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Communication and Visibility Manual

for European Union-funded Civil Protection Actions

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**European
Union**

*The **Communication and Visibility Manual for European-Union funded Civil Protection Actions** provides general guidance on the implementation of contractual visibility and communication. The concrete application depends on and may be adapted to the specific circumstances of the individual project. Civil protection authorities and stakeholders are invited to consult DG ECHO in case of doubt.*

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1. Why this Manual?

Civil protection stakeholders and bodies from EU Member States and Participating States¹ receiving support from the EU have an obligation to communicate about the EU civil protection assistance they receive.

The **aim** of communication by civil protection stakeholders and bodies on EU-funded actions is to:

- ensure that the public is aware of how the EU is helping;
- provide accountability as to where the assistance is going to; and
- foster continued strong support for civil protection assistance among key stakeholders and the general public.

For communication to be effective, it must be undertaken in close cooperation between civil protection stakeholders and the EU's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (henceforth, for the purposes of this document, ECHO).

The legal basis ([Decision \(EU\) 1313/2013](#)) provides that civil protection bodies and stakeholders receiving in-kind or financial support from the EU for their disaster management (i.e. preparedness, prevention and response) activities are required to mention the EU contribution and show the EU emblem. The manual at hand reminds stakeholders of these requirements and provides practical guidance on the implementation of these visibility and communication obligations.

The 2021 revised legislation on the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (Regulation (EU) 2021/836, Article 20a) has reinforced communication and visibility obligations for both **recipients of Union funding (“EU grants”)**, as well as the **beneficiaries of the assistance** delivered.

¹ There are currently 6 Participating States to the Mechanism (Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Turkey).

2. Displaying the European Union emblem

EU Member States, Participating States to the Mechanism and other civil protection stakeholders shall ensure an appropriate public awareness of interventions and actions funded by the European Union and display

- the European flag (EU emblem) and
- the funding statement “Funded by the European Union” or “Co-funded by the European Union” (translated into local languages, where appropriate):

Funded by the European Union



Funded by the European Union



Funded by the European Union

Co-funded by the European Union



Co-funded by the European Union





Co-funded by the European Union

The emblem can be downloaded in all EU languages on the [DG ECHO visibility page](#).

Civil protection stakeholders can also display their own logo (e.g. national emblem, civil protection symbol) alongside the EU emblem by following the visibility rules for third party logos.

The format of how the EU emblem and the text are displayed can be adapted to the context in which they are going to be used. However, the emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text.

	<p>Visibility rule for third party logos</p> <p>The placement of the EU emblem should not give the impression that the third-party promoter is part of the EU institutions. Therefore, it is required to place the EU emblem well apart from the logo of the third-party organisation.</p>
	<p>EU Civil Protection logo</p> <p>DG ECHO communication discourages the sole use of the civil protection triangle combined with the EU stars, often referred to as EU Civil Protection logo. However, this civil protection triangle or other emblems or logos can be displayed next to the EU emblem following the visibility rules of third party logos.</p>

2.1 EU visibility during civil protection preparedness, prevention and response activities

Civil protection preparedness, prevention and response activities are diverse and can be highly dynamic. They also provide good opportunity to show EU visibility. The EU emblem with the accompanying funding statement shall be displayed:

- Throughout response activities to a crisis, e.g. through stickers, display panels, banners and plaques, clothing items (EU vests, t-shirts, caps etc. worn by civil protection experts);
- On certified response capacities in the European Civil Protection Pool;
- During exercises and training activities;
- On operational publications and materials, such as training manuals, notebooks, notepads and posters;
- During conferences, seminars or on any information or promotional materials; such as brochures, leaflets, posters, banners, presentations in paper or electronic form.

This guidance is in accordance with Article 20a of Decision No 1313/2013/EU, stating that any type of activities by civil protection stakeholders who are involved in crisis preparedness, prevention and response shall display the EU emblem.

2.2 EU visibility in communication material

The EU emblem with the accompanying funding statement “Funded by the European Union” shall be used when producing any type of visibility and communications material for dissemination, for example:

- Websites;
- Audiovisual material for online and offline dissemination;
- Posters and other campaign material;
- Publications.

