings the Commission's aid in 2014 to fight the Ebola epidemic, which the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) has just declared a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern"](#), to €11.9 million. In addition, a second "European mobile laboratory" will be deployed in the coming days, most likely to Sierra Leone, to provide essential support to diagnostics and testing.

*"We are determined to fight the further spread of the deadly epidemic. Many lives depend on our immediate assistance. Our support will ensure urgently-needed healthcare and the strengthening of preventive measures through our partner organisations which are helping around the clock to provide life-saving assistance to the victims,"* said Kristalina Georgieva, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response.

EU Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, stated: *"Saving lives and providing further support to West Africa is now more than ever an urgent priority. We have therefore decided to mobilise today's additional assistance from the European Development Fund. New medical supplies and the mobile laboratory will help to meet the pressing needs in the region and improve capacities to detect the virus"*.

The additional EU funding will provide immediate healthcare to the affected communities and help contain the spread of the epidemic. The aid will be channelled through the European Commission's humanitarian partners on the ground, including UN agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations.

Humanitarian experts from the Commission have been deployed to the affected countries to undertake the assessment and coordinate with the health authorities and humanitarian partners on the ground.

### **Background**

The Ebola epidemic is taking a devastating toll in the four affected countries, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria. To date, the outbreak has seen 1711 cases and 932 deaths, including many health workers. Cases have been suspected in other West African countries but tested negative. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), this is the largest recorded outbreak in terms of cases, deaths and geographical coverage.

The European Commission allocated humanitarian funding in response to the Ebola outbreak as early as March this year. The response has already been scaled up – most recently in July. The funding has enabled WHO, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to sustain and expand their actions.

The Commission is also working closely with EU Member States within the Health Security Committee, keeping them informed about the latest developments and trying to synchronize measures to protect Europe. A travel advisory leaflet was issued by the Health Security Committee and is available in all EU languages.

The European Centre for Disease Control recently updated its risk assessment on Ebola.

Seven European specialist teams of the **European Mobile Laboratory** (EMLab) project for dangerous infectious diseases have been dispatched to Gueckedou in Guinea in late March, with a mobile laboratory to provide support with viral haemorrhagic fever diagnostics, rapid analyses of samples and confirmation of cases. The second unit is already in the region and will be deployed in the coming days, most likely to Sierra Leone (Freetown).

About 1100 tests have so far been conducted, including samples from Guinea and Liberia; more than 400 of them were positive. The EMLab project is a European initiative funded by the European Commission. It includes partners from Germany (Bernhard-Nocht-Institute, Bundeswehr Institute of Microbiology, University of Marburg, Robert-Koch-Institute), Italy (Istituto Nazionale Malattie Infettive Spallanzani), France (INSERM/Pasteur Lyon), UK (Health Protection Agency PD Laboratory), Hungary (Hungarian National Biosafety Laboratory), Switzerland (Spiez Laboratory) and Slovenia (University of Ljubljana, Institute of Microbiology and Immunology).

A new project is being prepared to provide additional detection capacities and training (€2 million from the *Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace*).

## For more information

[STATEMENT/14/251](#): Statement by Commissioner Borg on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa

[IP/14/891](#): EU scales up funding in response to Ebola outbreak in West Africa (press release, 30 July 2014)

The European Commission's humanitarian aid and civil protection:

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm)

Website of the EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva:

[http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/georgieva/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/index_en.htm)

Website of the EU Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs:

[http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/piebalgs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/piebalgs/index_en.htm)

Website of DG Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm)

European Commission health and consumer protection including travel advice leaflet:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness\\_response/risk\\_management/ebola/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/risk_management/ebola/index_en.htm)

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

[http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/ebola\\_marburg\\_fever/Pages/index.aspx](http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/ebola_marburg_fever/Pages/index.aspx)

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