



Commemorating Victims of Global Climate Change

15 JULY 2026

In 2023, the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission signed a **Joint Declaration** to establish an **annual EU Day for the Victims of the Global Climate Crisis** and to observe this day on 15 July.



Why 15 July? The date of 15 July was one of the worst days of the deadly floods in Belgium and Germany in 2021.



Who is this info kit for? This info kit aims to inspire local and regional authorities, organisations and networks active on climate issues, community groups or anyone else who wishes to raise awareness on the day and the importance of climate action.

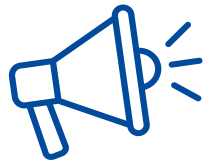


Volunteers and residents start to clean up their shops and restaurants following severe flash flooding on 18 July 2021 in Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler, Germany

Each year, 15 July will be an occasion to:



remember victims in
Europe and worldwide



raise awareness of action
people can take at their level to
reduce the risk of climate impacts
and be better prepared for and
respond to climate disasters.



Commemorate

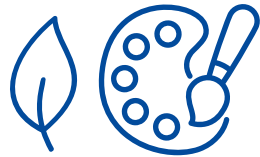




Observe a **moment of silence** in your workplace or community



Organise a **small ceremony** at a significant place locally



Organise an activity that uses **nature** or **arts** to connect people for a moment of reflection and inspires collective hope
(e.g. nature walk, artistic performance, community gathering)

How?



Connect the commemoration with an **event** to raise awareness and foster dialogue on climate issues
(e.g. documentary screening, panel discussion)

Raise awareness



How?

Use tools like the European Climate Pact's **quick-start tools for citizen engagement** to **organise a group activity** – a climate walk, photo story workshop, ‘peer parliament’ group discussion, or a local climate action group.

Use the **DIY Manual - Portal** of the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change designed to help regional and local authorities **engage citizens** – a climate festival, a world café or activities to imagine the future together.



Team up with other organisations and networks to amplify the importance of the day through **joint campaigns and shared resources**



Get in touch with the [European Climate Pact's](#) Country Coordinator or Climate Pact Ambassadors in your country to [connect](#) and work together



Engage with your local and regional authorities in your area through the [Covenant of Mayors](#), [Mission Adaptation to Climate Change](#) and [Mission Climate Neutral and Smart Cities](#)



You would like to **join forces** to make it an impactful day?

Get in touch

clima-events@ec.europa.eu

More information?

[EU Day for the Victims of the Global Climate Crisis](#)
[Climate Action - European Commission](#)





Background

Key figures and messages

Key messages

1 The annual EU Day for the Victims of the Global Climate Crisis, 15 July, established in 2023, serves to **commemorate victims** in Europe as well as worldwide and to **raise awareness** of concrete steps that people can take at their level to help **prevent and respond** to climate disasters.

2 The day is a call to all of us to act now to minimise the impact of climate change and to prepare for the risks it brings, to help **protect what's most precious to us** – our lives and our health.

3 The science is clear: extreme weather events and disasters are becoming **more frequent and more intense** as a direct consequence of climate change. Average temperatures are rising globally and weather patterns are becoming increasingly unpredictable.

4

As the climate heats up, it will bring with it **all kinds of risks**. From more frequent extreme weather events like heatwaves, droughts or floods, to coastal erosion and rising sea levels, the impacts will affect everyone.

5

Around the world, **millions of people** have already lost their homes, livelihoods or lives as a consequence of climate impacts. Climate-driven food and water insecurity is on the increase. When the risks combine with other adverse events, they become even more difficult to manage.

6

Climate risks pose a **threat to people and prosperity** also in Europe. Across the European Union, climate-related extreme weather already takes lives and inflicts economic damage. Even when the consequences aren't deadly, they leave a lasting impact on the local economy and communities.

7

To prevent the worst impacts of climate change, we must **continue to cut our greenhouse gas emissions** and **encourage global action to fight climate change**, to tackle the root cause of global warming.

