

Dear Readers,

We are at a turning point. The Union Civil Protection Mechanism marked its 20th anniversary with a record number of 114 activations in 2021. The world is exposed to ever greater, more frequent, simultaneous and complex disasters. Solidarity is thus increasingly necessary to face them. The legislative work is gradually transforming and adapting the Mechanism to this new and changing environment. To reach the most appropriate response a higher level of preparedness is necessary. This is the purpose of the Knowledge Network, as we transpose into knowledge the experience of what has worked from the operational side. We will identify existing knowledge, share it in a coordinated way and use places, platforms and tools that will enable us to develop it and go further.



By choosing climate change and its consequences for the European civil protection as the central theme of its mandate, the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union wants to place the major cause of this necessary adaptation at the heart of discussions. Recent events, such as those in the north of Europe and around the Mediterranean last summer, have unfortunately confirmed the necessity of this approach. Therefore, we must not weaken, but look up and keep going forward with the work initiated in this direction.

The Presidency workshop “Impacts on climate change on EU civil protection” was met with high interest of the community. It allowed us to bring together delegates from the EU Member States, the Commission, and experts, to discuss the issues of adapting early warning systems, improving preparedness and operational planning, as well as enhancing response capacities. In line with this systemic approach, climate change-related issues will be addressed in all fora during the next months, at a strategical level through recently endorsed Council Conclusions, as well as during all the events, including a full-scale exercise, organised during the mandate of the Presidency.

This work of taking stock of future consequences and impacts must allow us to better understand and process findings and protect ourselves. Our knowledge of, and response to, climate change will depend on our realism and pragmatism, as well as on our ability to integrate risk assessments into long-term strategy. Lessons learnt and experiences should help us move forward in anticipation, mitigation, planning and operational implementation. Expertise, good practices, and skills must benefit all.

Harmonious results from strengthened cross-border and multi-sectoral cooperation, and from capitalising on the Knowledge Network - including the Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre and future centres of expertise with a risk-based approach working together in Europe - will pave the way for further synergies in future reflections and decisions.

The will is there. Let us build momentum and use all the resources at our disposal to adequately prepare for what is to come. Together.

Stéphane ThebaultDeputy Director in charge of International Affairs, Resources and Strategy
French Directorate General for Civil Protection and Crisis Management**IN THIS ISSUE**

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Union Civil Protection Mechanism plays crucial role in support to Ukraine

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) is playing a crucial role in mitigating the effects of the military aggression in Ukraine. Four weeks since the Russian Federation forces invaded Ukraine, active conflict continues to result in civilian deaths and suffering, massive displacement, large-scale humanitarian needs, and destruction of civilian infrastructure across the country. The UNHCR reported on 25 March that close to 3.7 million Ukrainians had fled abroad, while 6.5 million people had become internally displaced.



Emergency assistance from Finland delivered to Moldova via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, © 2022 European Union

Ukraine requested support from the UCPM to respond to the needs of the population affected by the war. So far, the UCPM has facilitated in-kind assistance from all EU Member States and two UCPM Participating States, offering more than 137 million items including shelter items (beds, tents, blankets, etc.), firefighting equipment, personal protective equipment, vehicles, medicines, and other medical supplies. Through the Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations department (ECHO), the EU has provided EUR 85 million for immediate assistance to Ukraine. ECHO-supported interventions are covering the whole of Ukraine. The EU has also provided EUR 8 million for Moldova to support in the relief effort in supporting Ukrainian refugees fleeing from Russia's unjustified invasion of Ukraine.

With the support from ECHO's Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), three UCPM logistics hubs are now set up in Poland, Romania and Slovakia to facilitate the delivery of assistance to Ukraine. ERCC Liaison Officers and an EU Civil Protection Teams (EUCPT) are deployed there to facilitate the coordination of the arrival of incoming assistance to Ukraine and neighbouring countries.

Poland, Slovakia, Moldova and the Czech Republic have also activated the UCPM in order to manage the refugees inflow and North Macedonia activated it to support repatriation of its citizens.

ERCC Liaison Officer Vlad Petre reports from Romania: "In the past two weeks I have witnessed the most impressive civil protection operation to support the Ukrainian population affected by the war. I was overwhelmed by the rapid mobilisation of the Member States and the Participating States to UCPM, NGO, private companies or simply citizens to support the refugees seeking shelter in neighbouring countries or for the Ukrainians internally displaced." He adds: "From the civil protection logistical hub in Romania only, more than 1,500 cubic meters of materials responding to the most urgent needs were provided: medicine, shelter and hygiene items, food and ambulances, with a lot more to follow in the coming days. I was honoured to work again together with my colleagues from Romanian civil protection and make all this possible in such short time, with great efforts but a huge feeling of satisfaction."

In the morning of 24 February as the invasion of Ukraine began, I was not supposed to be on duty in the ERCC. However, I decided to come to support my colleagues in the main operation room and I was impressed by the immediate mobilisation of colleagues at all levels. In the following hours and days, UCPM Member and Participating States showed unprecedented support to Ukraine and people fleeing the war. For the ERCC, this meant being able to adapt very quickly and to scale up our response capacity. I am very proud to be part of this effort.

Eleonore Colin, ERCC Duty Officer



EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid staff closely coordinate the delivery of emergency assistance to Ukraine with the United Nations representatives, © 2022 European Union

logistical hub in Romania only, more than 1,500 cubic meters of materials responding to the most urgent needs were provided: medicine, shelter and hygiene items, food and ambulances, with a lot more to follow in the coming days. I was honoured to work again together with my colleagues from Romanian civil protection and make all this possible in such short time, with great efforts but a huge feeling of satisfaction."

