



Kick-off Meeting Track 1 projects Single Country Grants for Disaster Risk Management 2022 Call

12 April 2023

Prevention and Preparedness Programme team

DG ECHO

Kick-off Meeting 12 April 2023

Prevention and Preparedness Projects Track 1

- **13:00 Welcome and introduction by Leonor Nieto Leon, Head of Unit, Prevention and Disaster Risk Management Unit, DG ECHO**
- **13:10 Overview of projects and brief policy updates**
- **13:25 Administrative, financial and legal aspects of the project implementation**
- **14:15 The Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network**
- **14:30 Wrap-up**
- **15:00 Closure**



Overview of projects and brief policy updates

Cristina Brailescu – Team Leader
DG ECHO - Unit B.2 Prevention and Disaster Risk Management

2022 Call for single country grants for disaster risk management (Track 1)

- EUR 5.1 million total funding
- 13 proposals awarded
- Projects' duration: 24 months
- Projects start in 2023
- **3 projects on wildfire prevention**

Ireland

New national risk assessment methodology

Croatia

Modernisation of public alert system and crisis communication

Finland

Risk management for large-scale nuclear and radiological emergencies

North Macedonia

Methodology for national risk assessment

Latvia

Feasibility study for fire-fighting services

Latvia

Civil protection and disaster management training, and safety advice for the public

Latvia

Study on material reserves and resources in managing different disasters

Romania

Strategic framework for disaster risk management, and IT tool for search and rescue operations

Spain

Development of a national multi-hazard disaster loss database

Türkiye

Wildfire prevention and response capacity building for forest villages

Türkiye

Embedding nature-based approaches into disaster risk management policies and strategies

Türkiye

Long-term wildfire prevention action plan and capacity building for Istanbul forest region

Türkiye

Directive for risk management and risk reduction in cultural assets

Background: 2019-2022

Direct Grants

Annual calls

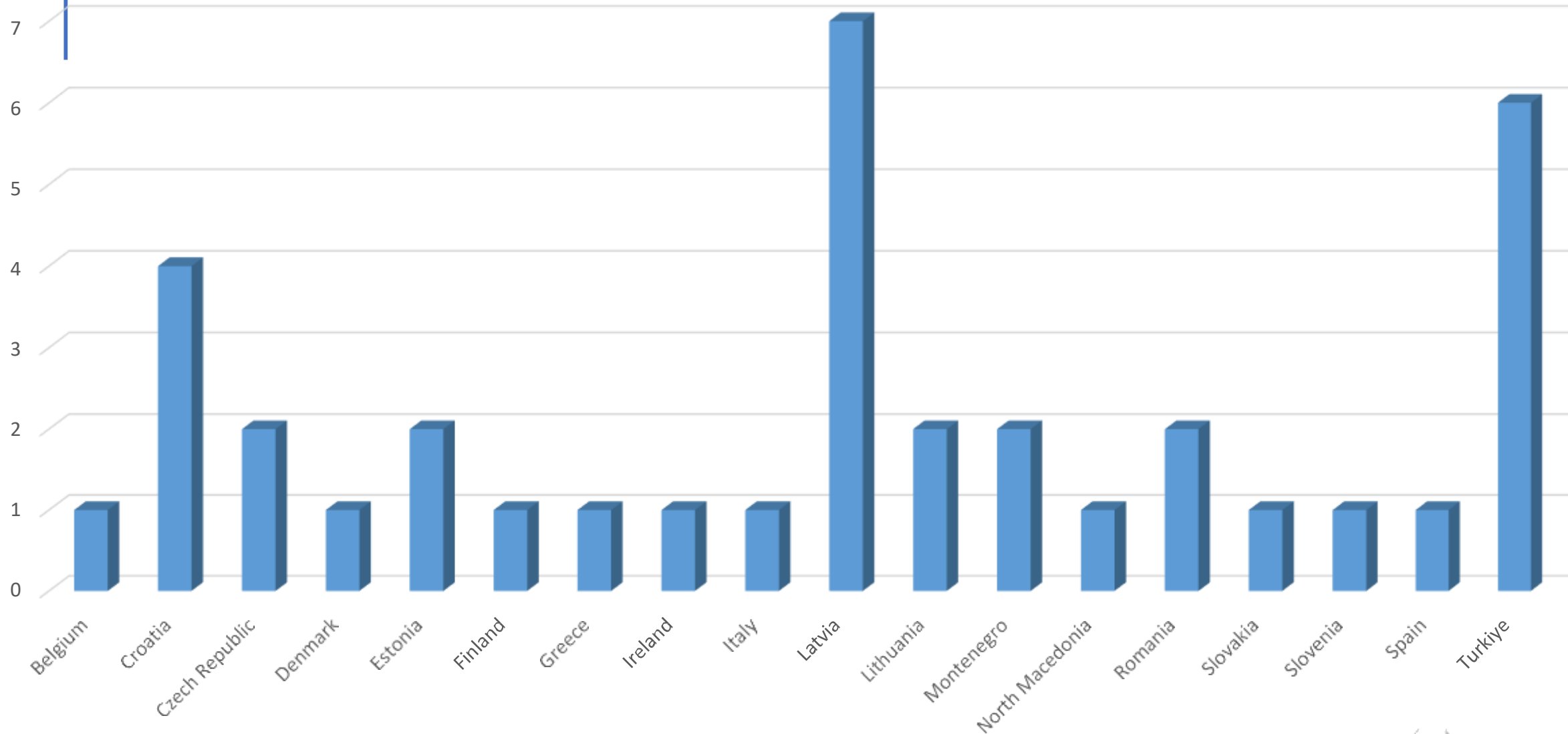
37 grants awarded to 18 different MS/PS worth EUR 13 955 897,75

