



Council of the  
European Union

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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Presidency Summary on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action

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According to the Global Humanitarian Overview 2020, 235 million people are expected to need humanitarian assistance in 2021. This is the highest figure in decades and looks even likely to increase further, because drivers like conflict, climate change and most recently COVID-19 are not fading and interact in unprecedented ways. A forward-looking humanitarian system that strengthens anticipatory humanitarian action<sup>1</sup> can help saving lives and mitigate the impact of crises.

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<sup>1</sup> Anticipatory humanitarian action can broadly be defined as an (1) action happening in anticipation of a hazard impact (2) to prevent or mitigate the impact (3) predicted on the basis of a forecast and/or collaborative analysis of a future event.

According to the results of the Presidency survey (WK 13545/20) on Member States' engagement in anticipatory action, 10 of the 13 responding Member States are already engaged in anticipatory action on a policy level, seven of which already provide funding for anticipatory action.

Particularly, through pooled funds that enable early action financing: The UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and the NGO-led Start Fund. Several Member States support related areas of preparedness and early warning.

## COHAFA Consensus

There is consensus that anticipatory humanitarian action constitutes an important opportunity to act in advance of disasters and crises before their impact fully unfolds and to do so more efficiently and in a more dignified fashion. Supporting the anticipation agenda – including scaling-up common efforts – is considered the right way forward. Member States appreciate that DG ECHO's renewed disaster preparedness approach considers anticipatory humanitarian action as a critical element of managing crises more efficiently and effectively. Furthermore, Member States wish for enhanced conceptual and terminological clarity and suggest further emphasis on the embeddedness of anticipation in disaster risk reduction (DRR). Member States favour linking humanitarian efforts closely to development and climate action agendas, hence ensuring coherence in implementation.

## COHAFA Key Contribution

Building on the current engagement of COHAFA members and taking into account the exchange during the COHAFA sessions, there is a window of opportunity for a system-wide shift towards anticipatory humanitarian action in which Member States and the EU are playing an essential role:

- This builds on Member States' contributions to the respective pooled funds, through which financing for anticipatory humanitarian action can significantly be expanded.
- Member States should continue engaging on policy level to stress the need for further investment in local early warning and early action capacities, recognizing the centrality of communities and local actors in shaping the anticipatory action agenda.

- To strengthen coherence of anticipation with related post-2015 agendas, enhanced exchange with relevant actors including strengthened engagement of disaster risk financing and development actors is recommended.
- Member States encourage sharing evidence and learnings based on robust empirical data. This will also support further conceptual development.

For Member States interested in increased policy engagement, the Presidency recalls the opportunity to join the Crisis Risk Financing Donor Working Group and become a partner of the recently launched Anticipation Hub.

The anticipatory action agenda needs to mature and further discussions and shared lessons-learned are essential. The German Presidency welcomes Portugal's intention to continue the debate during its Presidency and will support these efforts also as an explicit part of the German-Portuguese-Slovenian trio Presidency.

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