



Questions & Answers

EU Humanitarian Partnership 2028-2034

The Questions & Answers document provides the applicant organisations (hereafter "organisations") with explanatory information on the ex-ante assessment and the application procedure for the EU Humanitarian Partnership Certificate. The questions have been grouped in different sections to facilitate the access to information and will be updated regularly – new Questions & Answers will be added at the end of each section, and the table below will be updated to indicate the date of the updated document.

HISTORY OF CHANGES			
Version	Publication Date	Change	Page
1.0	09.07.2026	▪ Initial version	
2.0	28.08.2026	▪ Questions added: 9, 12b.	4, 5
		▪	
		▪	

I. AUDIT-RELATED QUESTIONS

1. Is DG ECHO financing fully or partly the ex-ante assessment?

DG ECHO does not fund the costs of the ex-ante assessment.

2. How should a family of partners take forward the ex-ante assessment exercise? Would one ex-ante assessment for all partners using the same audit company be acceptable, or should there be one assessment per partner with similar information when it comes to replying to questions on family members?

Each applicant organisation must present a completed ex-ante assessment. The contents of the various assessments presented must, by definition, truthfully reflect the set-up of the family to which the organisations belong, in a consistent manner. This would imply in principle that the replies to the questions on family members should be similar except to the extent necessary to reflect any particular role or expertise of a given applicant organisation in the overall family set-up.

3. What is meant by auditors carrying out "further procedures and tests [...] considered necessary"? How will proportionality and consistency be ensured across different audit companies?

This instruction shall be read in connection with chapter 5.2 *Engagement context of the Independent Assessment Report*. The auditor performs the assessment of the applicant organisation's systems, controls, rules and procedures based on the applicant organisation's preliminary information (e.g. in the pre-filled assessment report) and the supporting evidence provided. However, it is for the auditor to determine whether the proposed information and evidence is sufficient to reach a conclusion or whether additional information, documentation or additional testing is required. Proportionality and consistency are ensured through a common assessment framework, including standardised questions, scoring criteria and reporting requirements. The nature and extent of audit procedures may vary depending on the circumstances, but auditors are expected to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to support their conclusions in all instances.

II. QUESTIONS ON THE CALL DOCUMENT AND APPLICATIONS

4. How long does it take for applications for the EU Humanitarian Partnership Certificate to be assessed, and what are the timing expectations for submission?

The application window for the EU Humanitarian Partnership Certificate is open until 30 June 2033, allowing organisations to submit applications at any time during this period. While the assessment of applications normally concludes in a few months, this process may take longer if additional information is needed from the applicants. Organisations that would like to apply for funding as of 1 January 2028 should then submit their applications before **31 March 2027**. Applications received after this date cannot be guaranteed timely processing.

5. Will the Call document and application be translated into French?

Please refer to The Call document 11. *Important* section for information on languages.

6. In the Call document, it is mentioned that the Commission will perform regular monitoring of the certificate. How will this be done and what will the Commission monitor?

The regular monitoring by the Commission will be carried out via regular reporting, monitoring visits, legality and regularity audits, compliance audits, etc.

In doing so, the Commission intends to check the compliance with the conditions for the certificate but does not intend in any way to interfere with the organisation's procedures or systems beyond the assessment covered by the certificate.

7. How will organisations that fail the assessment and receive recommendations for improvements be expected to proceed?

Organisations that do not meet all the assessment criteria will not be awarded the certificate and will therefore not be eligible to apply for EU humanitarian funding. They are expected to take appropriate measures to address the recommendations provided. If they intend to apply for the certificate in the future, they will need to undergo a new assessment.

8. What is meant by situations in which an organisation "may be in material breach" in the context of suspension or withdrawal procedures?

The organisation may be considered in material breach in cases of non-compliance with any of the criteria set out under Block 1 (eligibility, financial capacity, exclusion and minimum requirements), or where significant weaknesses are identified in relation to Block 2 (operational capacity and additional suitability requirements).

III. QUESTIONS ON BLOCK 1 – ELIGIBILITY, FINANCIAL CAPACITY, EXCLUSION AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

9. Could you clarify how "non-profit-making" is defined? Does the applicant need to be formally registered as a non-profit organisation?

For the purposes of the Call Document, "non-profit" refers to an organisation that is **registered as non-profit-making**, i.e. is not established for the purpose of generating profits for private distribution. Any surplus generated through its activities should be reinvested in the organisation to support its objectives and activities.

10. Concerning the question 4 on non-exclusion, in which manner should the organisation prove that the natural or legal persons who are members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of the organisation are not in any of the exclusion situations?

Under Article 139(1) of the 2024 Financial Regulation¹, the organisation must confirm that the natural or legal persons who are members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of the organisation are not in one of the exclusion situations referred to in points (c) to (h) of Article 138(1) of this Regulation. The confirmation can be provided by means of a signed declaration of honour by the persons concerned (or their authorised

¹ To be found here: [Regulation - EU, Euratom - 2024/2509 - EN - EUR-Lex](#)

representative in case of legal persons) solemnly stating that they are not in one of the exclusion situations. There is no need to extend this verification to lower management levels.

10a. Does the above-mentioned declaration of honour need to be provided only by the chairperson or by each board member?

It is for the auditor to judge whether a declaration of the president or of each board member is needed to ensure sufficient evidence of non-exclusion, based on the information to be collected from the president as to how the latter has verified the situation of each board member (when the president is the only one to sign). More information on the non-exclusion requirements of the Commission for providing funding is available in Articles 136 and 141 of the Financial Regulation (Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509).