Countries awarded grants:

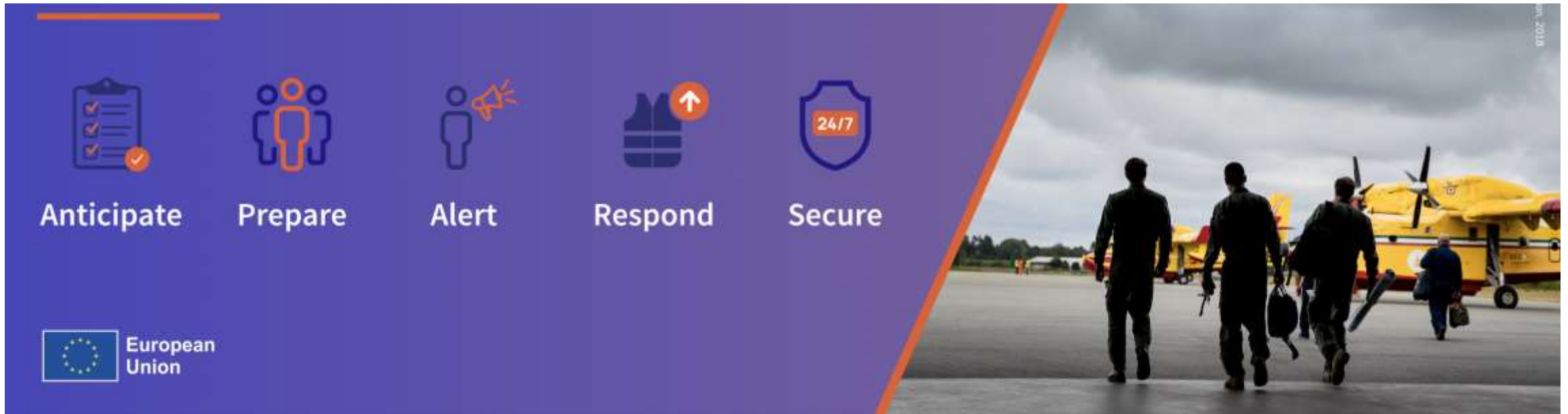
Member States: Belgium, Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain

