
Ukraine: EU fears chemical, biological and nuclear threats. Stockpiles of vaccines, medicines and equipment. Lenarcic, “our aim is to provide a rapid response”

The European Commission is getting ready to respond to public health risks such as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats. The European Commission announced in a statement the creation of “strategic reserves” of medicines through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The actions include a €540.5 million rescEU strategic stockpile, established in close collaboration with the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA), consisting of medicines, vaccines and equipment to treat people exposed to chemical agents. A rescEU reserve is also being created to provide “decontamination equipment and expert response teams”. The EU has mobilised rescEU to procure “potassium iodide tablets which can be used to protect people from the harmful effects of radiation”: “3 million iodide tablets have been delivered to Ukraine via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, with the help of France and Spain”. The decontamination reserve “will be developed and hosted by Croatia, Germany and Spain and will be 100% EU-financed with an initial budget of €66.7 million”. “We are taking concrete measures to increase Europe’s preparedness in the face of potential threats. We are setting up both a decontamination reserve and a new stockpile of equipment tailored to chemical, biological or nuclear emergencies”, said EU Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič. “I am grateful to Member States for this effort. Our aim is to provide rapid response capabilities for our citizens if such an emergency ever occurs”.

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