For updates on the situation visit the [ERCC portal](#), with the latest map available [here](#).

Find all information on the European Commission and EU's response [here](#).

Legislative changes enabling more response capacities under rescEU

The Commission adopted two revisions of the UCPM implementing legislation, the first on 22 February on **temporary shelter capacities and Emergency Medical Teams (EMT)**, the second on 15 March on **transport and logistics capacities** as part of the rescEU reserve.



The first revision was prompted by a recent gap analysis study. This concluded that the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) had no appropriate temporary emergency shelter capacity in the case of large-scale natural disasters affecting a large number of people. The earthquake in Croatia in December 2020 corroborated this finding. Despite a fast response from Member States in support of the country, the needs for adequate shelter capacities were not met.

Following the Croatian earthquake, national experts met to discuss a European solution to fill the gap in shelter capacities. Following on from this expert discussion, the European Shelter Capacity was established, with high-quality shelter assets stocked in warehouses to be quickly deployed, complemented by agreements to supply customisable assets on demand to sustain the response in the medium to long-term.

The same revision to the implementing legislation also modified the quality requirements of EMTs under rescEU to align them with World Health Organization standards under the Global Emergency Medical Team initiative.

With the second revision of 15 March 2022, transport and logistics capacities become part of the rescEU reserve. Over the past years, and especially during large-scale or complex crises, transport and logistics often proved to be a challenge in UCPM response operations. More recently, the lack of sufficient transport and logistical resources posed a key obstacle to Member States' ability to provide or receive assistance during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. These difficulties called for a more strategic and effective transport of medical assets, personnel and patients.



EU coordinated response to earthquake in Albania, © 2019 European Union

This led to the introduction of transport and logistics as the fourth priority area for rescEU capacity development in the UCPM legal basis (Art. 12(2) of the Decision No 1313/2013/EU as amended by Regulation (EU) 2021/836, adding to aerial forest firefighting, emergency medical response and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear ('CBRN') incidents).



2108 MODEX exercise, © 2018 European Union

After revising the legislation, national experts and the Commission worked together to examine gaps at national level. This work led to the consolidation of an implementing act establishing minimum quality requirements for rescEU transport and logistics capacities, suitable for deployments in a wide range of different scenarios and conditions. The ability to perform in operationally challenging circumstances and to ensure the transport and logistical handling of special good where necessary is included.

The main task of a transport and logistics capacity under rescEU will be to provide transport and related logistics services for persons, material, or equipment, or a combination of the aforementioned. During consultations with Member States, it was identified that transport and logistics capacities could be multi-purpose, and could be developed to perform tasks already defined for other aerial rescEU capacities.

The Commission will fully finance the development and deployment of all those capacities. Implementation is already underway, to build a more prepared and resilient Europe.

Read more:

- [Commission Implementing Decision 2022/288: rescEU shelter capacities and Emergency Medical Teams type III](#)
- [Commission Implementing Decision 2022/461: rescEU transport and logistics capacities](#)

Upcoming legislation on resilience of critical entities will benefit EU citizens and businesses

Interview with Heike Buss, Deputy Head of Unit - Counter-Terrorism,
Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission



Just over 15 years ago, the EU adopted a dedicated policy framework for the protection of critical infrastructure. What led to this?

The terrible terrorist attacks in 2004 on commuter trains in Madrid and on the public transport system in London led to a call for EU-level action to better protect critical infrastructure in Europe. EU Member States agreed that joint efforts were needed, leading to the adoption of a policy framework in 2006: the European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection. The Programme included measures to support cooperation and information sharing among EU Member States, funding of projects, and cooperation with non-EU countries. In 2008, the European Critical Infrastructures Directive was also adopted. The Directive put in place a procedure to identify and designate European Critical Infrastructures, alongside requirements for operators of European Critical Infrastructure to protect their assets.

In December 2020, the Commission published a legislative proposal for a Directive on the resilience of critical entities. What was the motivation behind the proposal?

While we have a dedicated EU policy framework in place since 2006, it has

become outdated in several aspects. The tools were not fit for purpose anymore, taking into account the evolving threat landscape and the economic, societal and technological developments. We have also seen a progressive change in the approach. Resilience is increasingly recognised as a concept that goes beyond protection to focus as well on the ability to prevent, resist, mitigate and “bounce back” into operation quickly after an incident.

Can you expand on what you mean by the existing framework not being fit for purpose anymore?

The European Critical Infrastructures Directive was an important first step for an EU-level framework, but it also had its limitations. For instance, it only covers two sectors, transport and energy. On top of this, the Directive was implemented unevenly.

In addition, the operational environment has evolved. Peoples' livelihoods and well-functioning economies depend on the reliable provision of essential services. With

further integration in the internal market over time, there are more interdependencies across sectors and across borders in the provision of essential services that rely on infrastructure. As a consequence, the potential for cascading effects in case of an incident increases. The risk landscape is dynamic, too. Take for example the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a huge impact also on the provision of essential services in the internal market. Or long-term

challenges related to climate change which will require significant efforts from entities providing essential services to not only protect specific assets but to become resilient. The proposal for a Directive on the resilience of critical entities addresses all these issues.

So you are looking at more types of risks, but you also aim to cover more sectors?

Yes, the proposed Critical Entities Resilience Directive retains an all-hazards, risk-based approach, with an important qualification. All relevant natural and man-made non-cyber risks fall under its scope, including natural disasters, accidents, public health emergencies and antagonistic threats such as a terrorist attack,



a hybrid attack or sabotage. The risk landscape can evolve fast and profoundly as we are witnessing with the crisis in Ukraine. This confirms that the initiative to better equip Member States and critical entities to enhance the resilience of critical entities against disruptive events is timely.