Participating States: Montenegro, North Macedonia, Türkiye

Number of grants awarded by country



Union Disaster Resilience Goals



And five **flagship initiatives** to support implementation

Commission [Recommendation](#) and [Annex](#) available all EU official languages [here](#)
Commission [Communication](#) available in all EU official languages [here](#)



1. Anticipate

Improving risk assessment, anticipation and disaster risk management planning



Flagship

Europe- wide disaster scenarios



2. Prepare

Increasing risk awareness and preparedness of the population



Flagship

"preparEU": A pan-European awareness programme for disaster resilience



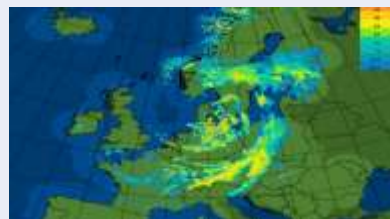
3. Alert

Enhancing early warning



Flagship

Linking global early warning with local action in Europe



4. Respond

Enhancing the Union Civil Protection Mechanism response capacity



Flagship

Scaling-up rescEU strategic reserve



5. Secure

Ensuring a robust civil protection system



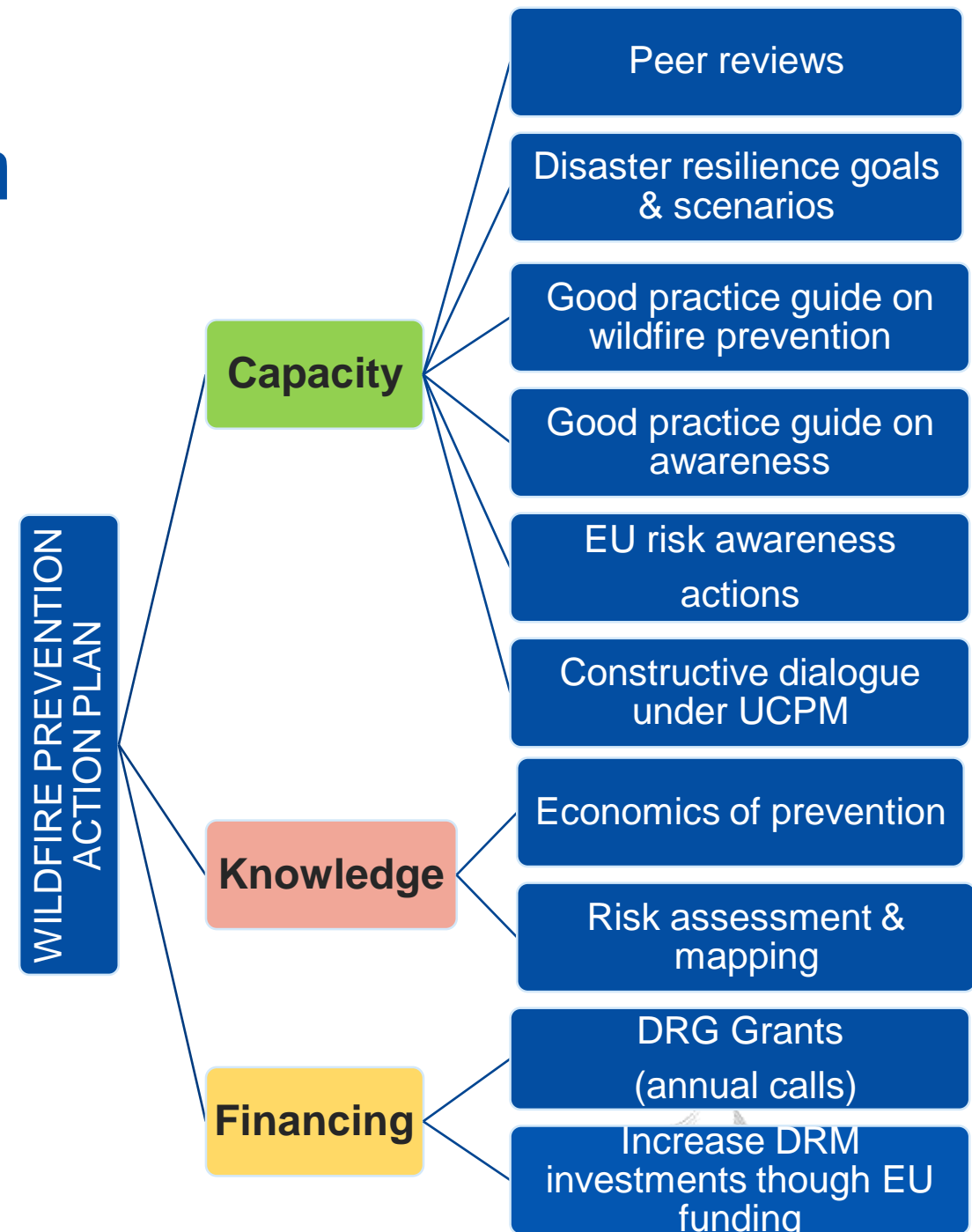
Flagship

Stress-testing the emergency operation centres across Europe



Wildfire Prevention Action Plan

- Aim is to enhance wildfire prevention efforts
- Promoting integrated wildfire risk management
- Wildfire prevention in focus combined with multi-hazard approach
- Complements existing guidelines and other EU policies and various ongoing initiatives.
- Role of the Knowledge Network across actions





Administrative, financial and legal aspects of the project implementation

Cristina Brailescu - Team Leader
Miriam O'Connor - Project Officer
Didier KESSEL - Financial Officer
DG ECHO

Unit E.3 – Contracts and Finance and B.2 Prevention and Disaster Risk Management

Project monitoring overview

Project Officer



Person responsible for managing the project from the EU side; normally follows it from beginning to end, with a key role in all decisions (payments, amendments, reviews etc.); main contact point for the consortium