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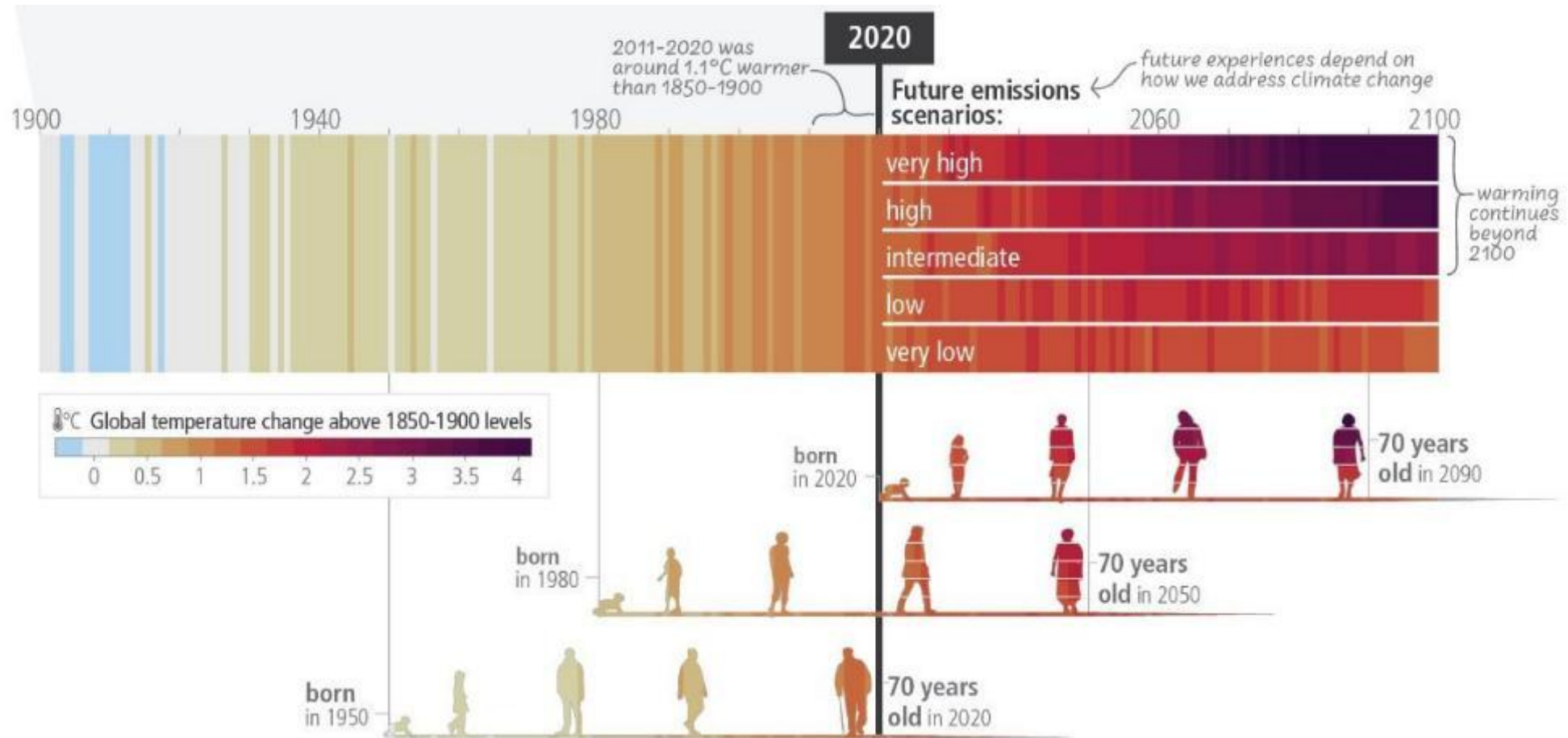
We must also **better prepare for** and **manage climate-related risks** that are already here – and will continue to grow. This requires investments, but the costs are modest compared to the cost of inaction. Preparing our homes, infrastructure, economy and health systems for climate change will help us save lives in the future.

9

The European Union is taking action. It is putting in place policies and measures to become climate-neutral by 2050 – an economy with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions – and to prepare for the unavoidable impacts of climate change, making our societies more resilient and protecting people and prosperity in Europe and globally.

Our climate is changing

As global temperature continues to rise, extreme weather events and long-term effects of climate change are claiming lives and affecting communities worldwide.