We propose to expand from two to ten sectors that are highly relevant for the good functioning of the internal market: transport, energy, health,

drinking and waste water, banking, financial market infrastructure, digital infrastructure, public administration and space. This makes it an ambitious proposal that responds better to today's challenges.



A Technical assistant of Virology Laboratory at INIAV. © 2016 European Union

You mention that the proposal covers non-cyber risks. What about the cybersecurity dimension?

Indeed, the number of cyber incidents is alarmingly high. The Commission has therefore proposed a revision of the Directive on the Security of Network and Information Systems, the NIS-2 Directive proposal, at the same time as our proposal was put forward. The NIS-2 Directive proposal covers cybersecurity comprehensively. Both directives together will provide a coherent package to enhance resilience of entities concerned.

What obligations does the proposed Directive entail for Member States?

According to the proposal, Member States will have to adopt a strategy for reinforcing the resilience of critical entities. They will perform a national risk assessment and on that basis identify critical entities, using the criteria established in the Directive. Member States should also provide support to critical entities, for instance through guidance

material or training and by sharing with them relevant aspects of their risk assessment. Member States will also be in charge of supervising critical entities and enforcing the rules of the Directive. Specific oversight at EU level is foreseen for critical entities providing essential services to a large number of Member States.

And what about the obligations for critical entities?

Critical entities, for their part, will have to do a risk assessment of their own, adopt appropriate and proportionate measures to ensure their resilience and notify competent authorities of incidents that significantly disrupt the provision of essential services.

There seems to be an obvious link with activities in the area of disaster prevention, preparedness and response. How does the proposal take this into account?

Natural disasters and accidents are among the most serious risks to the resilience of critical entities. I couldn't agree more that there is a broad array of knowledge, experience and tools available on those matters in the area of civil protection. This is why consultation and cooperation between the competent authorities for the implementation of the Critical Entities Resilience Directive and those in charge of civil protection will be paramount. We provide for this in the proposed Directive. When offering EU level support to Member States and critical entities in the implementation of the Directive, the Commission intends to build on available structures and tools such as those under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, including the

Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network.

Before the new directive can enter into force, the European Parliament and the Council need to adopt it. Where do you stand in this process?

The European Parliament and the Member States examined the proposal throughout 2021. It took some time because the proposal covers many sectors, requiring quite some coordination among Parliamentary committees and national ministries, respectively. Then, the Parliament and the Council adopted their positions on the proposal, including suggestions for modifications. The negotiations for finding a commonly agreeable legislative text, the so-called trilogue, started in January this year. The Commission acts as a facilitator in these negotiations. I am confident that the legislators can come to a good compromise in the not so distant future.

Read more:

[Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the resilience of critical entities.](#)

[Commission's work in the area of critical infrastructure protection.](#)

European Commission receives the Slovenian Civil Protection Award

European Commission (ECHO) received the Slovenian Civil Protection Award on 1 March for its contribution in strengthening international cooperation in protecting against natural and other disasters and building a stronger and more resilient European Union.

On Slovenian Civil Protection Day, the Slovenian Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief of the Ministry of Defence recognised ECHO for excellent cooperation, joint efforts and the commitment to the common mission of saving lives, preventing and alleviating human suffering and safeguarding the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and man-made crises.



Jerneja Jug Jerše, Head of the Commission's Representation in Slovenia, accepted the award on behalf of ECHO.



ECHO Director-General Vivi Michou said in a video address that she is honoured and privileged to receive this award as a recognition of ECHO's commitment to international cooperation in civil protection and its continuous support to life-saving assistance. She said: "Today I know I'm speaking to people who know well what managing crises means. To people who understand the implications of all kinds of emergencies. To people who are always ready to act as members of the wider European civil protection community."

DG Michou thanked the Slovenian administration for civil protection and disaster relief for offering support whenever and wherever it is needed. She added: "Your own contribution, such as rescEU protective equipment in Slovenia, but also your assistance to Ukraine, is tangible European solidarity and you should be proud of it."

Spain awards the EU for its emergency support in La Palma's volcanic eruption

The Spanish Ministry of the Interior and its Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Emergencies has awarded the Commission with the Spanish Civil Protection Merit Silver Medal.



The Commission's departments of [ECHO](#), [DEFIS](#) and [JRC](#), received the award for helping the country analyse the severity of damage caused by the eruption of the Cumbre Vieja volcano on the Spanish island of La Palma.

On 12 March Peter Billing, Deputy Director for Emergency Management and rescEU in ECHO, accepted the award at the ceremony, which was attended by King Felipe VI and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez.



When the Cumbre Vieja volcano erupted on 19 September 2021, the EU's Copernicus Emergency Management Service produced [satellite images](#) and timely and detailed information to the Spanish civil protection authorities. This has helped them forecast risks for people living on the island. More specifically, analytical emergency maps produced by the EU's Copernicus satellites and crisis management experts provided information on the lava flow and forecasted damage to buildings, emergency routes and infrastructure.

During the 3-month eruption, the Copernicus satellite informed the public, institutions, responders, media, and experts about the eruption's impact on people living in La Palma. In addition, Spanish authorities also received further information on how the volcano changed the island's shape, on soil erosion and the possibility of landslides.

LEARNING



EU Civil Protection Full Scale Exercise in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The [ResponSEE full scale exercise](#) will take place in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) from 27 to 29 April 2022. The exercise will be based on a full mission cycle for national and international response to a major earthquake with cascading effects under a pandemic situation.