Technical Desk
Officer



Person responsible for steering the project into a meaningful direction by paying attention to the initial project outcomes and the changing policy context! Make sure that it serves the UCPM objectives and policy goals!

Financial
Officer



Person responsible for managing and monitoring the project jointly with the PO and to handle mostly financial questions

Legal Officer



Person responsible for managing and monitoring the project jointly with the PO and to handle mostly legal questions

DG ECHO - Unit B.2

Prevention and Disaster Risk Management

Prevention and Preparedness Programme Team dealing with the Track 1 :

Cristina Brailescu
Miriam O'Connor

Vladlena Doroshenko Salatenko
Christian Aagaard



Legal aspects of the project implementation

Cristina Brailescu - Team Leader

DG ECHO - B.2 Prevention and Disaster Risk Management



Grants are direct financial contributions from the European Union budget awarded by way of a donation to beneficiaries.

Grants for actions are intended to support the achievement of Union policy objectives.

The results of the action remain the property of the beneficiaries.

What's in the grant agreement?

- Rights and obligations of the beneficiaries

Provisions on:

- Subject of the agreement
- Coordinator, Affiliated entities
- Duration of the Action
- Maximum grant amount, funding rate, eligibility of costs, technical and financial reporting



What's in the grant agreement?

- Rights and obligations of the beneficiaries

Provisions on:

- Communication and visibility
- Amendment, suspension and termination of the grant agreement
- Audits by the Commission or OLAF, record keeping
- Recoveries, data protection, Intellectual Property Rights
- Applicable law and settlement of disputes



Changes to the agreement

What happens when the consortium realises during the implementation phase of the action that changes are required for the proper implementation?