3. Variations to display the European Union emblem

The visibility guidelines request a consistent use of the EU emblem and funding statement “Funded by the European Union” for all visibility actions.

For grant agreements concluded before 2021, the EU emblem can be shown with the accompanying programme name **European Union Civil Protection**.

Please contact ECHO-COMM-CP@ec.europa.eu for assistance should you deem the use of the EU flag and funding statement “Funded by the European Union” insufficient, e.g. posing security risks for civil protection operations outside the European Union.

By following closely the instructions by European Commission corporate communication, the ECHO communication unit will assess on a case by case basis whether a derogation can be granted.



Please contact ECHO-COMM-CP@ec.europa.eu for questions related to EU visibility requirements in EU Civil Protection.

4. Communication

The primary target audience of communication actions by civil protection stakeholders should be the general public, both in the European Union and in third countries where EU-funded assistance is carried out. The idea is to give meaning to our actions by explaining in easy language what, how and why we undertake them and emphasise on the added value given by the EU.

Communicating in a meaningful way on EU-funded assistance entails that:

The messages (e.g. in press releases, verbal statements, press articles) are thoughtfully put together and **clearly mention that the project is financially supported by the EU** (by saying, for example, Thanks to EU assistance, XXX people are getting access to clean water... or With support from the EU, XXX is helping... Or The operation has been (co-)funded by the EU). The EU shall equally be named in tweets and audio-visual products.

Where specified in tender or grant specifications, e.g. in the case of exercises and training activities, contractors prepare a **plan for communication and/or media activities** for the duration of their contracts and submit it to the Commission.

The visibility and communication obligations generally imply that the mentioning of the European Union and/or display of the EU emblem shall be included on an equal footing with that of the civil protection authority or stakeholder. For further details on the use of the EU emblem, please refer to Section 2 of this Manual.

4.1 How to refer to the EU

The European Union (and its acronym “EU”) is the preferred term for basic visibility activities, when communicating with the media

etc. The terms "EU Civil Protection" or other programme names may also be used in written products, as appropriate. The stand-alone acronym ECHO needs to be avoided.

4.2 Media Outreach

This section explains the application of EU visibility and communication requirements in media-related activity, for example during the deployment of civil protection experts to a third country, or during prevention and preparedness activities organised with the support of the EU.

4.2.1 Press releases

A press release – either at the start or at the conclusion of deployment or action – shall display the EU emblem alongside that of the national civil protection authority and/or other leading partners.

The press release text must clearly state that the action is funded by the European Union. In addition, the text also includes tangible figures / examples of the (expected) impact of the provided assistance, such as the estimated number of people to receive assistance. Technical language has to be avoided at all cost. Press releases can include a quote by a DG ECHO or EUDEL representative, for example, the DG ECHO field expert, DG ECHO EU Civil Protection team leader and counterparts at the Brussels headquarters).

Civil protection authorities are kindly asked to share a draft of the press release with ECHO before its publication. Quotes by ECHO representatives must always be approved before publication. Press releases may also include the contact details of a relevant ECHO representative for follow-up questions by the media. The contact person must be approved by ECHO.

The URL address of ECHO's website to refer to is https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/index_en

4.2.2 Media Presence during interventions or civil protection exercises

Members of EU Civil Protection Teams and other partners involved in EU civil protection operations are encouraged to communicate on their projects with the media. For the sake of coherence and coordination, teams should organise internally how to deal with media requests. No authorisation from the Commission is required, as long as partners speak on behalf of their own organisation (e.g. a national civil protection authority) and on the technical aspects of the project. When speaking to the media, our stakeholders should acknowledge the assistance by the European Union and explain the tangible results achieved thanks to EU assistance.

In emergencies, if EU funds for humanitarian assistance are foreseen in addition to assistance through EU Civil Protection, this fact should be equally acknowledged in media interview.

Civil protection authorities are encouraged to inform ECHO about their media contacts during the project and share relevant press clippings. This is especially relevant if the EU has invited journalists on-site and EU-funded media visit.