The response will involve an EU Civil Protection Team (CPT), a liaison officer and the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team (UNDAC) as well as Urban Search and Rescue and firefighting teams, mountain rescue, water purification, medical response, and dog handling teams, from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Austria, Montenegro, Romania and Slovenia.

The international community and regional non-governmental organisations, namely UNDP, the EU Delegation, OSCE, EUFOR, World Vision, Save the Children, NATO, UNESCO/Blue Shield will be actively participating. This exercise will be a great training opportunity for the region and a supporting step to bring Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina closer to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.



... in France



The DOMINO full-scale exercise will take place from 15 to 20 May 2022, in the Bouches-du-Rhône department of France. This special geographic area features a concentration of technological and industrial risks, combined with major natural hazards.

The exercise will focus on chemical risks and a maritime pollution event, including disaster medicine. Organisations involved will find themselves in a situation that exceeds the response capacities of the departmental and national resources, requiring the activation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. This large-scale exercise is part of the preparation and training of crisis management actors in the event of a disaster requiring involvement of all territorial levels, certain inter-ministerial actors and European support. Participants include local authorities, the fire brigade, the health chain, schools and universities, the Mediterranean maritime authority, operational centres, and Marseille's maritime port.

The project is co-financed by the European Commission and led by the French Directorate General for Civil Protection and Crisis Management, in association with the civil protection authorities of Germany, Belgium and Spain, reinforced by a module from the Austrian Ministry of Defence.



... and in Norway

The [Arctic REIHN full scale exercise](#) has been postponed to a date still to be defined. The aim of the exercise is to test, verify and further develop emergency preparedness and response in the case of a nuclear or radiological accident in the Arctic. This includes mechanisms for alerting other nations, and for rendering and receiving international assistance.



This is an important exercise. In the Northern parts of Norway, rescue resources may be few and far between, and in some cases the nearest relevant help is located in neighbouring countries. That is why to increase our preparedness in case of an actual accident it is necessary to exercise together, get to know each other and identify learning points.

Elisabeth S. Aarsæther, DSB Director General

'A nuclear-driven vessel in coastal waters outside the town of Bodø in Northern Norway is in trouble. The captain reports an accident that will have consequences on both sea and land, as well as cross-border contamination. A massive local, regional, national and international response is required.'

The Arctic REIHN exercise is funded by the European Union. Norwegian partners include the Norwegian Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (DSA), the Norwegian Coastal Administration (NCA), the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) and the Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection (DSB), which is in charge of planning and conducting the exercise.

FROM THE COMMUNITY

Belgian UCPM Trained Experts' Day



The Belgian Directorate-General for Civil Protection organised its 5th UCPM Trained Experts' Day online on 3 December 2021. This yearly seminar brings together all Belgian Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) trained personnel to share updates on UCPM and Belgian activities and projects in international emergency assistance.

Belgian UCPM-trained experts come from a wide variety of disciplines and sectors and various levels of emergency services. Participants come from fire services, civil protection units, maritime response, medical services, emergency planning at all levels, police, foreign affairs, defence and more. In their daily job, many of them have few links with the UCPM and work in cooperation with different partners and within different networks. These yearly seminars enable these experts to maintain a connection with the UCPM and have formal and informal exchanges, nurturing their network. In the words of international relations civil protection expert Pieter Wynant, "The UCPM is not just a Mechanism, but it is a community of solidarity and support. This is really fostered through these yearly seminars".

Networking is one of the most important aspects of the job as a crisis manager. Maintaining this network at EU expert national level and UCPM level is extremely important. (...) In crisis situations you are immediately five steps ahead if you can work together with colleagues you know.

Col. Beeldens, Belgian Civil Protection

UCPM experts operate beyond Belgian national borders. Every year, guests from outside Belgium are invited and take part in the seminar to allow for more open and enriching discussions. This year the European Commission presented an overview on the latest developments within the Mechanism, with a special focus on HERA (the new Health Emergency preparedness and Response Authority). Participants from abroad included also the National Training Coordinator from Portugal, as Portugal would like to organise their own experts' day, a Slovak National expert in the Commission testifying from his home town on the importance of the assistance the Belgian medical team provided in Slovakia, and a Belgian expert from the diplomatic post in China.

Being involved as a stakeholder on a UCPM mission or being in a host nation role, as part of an intervention team or as an expert, often entails being and feeling a bit alone. As an expert, you find yourself in an unknown environment and situation, detached from your daily infrastructure and network. Investing in building the network allows experts to feel more "at home" even during deployment. It provides them with some recognisable elements in their new setting, a network they can rely on and friends that can support them. It also enables them, where needed, to quickly connect with the wide range of services represented in our network, ranging from the Belgian diplomatic services to, for example, the Belgian Burn specialists association.

Alone we can do a lot, but **together we can do much more.**



FROM THE COMMUNITY

**Towards enhanced wildfire response capacities:
empowering fire analysts and advisers through AFAN**

Europe's analyst networks are powerful intelligence resources to fight wildfires. AFAN promotes them and contributes to making their knowledge more visible. As wildfires increase in magnitude globally, the European fire seasons become longer and more complex every year. Despite having a wide variety of European ecosystems and fire regimes, fire frequency and behaviour are intensifying and emergency responders must deal with new and increasingly complex situations.

Fire Analysis and Assessment (FAA) tasks during the preparedness and response phase have proven to be an indispensable support for decision-making. In tactical operations and strategic decisions, an understanding of fire behavior and patterns in different climatic and environmental conditions can impact positively on the resolution of the emergency.