- description of the action
- duration
- budgetary changes
- bank account details



Amendment

General principles

- *No derogation from the conditions laid down in the UCPM Decision (Decision No 1313/2013/EU), the work programme, the Call for Proposals/Invitation to submit proposals (eligibility criteria and award criteria), the Grant Agreement*
- *Principle of equal treatment*
- *Compliance with answers/information provided in Frequently Asked Questions/Info Day*
- *General conditions of the grant agreement can never be changed*

When/how is possible to amend a grant agreement?

The grant agreement may only be modified during its lifetime

It shall be submitted in due time



The request for amendment must include the reasons and the appropriate supporting documents

The Commission may request additional information

The request for modification(s) shall be made in writing in a dedicated letter, submitted by the legal representative

Suspension and termination

- Suspension of the grant agreement
 - Requested by the beneficiary if exceptional circumstances make implementation impossible or excessively difficult
 - By the Commission, if irregularities, fraud, breach of obligations, etc.

No costs are eligible during suspension!

- Termination of the grant agreement
 - Requested by the Commission
 - Requested by the consortium



Financial aspects of the project implementation

Didier KESSEL - Financial Officer

DG ECHO - Unit E.3 Contracts and Finance

Comparison between grant templates

- TRACK 1 – call 2022

- Mono beneficiary model grant agreement: BUDG August 2019 – ECHO August 2020
- Only costs actually incurred
- No equipment (depreciation costs)
- No indirect costs

- (Most of) other UCPM grants

- General model grant agreement May 2021 with guidance published on the Funding & Tenders portal [Guidance & Manuals \(europea.eu\)](https://europea.eu)
- Costs actually incurred and unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence (annex 2A)
- Equipment (depreciation costs)
- Flat rate for indirect costs (usually 7%)

Subcontracting

ARTICLE 1.14 - SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING

As an exception to Article II.11 of the General Conditions, the entire action may be subcontracted, except for the tasks of reporting and submitting of the deliverables to the Commission.

Sub-contracting has to be included in Annex I (description of action) and III (budget).

It can also be approved by EC:

- if the beneficiary requests a grant amendment or
- After the recourse to subcontracting if specifically justified.

Visibility rules (article II.8) also apply to subcontractors.

Award of contracts to implement the action

ARTICLE II.10

The beneficiaries may award contracts in accordance with their usual purchasing practices provided that the contract is awarded to the tender offering best value for money / lowest price.

In doing so, they must avoid any conflict of interests.

Beneficiaries of grants, as contracting authorities, must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

Budget transfers

ARTICLE 1.16 — Budget transfers between budget categories are limited to 20% of the estimated eligible costs of the action specified in Article I.3.2.

The cost categories are: 1) Personnel 2) Travel and subsistence 3) Sub-contracting and 6) Other costs.

Example: if the total estimated budget is EUR 500 000, transfers between categories can be up to EUR 100 000.

No financial limitation within the categories.

No addition of costs relating to subcontracts not provided for in the description of the action, unless such additional subcontracts are approved by the Commission in accordance with Article II. 11.1(d).

Reporting and payments 1/2

- 1 pre-financing payment of 70% of the maximum grant amount within 30 days of signature of the grant agreement
- Quarterly reports (See calendar in article I.4.1) without interim payment.
- Final report no more than 60 days following the end of the last reporting period.
 - Final technical report
 - Financial statements
 - No certificates on the financial statements as EU contribution to each grant is < EUR 750 000

Reporting and payments 2/2

- The requested EU contribution amount should be consistent with the estimated budget
- Grants may NOT produce a profit (art. II.25.3)
- The final grant amount may be reduced in case of non-compliance with the Grant Agreement (improper implementation, breach of obligations, etc) (art. II.25.4)
- EC may request a sample of supporting documents: copies of invoices, time sheets, copies of contracts...
- Documents and records are to be kept 5 years after the final payment (II.27.2), as grants might be audited
- EC pays within 60 days from reception of the documents. In case of missing documents, requests for clarification... the payment may be suspended.

