











Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2021/2163(INI)	Procedure completed
New orientations for the EU's humanitarian action		
Subject 6.50 Emergency, food, humanitarian aid, aid to refugees, Emergency Aid Reserve		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Development	 NEUSER Norbert Shadow rapporteur	26/05/2021
European Parliament		 OCHOJSKA Janina	
		 ANDREWS Barry	
		 ROOSE Caroline	
		 BILDE Dominique	
		 KEMPA Beata	
		 URBÁN CRESPO Miguel	
	European Commission	Commission DG International Cooperation and Development	Commissioner JOUROVÁ Věra

Key events			
07/10/2021	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
09/11/2021	Vote in committee		
19/11/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0328/2021	Summary
14/12/2021	Debate in Parliament		
15/12/2021	Results of vote in Parliament		
15/12/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0505/2021	Summary

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2021/2163(INI)

Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	DEVE/9/07117

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE696.558	10/09/2021	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE697.853	07/10/2021	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0328/2021	19/11/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0505/2021	15/12/2021	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2022)89	28/04/2022	EC	

New orientations for the EU's humanitarian action

The Committee on Development adopted an own-initiative report by Norbert NEUSER (S&D, DE) on new orientations for the EU's humanitarian action.

Humanitarian needs are at an all-time high, with 238 million people in need of assistance in 2021, mainly due to conflict, but also to systemic factors such as climate change, natural disasters, environmental degradation, global population growth, food insecurity, limited water resources and failed governance. The COVID-19 outbreak has further exacerbated the global humanitarian crisis.

The report sets out how the EU and its Member States can respond to the challenge, working with their various humanitarian partners and other donors. It proposes a series of initiatives grouped into two main areas:

Addressing the growing needs and reducing the funding gap

While welcoming the Commission's communication on EU humanitarian action, Members recalled that EU humanitarian aid must always be provided solely on the basis of well-defined and pre-assessed needs, fully in line with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and pay particular attention to the difficulties faced by vulnerable groups. They welcomed the Commission's initiative of integrating education in emergencies.

Concerned about the sharp increase in the humanitarian funding gap, Members called on the Commission to provide a robust annual budget for EU humanitarian aid to ensure timely, predictable and flexible funding for humanitarian aid from the start of each financial year, and to keep a ring-fenced envelope within the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve for humanitarian crises outside the EU. Member States are urged to lead by example and allocate a fixed share of their gross national incomes to humanitarian aid.

The Commission and the European External Action Service are asked to develop a long-term strategy for working with third countries, in particular emerging donors, to increase the number of donor countries contributing to humanitarian aid on a voluntary basis. Members called for the establishment of an EU coordination mechanism to ensure a coherent EU approach to international humanitarian law.

The report also called on the Commission and the Member States to: (i) closely monitor violations of international humanitarian law and include violations of international humanitarian law as a criterion for listing individuals or entities under the relevant EU sanctions regimes and (ii) prosecute and sanction those who use starvation as a weapon of war in order to combat widespread violations of the right to food during conflicts.

Supporting a more enabling environment for humanitarian aid

Members stressed the importance of supporting local actors and urged the Commission to develop an ambitious localisation policy (especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic) that promotes transparency, making use of partners expertise and experience, and outlining how to provide more and better support for local respondents to strengthen their capacities, enable them to make use of all the instruments available and ensure their involvement in decision-making processes.

The report highlighted the challenges posed by climate change and called on the Commission to provide the necessary resources for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction through, inter alia, the Neighbourhood Instrument, development cooperation and international cooperation, in the framework of an approach based on the triple nexus of humanitarian aid, development and peace involving indigenous peoples and local communities.

The Commission and the European External Action Service are invited to adopt a communication developing a clear policy on a humanitarian-development-peace nexus in order to address the root causes of fragility and conflict, drawing in particular on the practical experience of non-governmental organisations.

Members called for more concrete gender mainstreaming in future humanitarian action. They called on the EU to implement the Nansen Initiative programme on cross-border displaced persons in the context of disasters and climate change and to place particular emphasis on

food as a basic right for all.

Lastly, Members insisted that the first European Humanitarian Forum in January 2022 should be inclusive and accessible, involve humanitarian implementing partners and seek to increase the visibility of EU humanitarian aid.

New orientations for the EU's humanitarian action

The European Parliament adopted by 551 votes to 63, with 83 abstentions, a resolution on new orientations for the EU's humanitarian action.

Humanitarian needs are at an all-time high, with 238 million people in need of assistance in 2021, mainly due to conflict, but also to systemic factors such as climate change, natural disasters, environmental degradation, global population growth, food insecurity, limited water resources and failed governance. The COVID-19 outbreak has further exacerbated the global humanitarian crisis.

Addressing growing needs and reducing the funding gap

Parliament welcomed the Commission's communication on EU humanitarian action and called for the rapid implementation of these proposals in close consultation and cooperation with humanitarian partners to ensure that aid is predictable, not fragmented and does not duplicate other actions.

Members consider that EU humanitarian aid should always be provided solely on the basis of well-defined and pre-assessed needs, fully in line with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and pay particular attention to the difficulties faced by vulnerable groups. The Commission is invited to place the principle of no one left behind at the heart of the new approach to humanitarian action.

Concerned about the sharp increase in the humanitarian funding gap, Parliament called on the Commission to provide a robust annual budget for EU humanitarian aid and maintain a ring-fenced envelope within the solidarity and emergency aid reserve for humanitarian crises outside the EU. Members called for an increase in funds for humanitarian aid and urged Member States to set an example and allocate a fixed share of their gross national income to humanitarian aid.

The Commission and the European External Action Service are asked to develop a long-term strategy for working with third countries, in particular emerging donors, to increase the number of donor countries contributing to humanitarian aid on a voluntary basis. Members called for the establishment of an EU coordination mechanism to ensure a coherent EU approach to international humanitarian law. They also highlighted the potential for blended funding initiatives further involving the private sector in EU humanitarian aid.

The resolution also called on the Commission and the Member States to: (i) closely monitor violations of international humanitarian law and include violations of international humanitarian law as a criterion for listing individuals or entities under the relevant EU sanctions regimes and (ii) prosecute and sanction those who use starvation as a weapon of war in order to combat widespread violations of the right to food during conflicts.

Supporting a more enabling environment for humanitarian aid

Stressing the importance of supporting local actors, Members urged the Commission to develop an ambitious localisation policy (especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic) that promotes transparency, making use of partners' expertise and experience, and outlining how to provide more and better support for local respondents to strengthen their capacities, enable them to make use of all the instruments available and ensure their involvement in decision-making processes.

Taking into account the specific aid and protection needs of disaster-affected populations, the resolution called on the Commission to provide the necessary resources for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction through, inter alia, the Neighbourhood Instrument, development cooperation and international cooperation, in the framework of an approach based on the triple nexus of humanitarian aid, development and peace involving indigenous peoples and local communities.

The Commission and the European External Action Service are invited to adopt a communication developing a clear policy on a humanitarian-development-peace nexus in order to address the root causes of fragility and conflict, drawing in particular on the practical experience of non-governmental organisations.

Members called for more concrete gender mainstreaming in future humanitarian action while advocating for free access to free public health services. They called on the EU to implement the Nansen Initiative programme on cross-border displaced persons in the context of disasters and climate change and to place particular emphasis on food as a basic right for all.

Lastly, Parliament insisted that the first European Humanitarian Forum in January 2022 should be inclusive and accessible, involve humanitarian implementing partners and seek to increase the visibility of EU humanitarian aid.