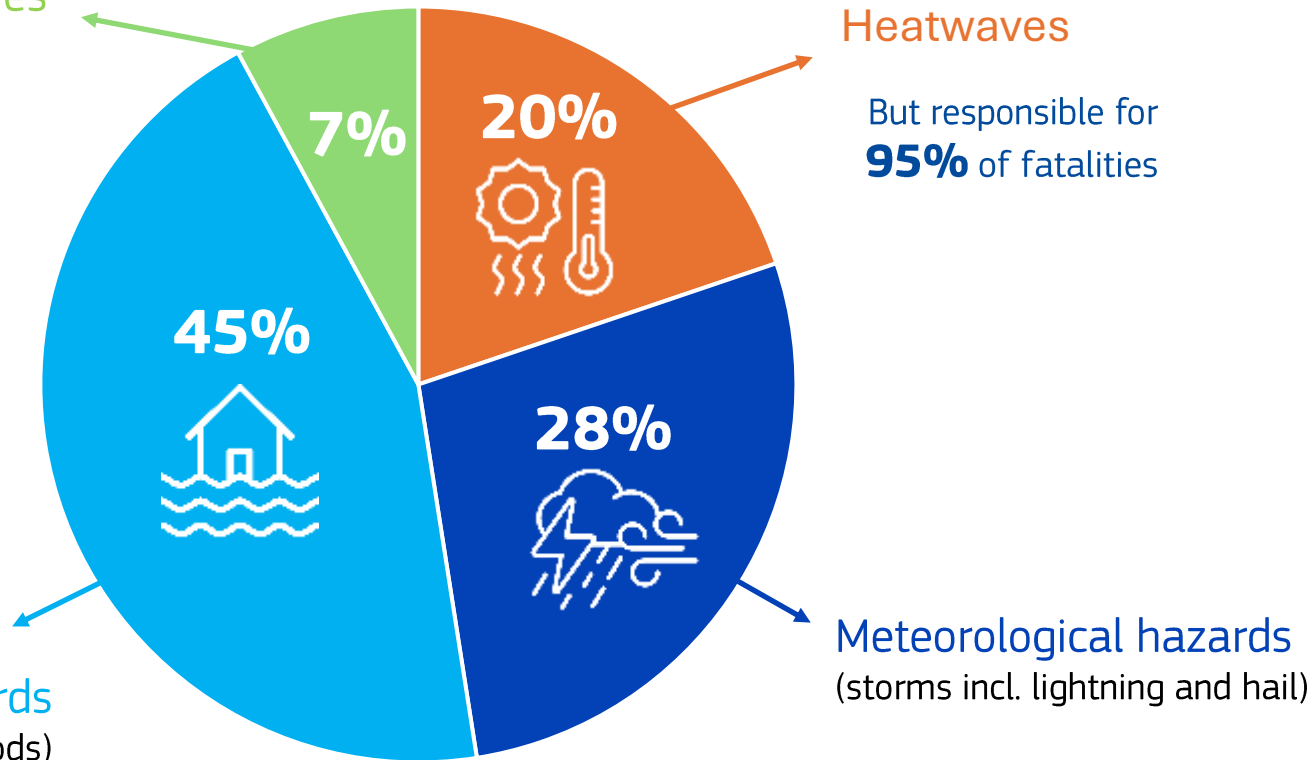


Climate risks are growing

The consequences of climate change are felt in all parts of the world. Interconnected with other risks and vulnerabilities, they affect all areas of people's lives today and in the future.

Climate hazards in the EU

Droughts, forest fires
& cold waves



Heatwaves

But responsible for
95% of fatalities

Europe is the fastest warming continent in the world, and climate risks are threatening its energy and food security, ecosystems, infrastructure, water resources, financial stability, and people's health.

European Climate Risk Assessment,
EEA 2024

Protecting communities hit by disasters

People and communities are increasingly at risk from life-threatening extreme weather events, such as floods and storms.

Around the world, more than **2 billion people were affected by floods** since 1998, and an estimated 1.81 billion people, or 23% of the world population facing significant flood risk.

Source: [WHO](#); [World Economic Forum 2024](#)

In 2025, **38%** of Europeans report feeling personally exposed to climate-related risks.

Source: [Eurobarometer, 2025](#)

In 2024, in Europe, at least 413 000 people were affected by **storms and flooding**, with at least 335 lives lost due these disasters.

Source: [Copernicus, 2024](#)



A torrent of water flows along the river Bela during heavy rain on 14 September 2024 in Mikulovice, Czechia



November 2024 in Paiporta municipality, in Valencia, Spain

Staying safe from the heat

95%

of all fatalities related to weather and climate extremes in Europe over the past 40 years have been linked to **heatwaves**, claiming around 48,000 lives in 2023 alone

Source: [European Environment Agency](#), 2024

Medics help a woman who has passed out from the heat during a heatwave on 20 July 2023 in Athens, Greece



A thermometer with a temperature of 41°C during the fourth heatwave of the summer, on 23 August 2023 in Bilbao, Spain



Cities hit the hardest by extreme heat

Due to the urban heat island effect, temperatures in cities and towns can reach 10 to 15 degrees more than surrounding rural areas, intensifying already extreme heat stress ([JRC, 2022](#)).