Currency and exchange rates (article I.4.6)

Request for payments and financial statements must be drafted in euros.

- Beneficiaries with general accounts in a currency other than the euro must convert the costs incurred in another currency into euros at the average of the daily exchange rates published in the C series of the Official Journal of the European Union (ECB website), calculated over the corresponding reporting period. See:

[Euro foreign exchange reference rates \(europa.eu\)](https://www.europa.eu/economy_finance/exchange_rates). → RO and TR

11 April 2023 EUR 1 = RON 4.9375 +0.0006(+0.0%)	Change from 11 April 2022 to 11 April 2023		
	Min (5 September 2022)	Max (28 March 2023)	Average
	4.8198	4.9523	4.9245

- If no daily rate is published, use Inforeuro [Exchange rate \(InforEuro\) \(europa.eu\)](https://www.inforeuro.eu/) → North Macedonia.
- Reporting period = project start and end date. Date of payment is not relevant.

ELIGIBLE COSTS – GENERAL CONDITIONS

- necessary for implementation of the action
- incurred within the implementation period
- indicated in the budget
- identifiable and verifiable, recorded in your accounting system
- compliant with the applicable tax and social legislation
- reasonable and justified

A few examples

Eligible costs

- Conference before the end of the project, but paid after the end date
- Travel for project meetings
- Visibility

Ineligible costs

- VAT
- Currency exchange losses
- Excessive or reckless expenditure
- Commission staff missions
- Equipment costs

Specific rules – personnel costs

- ARTICLE 1.13 — INELIGIBILITY OF COSTS OF STAFF OF NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS
As an exception to Article II. 19.2 (a), salary costs of the personnel of national administrations are eligible only to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities, which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the project concerned were not undertaken.
- For further information refer to :
 - article II.19.2. (a) → different types of personnel: (full or part-time) employees, persons with direct contracts ...
 - The appendix to the conditions for application (annex II of the call document) concerning direct personnel costs → cost calculation and documentation
- Time-sheets are mandatory for persons working part time on the action.
- A declaration is sufficient for persons working exclusively or at a fixed pro-rata on the action

Specific rules – Ineligible costs

- (article II.19.4)
- *(f) exchange losses (payment in different currencies)*
- *(g) costs of transfers from the Commission charged by the bank of the beneficiary*
- *(h) costs declared by the beneficiary under another action receiving a grant financed from the Union budget.*
- (article I.15)

As an exception to Article II.19.3, indirect costs are not eligible.

Ineligible Value added tax (article I.11)

As an exception to Article 11.19.2(h), paid value added tax (VAT) is not eligible under the Agreement

The fact that VAT is non-recoverable or non-refundable according to the national legislation of the beneficiary's country DOES NOT make paid VAT an eligible cost.



Other key aspects of the project implementation

Miriam O'Connor - Project Officer

DG ECHO - B.2 Prevention and Disaster Risk Management

Communication & visibility:



Co-funded by the
European Union

- DG ECHO [guidelines on Communication and Visibility](#) in UCPM projects: website, audiovisual material, posters & flyers, publications
- Improving the visibility and dissemination of the projects' results (recommendation from [evaluation of the prevention & preparedness projects 2014-2020](#))
- Please refer to ARTICLE 11.8 of your grant agreement - VISIBILITY OF UNION FUNDING
- Send any interesting project photos/videos during the project lifetime to the Prevention & Preparedness Programme team at ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu
- [Knowledge Network platform](#): project pages, discussion groups, news & events – please try to use **an ACRONYM or a short title name for your project**

Modifications / Amendments in practice

- The Project Coordinator should inform the Project Officer (via the functional mailbox ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu) about the need for a modification or an amendment as soon as possible.
- Some modifications do not require a Grant Agreement amendment (e.g. Art. 1.16 of the grant agreement — SPECIAL PROVISIONS ON BUDGET TRANSFERS).