4.2.3 Press Conferences and press visits

DG ECHO organises **joint press conferences** together with civil protection bodies and stakeholders and the national government that requested assistance in the aftermath of a disaster, or that are involved in major EU-funded

initiatives. DG ECHO also organises dedicated **media visits for journalists** to learn about practical results of EU Civil Protection. Both press conference and press visits aim to give further visibility to EU assistance. A relevant number of positive press articles covering this EU assistance serves as indicator for its successful outcomes.

EU civil protection bodies and stakeholders are asked to actively contribute to the success of these press conferences and press visits, for example through logistics, outreach to national media etc.

4.3 Social Media

Social media communication is a **high-impact way of creating visibility** among the general public and specific target audiences.

Civil protection partners are requested to:

- **publish visually attractive content** on EU-funded assistance, targeted at the general public, i.e. EU citizens who are not experts in the civil protection domain. To fulfil the visibility requirements, the social media posts should clearly mention and illustrate the EU's financial support to the mission.
- **refer** to ECHO as the EU or EU Civil Protection, whichever is clearer for the audience;
- use ECHO-related **hashtags**, when relevant: #EUCivilProtection (and/or specific event-related hashtags in coordination with ECHO);
- **tag** ECHO in the posts, using the handles indicated below;
- and invited to like/follow/subscribe to ECHO's social media channels:
 - Facebook:
<http://facebook.com/ec.humanitarian.aid> (tag with: @ec.humanitarian.aid)
 - Twitter:
https://twitter.com/@eu_echo (tag with: @eu_echo)
 - Instagram:
https://instagram.com/eu_echo (tag with: @eu_echo)
 - Flickr:
http://www.flickr.com/eu_echo
 - YouTube:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/HumanitarianAidECHO>
 - Blog:
https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/stories_en

DG ECHO encourages the use of content from our website and social media platforms, provided that DG ECHO is appropriately credited/tagged.

4.4 Photos

Civil protection stakeholders are encouraged to **take and promote photos on the assistance** with a clear acknowledgement of the EU partnership. They are also invited to share the photos with ECHO as soon as possible, ideally during or shortly after the deployment. The link to download the material should be sent to: echo-comm-cp@ec.europa.eu

Photos shared with ECHO for further dissemination should be provided in high resolution (72dpi for web, 300dpi for

print) and accompanied by brief captions and an explanatory sheet with background information (date, country, city/region, project, copyright, name and role of the person in the photo, if applicable). ECHO reserves the right to edit the text of the provided photo captions to fit the editorial style of its website and social media channels.

Kindly note that ECHO may also deploy professional photographers to cover assistance provided under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

Partners must ensure full Intellectual Property Rights and General Data Protection Regulation compliance, as required by law.

4.5 Audio-visual products

Audio-visual products should highlight the tangible impact of EU civil protection assistance provided in close cooperation with its Member States and Participating States. The European Union's role can be emphasised by integrating it into the storyline and by including, for instance:

- footage displaying the EU emblem (on items, stickers, uniforms etc.);
- statements on and references to EU's support, e.g. "Thanks to EU assistance/financial support, xxx has managed to help xxx people affected by xxx".
- interviews with a Commissioner, a senior official or an ECHO expert in the field.

Note: all videos must display the EU emblem with the accompanying text "Funded by European Union" at the end.

The audio-visual material should be produced up to professional broadcast or social media publication standards from a conceptual, editorial and technical point of view. ECHO should always be referred to as **the EU, European Union** or **EU Civil Protection**, as relevant. For more guidance, please refer to the table below.

In addition to ready-made videos, stakeholders are encouraged to share with ECHO clear broadcast footage in 16:9 aspect ratio that can be easily re-edited into a video. In case of interviews, transcripts in the original language and in English should also be provided, whenever available.

Civil protection stakeholders are invited to share the available audio-visual material with ECHO as soon as possible, ideally during or shortly after the deployment. The link to download the material should be sent to:

ECHO-COMM-CP@ec.europa.eu

Stakeholders must ensure full Intellectual Property Rights and General Data Protection Regulation compliance, as required by law.