As the fire scenarios become more unpredictable and uncertain, fire analysts are key to provide robustness in the decision-making.

Núria Prat-Guitart, AFAN coordinator

This knowledge of fire behaviour and patterns is applied in many wildfire emergencies both on the ground and remotely.



The [Advanced Fire Analysis Network](#) (AFAN) project was funded by the UCPM in 2021 to empower the European FAA networks and facilitate knowledge-sharing. The project also scales up existing regional and national knowledge and capacities and harmonises them with the mission of shared-mutual learning. The project [consortium](#) led by the Pau Costa Foundation includes wildfire emergency responders: the Catalan Fire and Rescue Service (Spain) and the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (UK). It also includes three training centers: Entente - VALABRE and the French National Fire Officers Academy - ENSOSP (France) and D.R.E.Am Italia (Italy).

A public event will take place in Gardanne (France) on 22 April 2022 to present the results of the project. If you are interested in attending, contact afan@paucostafoundation.org.



AFAN will end in June 2022 with a set of promising outcomes:

- Networking tools for connecting European Fire Analysts. AFAN is soon launching a Map of wildfire analysis expertise across Europe. Include your organisation by completing [this form](#).
- Proposal for a common framework to identify fire analyst profiles, capacities, and existing knowledge. The document will be available on [AFAN's website](#).
- Guidelines for the use of common tools, science, and best practices used in FAA (under development).
- Proposal for a common framework for remote assessment and advisory teams (under development).
- AFAN webinar series. Upcoming webinar dates and the recording from previous webinars are available [here](#).

FROM THE COMMUNITY

NO-FEAR project: Network Of practitioners For Emergency medical systems and cRitical care



NO-FEAR is a five-year multinational European project bringing together practitioners, policy makers and representatives from academia and industry involved in response to medical emergencies and health threats. Together, they work to achieve a common understanding of needs and operational gaps, and recommend potential areas for innovation.

When NO-FEAR was launched in 2018, large-scale threats centred on security-related incidents like terrorism, fires, CBRN incidents, and conflicts. These dangers remain. Since then however the COVID-19 pandemic burst into our world, heavily impacting on health system and the entire global society.

NO-FEAR has mobilised the large network created during the project to share real-time knowledge, experience, lessons learned and challenges. [NO-FEAR's webinars and discussions](#) have offered a space for key stakeholders to help each other in preparing and responding to a new and ever-changing threat.

Responses to COVID-19 are being worked out on the ground by first responders, medical professionals, scientific innovators, and experts around the world. NO-FEAR connects these diverse actors so they can tap into each other's wealth of experience.

The COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly represents the major health threat of our time, putting our citizens in danger and pushing many of our national health systems to a breaking point. Medical practitioners find themselves operating in completely unknown and unpredictable situations. In this scenario, encouraging the transnational cooperation and the exchange of information, lessons learned, best practices and quickly available solutions is of paramount importance.

Francesco Della Corte, NO-FEAR Project Coordinator



International and inter-agency communication is fundamental because all large-scale emergencies require the whole chain of emergency "actors" to rapidly assess the situation and provide care to those in need, in a coordinated and collaborative way. Yet responders may speak 'different languages', figuratively and literally. Protocols and equipment differ between agencies internationally and sometimes within the same country.

While NO-FEAR is a European Union project, the networks it is building are global. The networks allow practitioners to talk with each other about the understanding that responses will adapt, knowledge will grow, and situations will change. The speed at which COVID-19 protocols, operating procedures and treatments

evolve speaks to the need for practitioners to have up-to-date information. NO-FEAR puts them in conversation to pool knowledge and discuss their own local responses. Topics recently discussed in [practitioner-focused webinars](#) have included:

- Emergency Communication in the era of 5G
- Experience sharing during COVID 19 – how can we leverage cross border cooperation to better prepare for the future?
- Medical and logistical constraints of COVID-19 patient air transfers
- Ransomware Attack on Irish Health Service.

NO-FEAR



NO-FEAR organised a project workshop in Madrid from 28 to 30 March 2022 on the analysis of lessons observed during the response to COVID-19. Key findings were discussed among practitioners from all over Europe and presented to policy makers from the national and international health authorities and civil protections departments.

If you're interested in joining as a practitioner or supplier – [sign up to the mailing list](#), join the [network portal for full access](#), or alternatively follow NO-FEAR on [social media channels](#) to keep in touch.

FROM THE COMMUNITY



Strengthening the EU civil protection area: a strategic dimension for the French National Fire Officers Academy

The French National Fire Officers Academy (ENSOSP)'s EU research activities are supporting first responders with knowledge, good practices and innovative technologies to be prepared for the changing risk landscape in which they work.

Reacting to emerging risks

Solidarity between Member States constitutes the underlying principle of the European civil security policy, with emerging risks having serious impacts on first-responders' activities and on communities.

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič, said: "The EU Civil Protection Mechanism is a concrete example of EU solidarity in action". In 2020 alone, the mechanism was activated 102 times, illustrating the need to support the development of a strong European civil protection area to share capacities and knowledge and enhance the operational capabilities of first responders.



Sharing knowledge and best practices through networks of stakeholders

ENSOSP is responsible for knowledge management on civil protection in France (see the [Portail National des Ressources et des Savoirs](#)). Building on this expertise, the Academy is now involved in two EU-funded projects with the ambition of becoming EU-wide one-stop shops in their specific areas:

- [FIRE-IN](#), coordinated by [SafeCluster](#), which aims at improving national and European fire and rescue capabilities and promoting uptake of innovative solutions thanks to the FIRE-IN online platform;
- [AFAN](#), coordinated by [Pau Costa Foundation](#), which aims at creating a European wildfire expert knowledge-sharing network focused on fire risk analysis and risk reduction.