Quarterly Reports and Deliverables

- Please make sure that the Quarterly Reports on project implementation are sent on time to the functional mailbox ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu)
- The report will be reviewed by the Technical Desk Officer who will come back to you with any comments or questions
- For any deliverables produced (e.g. reports in your native language, please send us a short summary in English.

Events & meetings

- Please inform DG ECHO on your planned events, workshops, calls for information.
- Online participation
- Sharing project information with the UCPM community e.g. Knowledge Network Platform.

Checks and audits

- The objective of an ECHO audit is to enable the auditor to express an opinion as to whether:
 - 1) The funds have been used in accordance with the applicable legislation and the terms and conditions of grant agreements, and
 - 2) The funds have been used for their intended purpose.
 - 3) To provide assurance about the legality and regularity of the expenditure paid by the Commission.

Checks and audits

- Commission audit or external contracted company
- Checks and audits possible at any time during the project implementation and up to 5 years after the final payment
- Please keep all documentation required to ascertain the eligibility of the costs
- Depending on the finding, appropriate measures are taken, including recovery.
- Please refer to ARTICLE II.27 - CHECKS, AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS of your grant agreement.
- DG ECHO Audit Info Paper, available at [Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network website \(Audit webinar 2022\)](#)

Next steps

- **Quarterly report** – pls remember to send your report in due time
- **Bilateral meetings by project:** we will initiate bilateral meetings with each project, including the Technical desk-officers – to better understand your project and links to UCPM policy
 - Projects will be introduced to their Technical Desk-officers
- Inform us of any challenges, questions, etc.

Useful links

Prevention and Preparedness team: ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu

UCPKN online collaborative platform: <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/>

Questions?



The Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network

Guillermo GRIEM – Policy Officer
DG ECHO – Unit B.3 – Knowledge Network and Evidence Based Policy

12 April 2023

Vision & Mission

Union Civil Protection Mechanism and its community have the knowledge and expertise to effectively prevent, prepare for and respond to current and emerging risks and challenges in disaster risk management.



Bring together civil protection and disaster risk management experts and organisations
(**partnership facilitator**)



Make relevant knowledge on civil protection and disaster risk management accessible to all
(**knowledge broker**)



Foster innovation for more efficient and effective civil protection systems
(**innovation catalyst**)

Strategic goals



Stronger Community:

Enhance **collaboration** between scientists, practitioners, policy- and decision makers in civil protection and disaster risk management



Shared Knowledge for Action:

Support **knowledge sharing and learning** to strengthen the collective capacity to prevent, prepare for and respond effectively to emergencies



Research that Matters:

Strengthen **application of research** in civil protection and disaster risk management planning and operations

UCPKN Structure



The Capacity Development Pillar

The Capacity Development Pillar aims to connect, promote and strengthen capacity development initiatives relevant to civil protection and disaster management stakeholders, with the view of increasing collective capacity of the UCPM to prevent, prepare for and respond effectively to emergencies.



The Science Pillar

The Science Pillar aims to bring together academia, practitioners and decision-makers for multi-disciplinary, cross-sectoral and cross-border cooperation. One of its objectives is to apply scientific knowledge to disaster risk management - particularly prevention and preparedness activities - more efficiently.

UCPMN key activities



UCPM Training Programme



UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme



Awareness-raising activities



Exchange of Civil Protection Experts



Scientific advice & innovation



Community engagement



Civil protection exercises



Thematic workshops & conferences



Partnerships facilitation opportunities

UCPM Training and Exercises Programme



To improve expert competences and ensure compatibility & complementarity between intervention teams

- ✓ Supplements national training to better prepare experts to work within the UCPM
- ✓ Actors involved: EC + experts + **National Training Coordinators** (who manage the programme at national level)
- ✓ **NEW** training programme in May/June 2023
- ✓ Face-to-face and online
- ✓ Deployable / non deployable training pathways, plus ad hoc training and workshops
- ✓ UCPM training page:

<https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/disaster-preparedness/union-civil-protection-mechanism-training-programme>