Basic guidance on producing videos for social media:

- Produce the videos in square or vertical format when producing videos for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. It is best to film the videos with this format in mind.
- Produce social media videos to be watched with sound OFF. 85 % of viewers watch without turning the sound on.
- When using text in the video, make the text big, bold, simple and as brief as possible.
- Try to give your video a cinematic look to grab attention.
- Always use subtitles when there is speech. Make the subtitles big and easy to read (and simplify what is said to make it easy to read).
- Make the video edit as short as possible – aim for one-minute productions maximum.
- Tell simple, engaging stories with attractive footage. Try to make them relatable. The video should give people a small idea of what we do, not explain it to them in detail. Never use any jargon or acronyms.
- You only have 2-3 seconds to catch people’s attention on social media with your video. Use it well and start with the most exciting part of the story.

5. Reporting and coordination with DG ECHO throughout activations of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism

Unless specified differently, civil protection bodies and stakeholders shall report to DG ECHO on measures taken to fulfil the visibility and communication requirements laid out in this document. When **submitting the final grant request** after the deployment, Civil Protection stakeholders will be invited to share the proofs of their communication and visibility actions. The Commission will take the material into consideration when evaluating the operation.

This material may include

- **photo and video material** that showcase how EU visual branding is applied to capacities funded or co-funded under EU Civil Protection;
- **press communication** that includes appropriate references to EU Civil Protection;
- **events** that are organised in the margins of the EU Civil Protection operation;
- **social media communication** that refers and links to EU Civil Protection;
- any other **examples of proactive communication** about the Union support to national media and stakeholders, as well as through their own communication channels; and
- **support to the EU’s communication** actions on the operations.



As a minimum requirement for **all EU-funded operations** throughout activations of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, the Commission expects recipients of funding to apply the **visual branding during the delivery of the action**. In addition, recipients of funding are requested to mention the assistance on their **social media channel(s)**, as well as to support the Commission’s communication actions if they are invited to do so.

Derogations to this can be allowed for safety reasons.

The EU places particular importance on jointly coordinated EU Civil protection actions that receive considerable EU funding:

For **medium-value grants**, where the EU contribution is estimated (at the moment of the offer) between € 60,000 and 1 million, recipients are requested to deliver as a minimum one of the following actions in addition to **visual branding during the delivery of the action** and **social media communication**:

- press communication; **or**
- submission of professional photos and/or videos; **or**
- other actions such as ceremonial events.

For **high-value grants**, where the EU contribution is estimated (at the moment of the offer) above € 1 million, recipients are requested to deliver as a minimum the following additional actions in addition to **visual branding during the delivery of the action** and **social media communication**:

- press communication; **and**
- submission of professional photos and/or videos;
- other actions such as ceremonial events are optional.

For all types of grants (low, medium or high value), the recipients *may* also be requested to support the Commission's own communication actions, for instance on content or outreach.

Please find below a summary of the minimum visibility and communication requirements, which are specifically applied during UCPM activations (transportation grants):

EU grant contribution	< € 60 000	€ 60 000 – € 1 million	> € 1 million
Visual branding	x	x	x
Social media	x	x	x
Support to EC communication	x	x	x
Press communication	[optional]	} Minimum one	x
Photos / videos	[optional]		x
Other (e.g. events)	[optional]		[optional]

In case certain branding or communication requirements cannot be met, due to the nature of the operation or (outside the EU) because of security concerns, recipients should justify this in the reporting and propose appropriate alternative solutions.

Before and during the deployment of major operations, the Commission will send specific communication guidance to the communication contact points in the relevant Civil Protection authorities, as well as to the contact points in the respective Permanent Representations and Commission Representations. This guidance reminds them of the graphic use of the emblem, the social media handles and hashtags, technical requirements of audio-visual material.

6. Contact Information

You are welcome to contact the ECHO Communication team for questions related to visibility/communication activities at any stage: ECHO-COMM-CP@ec.europa.eu

For major communication projects, you are strongly advised to contact us before the proposal is finalised.

During disaster response activities please do not hesitate to call Emergency Response Coordination Centre and ask for the Communication Officer responsible for your project's country or thematic area:

At headquarters in Brussels Tel: (+32 2) 295 44 00 (Emergency Response Coordination Centre)

E-mail: ECHO-COMM-CP@ec.europa.eu

Website: https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/index_en