Check out the Covenant of Mayors' [#CitiesRefresh campaign](#) for inspiration on how to tackle heatwaves in urban areas.

Protecting our health

Rising temperatures are associated with increased mortality, morbidity, hospital admissions, and mental health burden for disorders such as suicide, anxiety, affective, and addictive disorders.

Globally, 3.6 billion people live in areas highly susceptible to climate change. Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250 000 additional deaths per year, from **undernutrition, malaria, diarrhea** and **heat stress** alone.

Source: [WHO](#)

Individuals directly exposed to climate disasters are at increased risk of **mental health** problems including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety.

Source: [Heinz & Brandt, 2024](#)



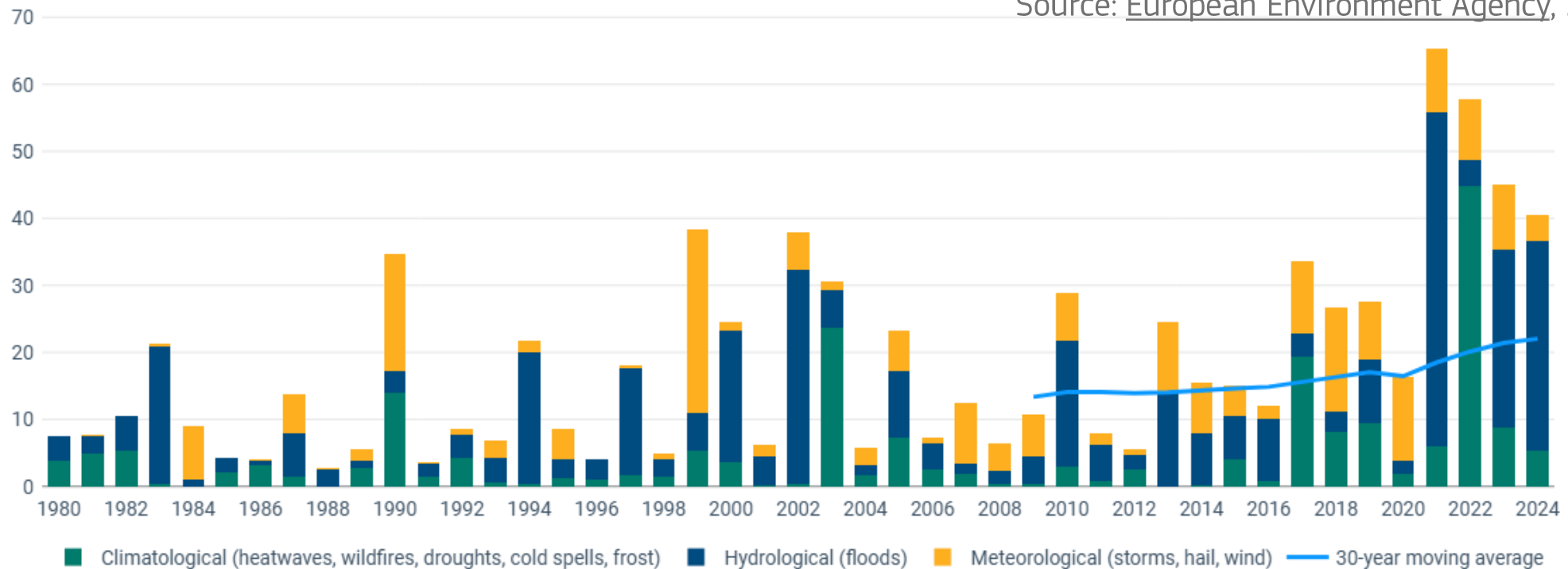
Preparing better to protect people and prosperity

The impacts of climate change put our societies and economies under strain, posing risks to the wellbeing of current and future generations.

EUR 822 billion

economic losses of assets from weather- and climate-related events in the EU between 1980 and 2024, of which **EUR 208 billion** (25%) were between 2021 and 2024.

Billion EUR (2024 prices)





EU's response

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions



To curb climate change, we need to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The EU has put in place **legally binding targets, market mechanisms, and sector-specific policies** to cut emissions and accelerate the transition towards a climate-neutral society.

It also works together with other **countries and regions** to tackle climate change and its impacts.

