



The EU and Yemen

EU response to the conflict in Yemen

As the war enters its fourth year, Yemen faces enormous challenges. The hostilities have exacerbated an already difficult and fragile humanitarian situation. Currently, according to UN [figures](#) more than 22 million Yemenis are dependent on external assistance and 8.4 million are on the verge of famine. Tens of thousands of Yemenis have died as a result of the war.

Yemen is today increasingly fragmented. The political vacuum has increased the prevalence and influence of non-state actors that now control large parts of the territory, including some terrorist groups. The ongoing conflict has taken on an international dimension and threatens to undermine the stability in the wider region.

Throughout the conflict, the EU has remained active in three main areas. First, the EU has pursued political consultations with all stakeholders, both in Yemen and in the region, with a view to complement the efforts of the UN Special Envoy and push for the resumption of negotiations which are the only viable way out of the conflict.

Second, the EU has sought to address short, medium and long term needs, playing a role in building resilience, promoting income generation activities and social safety networks to support the peace process and prepare for the future end to the current crisis.

Third, the EU has funded humanitarian projects supporting displaced populations, integrated nutrition, health and water activities as well as coordination and logistics in support of the humanitarian community. The EU has also played an active role in advocacy and coordination of humanitarian donors. The EU's total support to Yemen since 2015 amounts to more than €500 million.

The EU's support

1) Political support, security and human rights

With a budget of over €50 million, the European Union continues to provide political support and promote security and human rights. It will **continue to support and complement the efforts of the United Nations in achieving a peace settlement in Yemen**. This commitment has been reiterated by European Foreign Ministers [on 25 June 2018](#) on the occasion of the Foreign Affairs Council.

The EU's engagement with all the parties to the conflict aims at laying the ground for a resumption of talks under the leadership of the UN. The EU is supporting the **participation of local actors in peace negotiations** and the implementation of a future agreement **with actions worth more than €7 million**. It also supports and engages with civil society organisations in the country to build their capacity and strengthen their network, with **€ 6.4 million**.

The EU also works to **strengthen social protection systems** and provided funding for UN-led efforts to **facilitate the flow of commercial items and humanitarian aid into Yemen**. The EU, in coordination with the UN and other donors, has also convened several diplomatic initiatives to raise [awareness](#) on the conflict, to build trust among parties and discuss the underlying issues of the current conflict, including [economics](#) aspects.

Yemen is currently facing threats from a range of terrorist groups. Weak governance infrastructure and criminal justice capabilities, and a lack of information sharing on law enforcement, have increased the country's vulnerability. With actions **worth €18 million**, the EU is working on stabilisation initiatives to enhance the capacities of local key security providers, from the judiciary and the law enforcement. The EU also supports selected community leaders with training to improve security structures at local level.

The EU pursues two security-related regional actions in Yemen: one (**€11 million**) to enhance law enforcement capacity on counterterrorism in line with human rights and the rule of law, and a second one (**€6 million**) to contribute to national and regional efforts to meet international standards on anti-money laundering (AML) and countering the financing of terrorism (CFT).

The EU also supports the protection and empowerment of human rights defenders in Yemen, children's rights in the armed conflict, monitoring of human rights violations, legal assistance for victims and inter-community dialogue with **€1.9 million**.

2) Humanitarian assistance and development

The European Commission has provided **€406.7 million in both humanitarian and development assistance** in Yemen since the beginning of the crisis. The EU's actions in Yemen are in line with the [Council Conclusions](#) which outline the links between development and humanitarian initiatives.

Humanitarian aid: EU lifesaving assistance of €233.7 million has been provided since the beginning of the conflict in 2015 and focuses on health, nutrition and food security crises with projects including a water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) component to prevent transmission of epidemics such as the cholera outbreak. The EU has also funded protection activities with a particular focus on gender-based violence, education in emergencies activities and activities that enhance rapid response capacity among partners, logistical support, and coordination and advocacy actions.

All EU humanitarian aid is provided to help the most vulnerable civilians in need of humanitarian assistance or protection.

EU programmes address both immediate and medium, long term needs with a particular focus on resilience.

Humanitarian situation overview:

Yemen's humanitarian needs are enormous and impact most of its population.

- 22.2 million people (80% of the population) are in need of humanitarian assistance, of which 11.3 million in acute need. Within this population, 8.4 million people are at risk of pre-famine – a 24% increase since last year.
- Yemen has also suffered the largest cholera outbreak ever recorded. Since 27 April 2017 until 3 June 2018, over 1,100,000 suspected cases and 2,300 related deaths have been reported. Another wave of cholera is feared following the rainy season as only 45% of health facilities are functioning, salaries of health staff have not been paid since October 2016, and 16 million people are in need of water, sanitation and hygiene services.
- The nutrition crisis is worsening. Currently, some 1.8 million children under the age of five, and 1.1 million pregnant or breastfeeding women are acutely malnourished, including 500,000 children under the age of five suffering from severe acute

malnutrition. Overall, approximately 7.5 million people are in need of nutrition assistance, of which 2.9 million require treatment for acute malnutrition.

- Over 3 million people have been forced to flee their homes since the start of the conflict, including 2 million who are still internally displaced and 1 million IDP returnees. In addition, Yemen continues to host 280,000 refugees and asylum-seekers from other countries. The consequences of the escalation of the conflict on civilians in the last months are alarming, most notably regarding the port city of Al-Hodeidah, which acts as a lifeline for 70% of the Yemeni population.

Development assistance: €173 million in long term assistance has been provided so far, making the EU one of the leading development donors in Yemen.

One of the EU's flagship programmes, worth €35 million from 2015 to 2019, has been dedicated to enhancing rural resilience. Through this [programme](#) in Abyan, Hajjah, Hudaydah, and Lahj Governorates, the EU has supported social cohesion by recruiting and training local mediators (including female [mediators](#) in places like Beit Al Faqeeh). It has also helped with the re-establishment of hundreds of local community councils and assisted communities in adopting more than five hundred self-help and compact initiatives, including on [education](#), benefiting more than 80.000 Yemenis through a range of community infrastructure projects. More than 22,000 individuals benefited from community asset rehabilitation through 'cash for work' schemes and 870 micro-businesses were created.

In a country where millions are suffering from pre-famine conditions, the EU has dedicated special attention to agriculture livelihoods to enhance **food security** through a programme worth **€41 million in 2018 alone**. The EU is responding to continuous displacements caused by the conflict by contributing to the resilience of internally displaced people (IDPs) and their host/return communities through an action **worth €35 million**. The EU is also supporting Yemen's fragile health infrastructure, fighting [malnutrition](#), and working to create a network of community health workers to [help prevent](#) the country's system from collapsing, with projects **worth €26 million**.