Risk Data Hub

Useful to support Member States in:

- ✓ Reporting on **National Risk Assessment** and Risk Management Plans, as required by the Union Civil Protection Mechanism Decision No 1313/2013/EU
- ✓ Developing **loss databases**, as outlined in Priority 1 of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
- ✓ Quantifying and justifying financial support for certain major events (e.g., the EU Solidarity Funds)
- ✓ Supporting evidence-based policy formulation



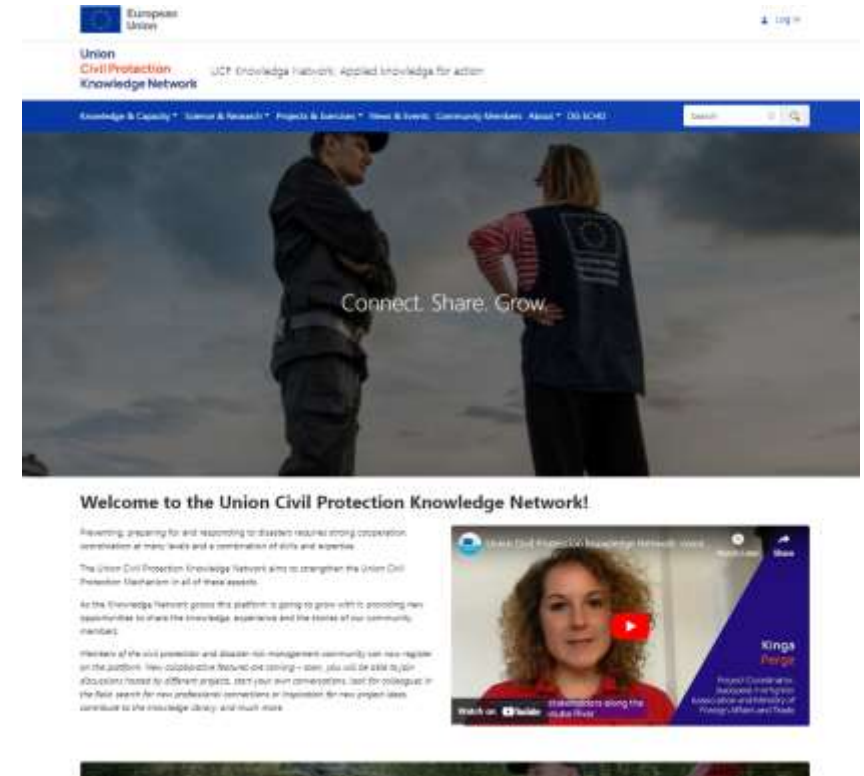
Risk Data Hub is a GIS web platform of European wide risk data and methodologies for Disaster Risk Assessment.



UCPKN online collaborative platform

<https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/>

- Information and collaboration hub for the civil protection and disaster risk management community
- Sustainability, ownership, user-driven, one-stop-shop, constant improvement
- **Why:**
 - ✓ For the community, by the community: info sharing, networking, peer to peer support
 - ✓ Amplify knowledge from local/regional/national level
 - ✓ Sustainable working spaces for exercises & projects for better visibility and knowledge sharing
 - ✓ Security and data privacy in line with EC requirements & good practices





European
Union

Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network

Connect. **Share.** Grow.

civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu

Contact: ECHO-CP-KNOWLEDGE-NETWORK@ec.europa.eu





Wrap-up session

Cristina Brailescu – Team Leader
DG ECHO - Unit B.2 Prevention and Disaster Risk Management

12 April 2023

Contacts

- We encourage you to contact the Project Officer through the functional mailbox: ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu
- Communication with the Project Officer should be very regular in order to solve any issues that may appear.
- In case you need to contact the Technical Desk Officer, you should put the Project Officer also in cc in order to be aware of any issue and the functional mailbox: ECHO-CP-P&P@ec.europa.eu