Examples of EU action



EUROPEAN CLIMATE LAW

Making EU climate goals legally binding

Climate neutrality (net-zero emissions) by 2050



EMISSIONS TRADING SYSTEM

Driving cost-effective emissions cuts and investment in the clean transition



ACTION ACROSS ALL SECTORS

From the power sector to industry, transport, buildings, agriculture and forestry



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Working with international partners to accelerate the global transition

Building resilience and managing risks

EU's adaptation strategy

Long-term vision for the EU to become a climate-resilient society, fully adapted to the unavoidable impacts of climate change by 2050

Smart
Faster
More systemic



Adaptation

Stepping up international
action for climate change



Climate
ADAPT

Sharing knowledge for a climate-resilient Europe

Preparedness, prevention and response: EU Civil Protection Mechanism



The Civil Protection Mechanism offers on-the-ground logistical and operational support to improve prevention, preparedness, and response to disasters.

830+

The number of times the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** has been activated to respond to emergencies since its creation in 2001 (including 64 times in 2025)

Source: [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#), 2026

Preparedness, prevention and response: Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve



EU ECHO - EU civil protection exercise in Bulgaria

Provides rapid financial response to all kinds of emergencies from natural disasters to humanitarian crises in EU countries or their neighbours.

EUR 8.2 billion paid out for various recovery efforts by the EU's **Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve** since its creation in 2002. Recovery after **flooding** is the most commonly funded, while the largest amounts have been allocated for recovery efforts following earthquakes.

Source: [European Parliament](#), 2025

Preparedness, prevention and response: EU firefighting force

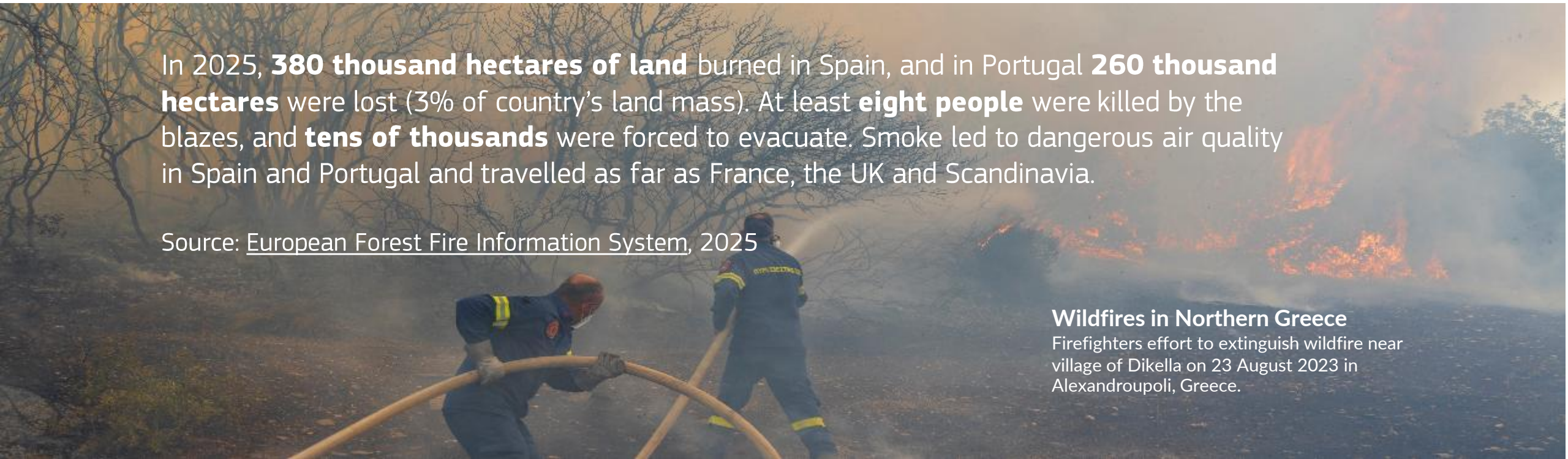
A **300**-member rapid-response wildfire force launched by the EU in February 2026 to bolster cross-border support during increasingly severe fire seasons.

In 2025, **380 thousand hectares of land** burned in Spain, and in Portugal **260 thousand hectares** were lost (3% of country's land mass). At least **eight people** were killed by the blazes, and **tens of thousands** were forced to evacuate. Smoke led to dangerous air quality in Spain and Portugal and travelled as far as France, the UK and Scandinavia.

Source: [European Forest Fire Information System](#), 2025

Wildfires in Northern Greece

Firefighters effort to extinguish wildfire near village of Dikella on 23 August 2023 in Alexandroupoli, Greece.





Next step: European Integrated Framework for Climate Resilience

"A more ambitious, comprehensive and coherent EU approach to climate resilience and preparedness"

In late 2026, the European Commission will propose a new European Integrated Framework for Climate Resilience, to safeguard Europe's security and prosperity, boost its competitiveness, and protect our health and well-being.