Enhancing operational capabilities of first responders through innovation

The Academy is committed to finding ways to improve the safety and operational capabilities of those working in crisis management. To achieve this, ENSOSP is partner in two Horizon 2020 projects funded under the Technologies for First Responders call:

- [FASTER](#) is researching innovative technologies to improve the safety and efficiency of First Responders. Coordinated by [CERTH](#), it is in its final year and preparing for a series of demonstrations;
- The newly begun [RESCUER](#) project, coordinated by [UPM](#), aiming at researching and developing a technological toolkit to support First Responders in adverse and infrastructure-less environments.

The involvement of ENSOSP in these four high-profile projects will help meet the following objective of the Academy: improve knowledge management and innovation for first-responders. It also helps to nurture mutually beneficial collaborations with technical developers and research organisations working on civil protection solutions and with other first responders throughout Europe.

[More information on ENSOSP's EU research activities](#) is available on the ENSOSP website.

ENSOSP is committed to making its contribution by strengthening its European-related activities as a civil security end-user and training center. A restructuring of our Academy took place in 2021 with the creation of a dedicated Research and Innovation Department and the adoption of a Research roadmap identifying research priorities. The need to develop ENSOSP's participation in EU projects is identified as one of those priorities.

Commendant Wilfried Stéfic, head of the ENSOSP Projects Laboratory

FROM THE COMMUNITY



CapaCities: Disaster Risk Management capacity development for cities in Eastern Neighbourhood countries

Thanks to the [CapaCities project](#), the cities of Ungheni in Moldova, Kutaisi in Georgia and Ararat in Armenia improved their Disaster Risk Management (DRM) planning capacities, in line with the priorities of the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#). By the end of the project, they had the capacities to carry out a structured DRM planning, which will help them increase their resilience to disasters. CapaCities ran between 2018 and 2019 and was co-funded under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

To gain insight into their DRM capabilities and potential areas of improvement, each city carried out a self-assessment using a tool developed by CapaCities. The next step for each city was a peer review carried out by the focal points of the other cities and CapaCities. These activities were led by knowledgeable and competent focal points and based on a concrete DRM strategy including the roadmap developed during the project.

In Ungheni, for instance, the City Hall and other DRM stakeholders implemented the DRM strategy actively. Civil Protection plans for education and health institutions, for the department for emergencies and other key establishments now include measures to sensitise citizens on disaster risks prevention and preparedness, and actions to take in case of a disaster according to the DRM Strategy.

Ungheni has also been successful in implementing further measures such as modernising and expanding water supply and sewage networks.

The city of Ararat installed a siren warning system and successfully tested it during conflict in the area. The warning system installation was an important step because Ararat is a border city and also located in a seismic zone. The DRM stakeholders in Ararat are now looking into finding local donors to reconstruct the city's two old and inadequate shelters.

CapaCities also led to the establishment of a DRM Department in Kutaisi, and raising awareness about the need for DRM planning at national level and amongst other municipalities.

The project also enabled lasting cooperation between the trained DRM focal points in the three countries who exchange experiences on the implementation of their DRM strategy as well as with coordinating partners from the Netherlands.



Members of the CapaCities team observe the work of medical volunteers during a multidisciplinary exercise in Ungheni District (Moldova), © 2019 CapaCities

A design that can save lives: Gawkers catch themselves in the act, thanks to an innovative design on Johanniter ambulances

Time and again, [Johanniter](#) rescue workers have experienced their work being impeded by onlookers. The proliferation of smartphones and widespread use of social media have exacerbated the problem. "This has to change, because often just a few minutes can make the difference between life and death," says Jörg Lüssem, a member of Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe's national board of directors.

To solve this problem, Johanniter took up from the Scholz & Friends agency the idea of attaching a QR code to rescue vehicles or rescuers' equipment, and is currently testing it out in a pilot project. The QR code is designed to discourage onlookers who want to capture the action with their smartphones. It triggers the automatic warning "Gaffen tötet!" ("Rubbernecking kills!") on the smartphone of the person taking the picture. In this way, people taking photos at the site of an accident become immediately aware of their actions.

The aim is to draw attention to "rubbernecking at the scene of an accident" and to address it in a completely new way. Because gawking is no longer a trivial offense. Since January 1 2021, Section 201a of the German Criminal Code stipulates that photographing or filming an accident can result in a prison sentence of up to two years.

In parallel with the practical test on the road, the Akkon University of Human Sciences is studying the "rubbernecking" phenomenon and the reactions to the stickered ambulances. A five-member team led by Prof. Marisa Przyrembel is referring to aspects of emergency, social and motivational psychology to get closer to the "gawking" phenomenon. "For years, there has been a lack of a reliable study with nationwide provable figures on this topic. We want to change that", says Prof. Przyrembel.

Data from the respective rescue missions, click numbers generated by the QR code and data collected from surveys of rescue service personnel and the population will be evaluated, to test the new design in a practical way.

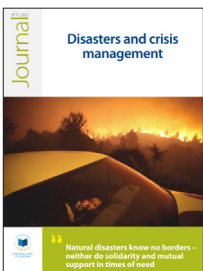
Current status of the pilot project

A total of 32 Johanniter ambulances from all over Germany are participating in the pilot study. Forty-three regularly liveried vehicles were also included in the study, to be used as comparative values. The first partial results are expected in mid-2022. These will form the basis for an internal organisational evaluation of whether the pilot project should be extended to all 289 Johanniter rescue stations nationwide. See: [Project video \(in German\)](#).