11. Do the humanitarian organisation's statutes need to specifically include a reference to humanitarian aid to cover question 5?

A specific reference to "humanitarian aid" in the organisation's statutes is not mandatory. However, as stated in the Call document, the organisation's humanitarian purpose must be clearly spelled out in its statutory documents, and it must be clear that the organisation delivers humanitarian aid. In addition, the organisation's other internal rules and policies should refer to humanitarian aid and the humanitarian principles.

12. Is the humanitarian project mentioned in question 7 referring only to projects funded by DG ECHO in non-EU countries where DG ECHO provides humanitarian aid?

No, all humanitarian projects in any non-EU countries can be considered as humanitarian aid experience.

12a. Does the question entail that the total project budget should be EUR 200 000, including money transferred to the implementing organisation and the own budget of the organisation as the leading organisation, OR should this EUR 200 000 constitute only the total budget transferred to the implementing organisation? And can there be multiple partners from different countries under same project as implementing organisation?

The total project budget managed by the organisation must be at least EUR 200 000/year, including **both**:

- Funds retained by the organisation,
- Funds transferred to implementing partner(s).

If the organisation participates in a larger project as an implementing partner, the share of its action must be at least EUR 200 000/year. The EUR 200 000 is **not** the amount transferred **only** to implementing partners but the minimum annual budget for the entire project (or the organisation's share if acting as an implementing partner).

A single project can involve multiple implementing partners (including from different countries) and operate in more than one non-EU country, provided the total annual budget for the project managed meets or exceeds EUR 200 000.

For multi-year projects, the minimum budget requirement of EUR 200 000 applies to **each year** of the project's implementation.

12b. Could you confirm whether the humanitarian projects need to cover the three consecutive years?

Yes, the applicant organisation must have implemented at least one humanitarian project of a minimum amount of EUR 200 000 in non-EU countries during each of the past three **consecutive** years.

13.If the operating income of an organisation for each of the last 2 years is less than EUR 2 million, does it automatically mean that applicants would be rejected?

Yes, as organisations with an operating income of less than EUR 2 million over any of the last two years do not comply with the minimum requirements to become ECHO partners.

14.How and at which level can organisations demonstrate compliance with EU values under question 15? For organisations that are part of an NGO family, network or (con-)federation should compliance be demonstrated at the global/network level or by each individual organisation?

Organisations can demonstrate compliance with this criterion by providing examples of policies which reflect adherence to EU values such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. Having measures in place to address the non-compliance with such values and priorities would also be important. Organisations that work as part of a family/network/(con-)federation can cross-rely on the policies of the family as long as this is reflected in the policy belonging and applying to the organisation and can be demonstrated by the organisation.

15.What does it mean to remain fully legally, financially and operationally responsible for the proper implementation of the action as mentioned in question 16?

More details for this question have been provided in the guidance column in the questionnaire of the Independent Assessment Report document.

16.What does question 18 assess?

Question 18 aims to assess whether the organisation ensures that funds are transferred as directly as possible to the country or countries where the EU-funded humanitarian action is implemented. Where funds are not transferred directly to the country of implementation, auditors should assess whether the applicant has appropriate procedures for such arrangements and whether the deviation from direct transfers is justified.

IV.QUESTIONS ON BLOCK 2 – OPERATIONAL CAPACITY AND ADDITIONAL SUITABILITY REQUIREMENTS

17.What is meant by a “complete register” under question 2.5?

A “complete register” means that **all known** allegations of irregularities, fraud and corruption are reflected in the register.

18.What is meant by reporting lines for whistle blowing under question 2.6?

“Reporting lines for whistle blowing” refer to the channels established by the organisation through which staff can confidentially and safely report suspicions of misconduct including SEAH, fraud, corruption or other breaches of ethical rules and standards.

19. What other training equivalent to HEAT can be accepted under question 4.4?

Any other training may be accepted as equivalent if it provides a level of information and coverage comparable to HEAT, including similar learning outcomes on personal security, situational awareness, risk assessment, and emergency procedures.

20. How can organisations demonstrate compliance with IHL through their activities under question 7?

Compliance with IHL standards shall be ensured i.e. via the following actions:

- Requirements embedding compliance into core documents, policies and operational procedures;
- Staff awareness – induction trainings, refresher trainings;
- Ensuring compliance with international sanctions;
- Conflict-sensitive project design – include e.g. access negotiation protocols, needs assessment based solely on vulnerability and severity of needs, avoiding discrimination or alignment with any party to conflict;
- Monitoring and accountability mechanisms throughout the project cycle;
- Functioning complaint and whistleblowing mechanisms and corrective mechanisms;
- Effective oversight bodies – including oversight of implementing partners.

21. Regarding food and medical supplies, under questions 8.10-8.12 do these apply solely to items purchased with DG ECHO funding or to all such items?

The requirements apply to all food and medical supplies handled by the organisation, regardless of the source of funding.

22. What is meant by "formal electronic archiving system" mentioned in question 13.2? Does it simply mean 'uploading documents into Sharepoint in an organised way' or does it entail a more specific software system?

A formal electronic archiving system entails more than simply uploading documents in an organised manner (e.g. to SharePoint). It constitutes long-term, unalterable storage of digital data. At headquarters level, a formal electronic archiving system is expected. For field offices, however, an organised electronic filing system should be sufficient.