NEW RESOURCES

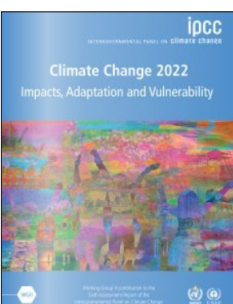
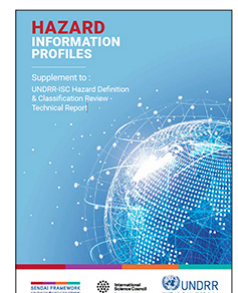
Natural disasters know no borders – neither do solidarity and mutual support in times of need



The European Court of Auditors released a publication focusing on the [impact of solidarity in times of crisis](#) and on how public auditors in the European Union (EU) are contributing to alleviating future crises. The report provides insights from community leaders, administrators, disaster risk reduction practitioners, and humanitarian aid partners in the EU and beyond on their role in disaster risk reduction. Interviews with various actors shine a light on accountability, adaptive leadership, organisational effectiveness, data analysis, preparedness and prevention, solidarity and mutual support, and providing aid across borders.

UNDRR-ISC Hazard Information Profiles

Following the release of the [UNDRR-ISC Hazard Definition and Classification Review - Technical report](#) in July 2020, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction International Science Council published a supplement in 2021: [Hazard Information Profiles](#). The publication has a description of 302 hazard information profiles, developed using a consultative process by scientists and experts across the globe. These resources are important in supporting the implementation of disaster risk reduction and risk-informed investment, as they provide a common set of hazard definitions to governments and stakeholders to inform their strategies and actions on risk reduction and management.



Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s Working Group II has finalised its contribution to the [Sixth Assessment Report](#). The document focuses on the impacts of climate change, looking at ecosystems, biodiversity, and human communities at global and regional levels. It also reviews vulnerabilities and the capacities and limits of the natural world and human societies to adapt to climate change.

You can access at the following links: the [summary for policy makers](#), the [technical summary](#) and the [full report](#).

SCIENCE

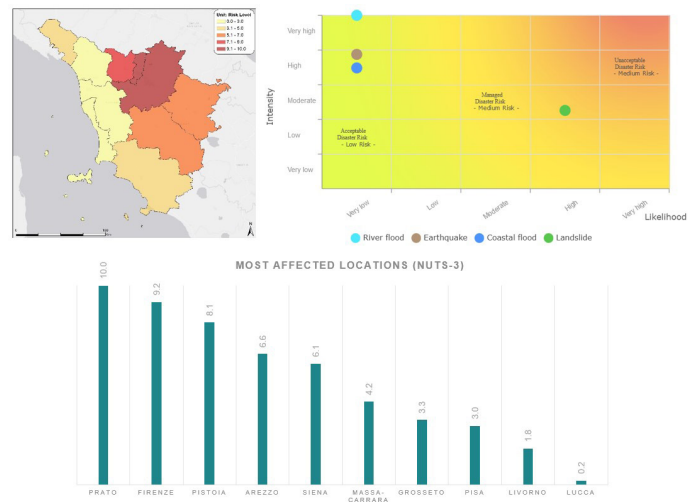


The Risk Data Hub: supporting Member States in risk management reporting

The Risk Data Hub is a geographic information system (GIS) web application developed by the [Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre \(DRMKC\)](#). It hosts, curates and disseminates data, tools and methodologies for disaster risk management (DRM). Among its key functionalities, it offers an open-source methodology for risk assessment and an authoritative loss and damage database that can analyse losses due to disasters at European level.

The Risk Data Hub (RDH) platform has six main modules:

- **The Risk Analysis data portal:** application to improve the access to and sharing of curated European-wide risk data;
- **The Disaster Loss data portal:** collection of European wide historical loss and damage data from open sources;
- **DRM data from other projects:** module hosting outcomes from various DRM projects (i.e. Horizon 2020, FP7 etc.) which are supporting DRM related actions;
- **The Methodology module:** learning and training section illustrating how to use the platform and its tools;
- **The User Corner panel:** solution targeting national authorities for accessing, storing and managing disaster risk data. Access to data is restricted so that each user has its own private workspace;
- **Facts and Figures** (currently under development): this will allow users to generate ad-hoc reports on specific areas, hazards and/or assets making use of RDH data at different level of aggregation.



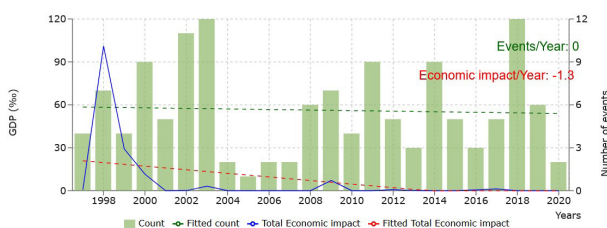
The figure shows a use-case at NUTS-3 level using provinces of Tuscany (Italy) as reference. The asset selected is "residential building" with a set of hazards including earthquakes, landslides, coastal floods and river floods, with 2-years return periods. Risk scores are mapped onto the geographical areas of interest. The platform also produces informative charts including: (i) a risk matrix to visualize intensity and likelihood of each hazard (ii) a bar plot of most affected locations with the matching risk values.

The Risk Analysis and Disaster Loss data portals are hosting open data and analysis with European wide coverage. They offer an overview on available and commonly used data. For the Risk Analysis Module this is presented in terms of risk components (hazards, exposure and vulnerability that in turn are used to estimate an overall risk indicator), while for the Disaster Loss data Module this is presented as disaster loss and damage data (fatalities, economic losses, non-economic losses). The RDH administrators manage these data and European-wide analysis and indicators that are freely available for download.

The visualisation and analysis of Risk Data Hub data rest upon a fundamental combination constituted by (i) one or more hazard onto (ii) one or more assets. Users are able to select not only the desired combination of hazard and assets, but also specific spatial aggregation and temporal time-frames to estimate risk and its components and to visualise past losses and damage.

Trends

Past trends and yearly rates of change



Similarly, the portal is able to compute loss data trends as well as yearly rates of changes. The example above considers losses for residential buildings in Italy measured as % of GDP from 1997 to 2020.

All metrics are conveniently displayed as a normalised indicator from 0 (minimum value) to 10 (maximum value). To date, the DRMKC Risk Data Hub supports three levels of spatial aggregation: NUTS-1 (Country), NUTS-2 (Region) and NUTS-3 (Province). More levels are allowed if needed by users (e.g. local administrative units). In terms of temporal aggregation, users can choose temporal aggregations at different intervals (2, 5, 10, 15, 25 years).

Support to local and national authorities

To support local/national authorities with the respective commitments in the framework of the Sendai agreement or the National Risk Assessments reports, the Risk Data Hub provides methodological and implementation examples. It also offers useful, objective inputs to the quantification and justification of the financial support requested by Member States to cope with certain major events, such as the EU Solidarity Funds.

The Risk Data Hub provides decision makers with access to robust statistics, for their evidence-based policy formulation. Post-events records and pre-events assessments supports the development of decision making tools such as Cost Benefit Analysis. Identifying the geographically located drivers of disasters (exposure and vulnerability), the Risk Data Hub allows to intertwine the global/international policies and the local scale of practice and implementation.

To learn more about the Risk Data Hub and its features, join the dedicated **DRMKC Risk Data Hub workshop** on **15 June**, with a series of webinars to learn about what is on offer. Registrations are open [here](#).

Additional resources:

- [DRMKC RDH Publications](#)
- [RDH Users' Guide](#)



DRMKC
Risk Data Hub Workshop
15 June 2022

COMING UP

Call for Proposals on Knowledge Network Partnership 2022



This year's Call for Proposals on Knowledge Network Partnerships opened on 17 March. **The deadline for applications is 9 June**. The Call will finance projects contributing to the consolidation and operationalisation of the Knowledge Network, supporting the development of its key activities.

The projects under this call will establish thematic communities/centres of expertise that will generate, promote, test, exchange and disseminate knowledge, skills, expertise, innovation, and scientific evidence in support of the two pillars of the Knowledge Network: capacity development and science.

What are thematic communities/centres of expertise?

Thematic communities/centres of expertise will be multinational and multidisciplinary specialised groups with organisational environments that strive to develop high standards of conduct in capacity development, learning, research and innovation in civil protection and disaster risk management. They will bring together practitioners, researchers and experts from various institutions engaged in disaster prevention, preparedness and response.

What will they do?

Thematic communities/centres of expertise will focus on a specific natural or human-induced hazard, a cluster of hazards, or a particular preparedness and response scenario to:

- pull together, develop, disseminate and exchange state-of-the-art knowledge and expertise;
- encourage scientific excellence;
- stimulate technological innovation;
- create and archive educational and learning goals;
- support policy and decision-making in civil protection and disaster management.

For more information on the Call for Proposals visit: [Call for Proposals on Knowledge Network Partnerships](#)

COMING UP

Meeting of the Directors of civil protection and firefighting schools 12-13 April 2022, Gardanne near Aix-en-Provence (France)



The French Presidency will host a meeting of the Directors of civil protection and firefighting schools. The objective is to encourage the creation of synergies among civil protection and fire brigade schools. Knowledge from diverse programmes, procedures, operational techniques, information sharing and good practices can be pooled together, enabling experts in EU deployments to work with a multi-risk approach and in the context of cross-border cooperation.

Two participants per Member State are invited to attend (as designated by the Member States). For any questions, please contact the French Presidency team at the following email address: dgscgc-pfue@interieur.gouv.fr

Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks (HNPW) 2-20 May 2022, hybrid: online & Geneva (Switzerland)



HNPW 2022 will take place remotely from 2-6 May and from 16-20 May. The face-to-face (in person) parts of the event take place from 9-13 May at the International Conference Centre in Geneva.

There will be a session on the Knowledge Network on **17 May at 11:00 CET**. It will allow participants to learn more about the Knowledge Network's mission and vision and its different activities.

European Civil Protection Forum: Towards faster, greener and smarter emergency management 28-29 June 2022, Brussels (Belgium)



Practitioners and decision-makers in civil protection will reflect together on the current and future role of the UCPM. Under the overarching theme "Towards faster, greener & smarter emergency management", the Forum will tackle four policy axes:

1. Strengthening climate resilience - Preparing for extreme weather events
2. Protect our citizens - Adapting to new risks
3. Europe in the world - Reaching beyond geographical boundaries
4. Embrace innovation and digitalisation - Pooling our knowledge

These topics will be discussed in different formats: four plenaries, 12 workshops, two thinking labs, and an exhibition. Participation in the event is limited. The programme and information on who can participate will be published on the [event webpage](#) in the coming weeks.

For additional information, please contact ECHO-CP-Forum@ec.europa.eu

Would you like to receive future updates on the **Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network** directly to your mailbox?
If yes, please let us know by filling in this [short form](#).

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network

E-mail: ECHO-CP-Knowledge-Network@ec.europa.eu - Website: <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu>