

EVALUATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION EXTERNAL ACTION

Interim Evaluation of the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2017-2022

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Framework Contract ECHO/E2/FWC/RC/2021/SI2

Interim evaluation of the implementation of Decision No. 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2017, 2022

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ABSTRACT

This interim evaluation of the implementation and performance of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) was commissioned by the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO). The UCPM aims to strengthen cooperation between European Union (EU) Member States and Participating States on civil protection in order to improve prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. The evaluation assessed the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, coherence, and EU added value of the UCPM, identified lessons, and provided strategic and operational recommendations. Overall, it found that UCPM activities in the field of prevention, preparedness, and response contributed to achieving the Decision's objectives. Despite a notable increase in UCPM activations between 2017 and 2022 – driven by the emergence of new and more frequent disasters – the UCPM has successfully adapted to changing pressures and demands, consistently maintaining a high response rate and contributing to effective support to international response efforts. Together with the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP), the establishment of rescEU was a key development that strengthened EU and national preparedness. The evaluation also identified a number of challenges impacting the UCPM, such as the evolving disaster risk landscape and the need to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation at national and EU level.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the executive summary of the interim evaluation of the implementation and performance of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), undertaken by ICF on behalf of the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO).

Purpose and scope of the study

This interim evaluation assessed the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, coherence, and EU added value of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism between 2017 and 2022. More specifically, it supported DG ECHO to:

- Understand progress in implementing the Decision, including gaps and shortcomings;
- Understand the extent to which the Decision is achieving its objectives and the main quantitative and qualitative impacts;
- Improve implementation of existing legislative provisions;
- Provide inputs for possible proposal(s) to amend the Decision or its implementing acts;
- Inform, where appropriate, the review of the financial breakdown of the UCPM as set out by Article 19(5) of the Decision and identify potential room for improvement in UCPM budget implementation.

The evaluation covered the 27 European Union (EU) Member States¹, eight Participating States², and 19 eligible third countries.

Methodology

The approach to the interim evaluation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU was informed by research tools developed and tailored to build a rich and comprehensive evidence base covering a wide range of stakeholders. It combined complementary quantitative and qualitative research methods that collected data from relevant sources and mitigated the impact of data limitations to the extent possible. In line with the Better Regulation Guidelines (BRG), it provided a basis for triangulation and

¹ United Kingdom (UK) was included as an EU Member State until 2020 (inclusive).

² Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Türkiye, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ukraine joined the UCPM as a Participating State in April 2023, after the evaluation period.

verification of data from different sources to answer the evaluation questions, draw conclusions, highlight lessons and develop recommendations.

The interim evaluation began in October 2022 and comprised several phases: i) inception; ii) research and consultation; and iii) analysis, triangulation and synthesis. In addition, the evaluation team undertook a baseline analysis, primarily informed by data reported in previous UCPM evaluations.

Several data collection activities informed the evaluation questions: a rapid review of documentation, followed by an in-depth desk review of qualitative and quantitative data, one inception workshop, six case studies, 108 key informant interviews, three focus groups, one expert validation workshop, and four online surveys (targeting civil protection authorities, DG ECHO desk officers, trainers/training and exercise contractors, experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities). The case studies comprised a tailored review of relevant documentation and a series of additional interviews with key stakeholders, selected for their expertise or involvement with the topic in question. The consultation activities gathered stakeholders' perspectives on the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, and EU added value of the UCPM, key lessons, main gaps and shortcomings across the evaluation period, as well as potential improvements for the UCPM going forward.

Key findings and conclusions

Effectiveness

As per Article 3(1) of the UCPM Decision, **the UCPM has progressed towards its general objective of fostering cooperation and solidarity between the Union and Member and Participating States**. The UCPM facilitated cross-border and cross-sectoral cooperation across the evaluation period, which improved by applying the lessons from major disasters.

The activities that contributed most to the achievement of specific objectives in the field of prevention included risk mapping, achieved through the national risk assessment processes, the overview document of disaster risks in the EU, and the collection and consolidation of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Summary Reports from Member and Participating States, as well as prevention projects within the Prevention and Preparedness Programme (PPP). Nevertheless, there is disagreement about the extent to which progress of prevention activities can be measured, given the long-term scope of such work. Additionally, civil protection authorities often face difficulties in carrying out prevention initiatives (notably, the production of DRM Summary Reports), given the cross-sectoral nature of disaster risk prevention and the challenges for civil protection authorities in leveraging cooperation from a wide variety of actors.

The UCPM significantly contributed to enhancing preparedness, particularly through the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) and rescEU, designed as a last resort tool to be mobilised in worst-case disaster scenarios when emergency assistance from the ECPP cannot be mobilised or is insufficient. Other activities that contributed to achieving the UCPM's preparedness objectives include: the Training and Exercises Programme; Early Warning Systems (EWS), preparedness projects funded under the PPP, and Host Nation Support (HNS) guidelines.

Despite a substantial increase in activations (primarily due to forest fires, the COVID-19 pandemic, and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine), **the UCPM successfully maintained a high response rate during the evaluation period, thus contributed effectively to response efforts**. The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) played a crucial role in ensuring a rapid and efficient response to disasters by coordinating and supporting real-time response to emergencies within and outside the EU.

The UCPM contributed to raising awareness of disasters within the civil protection community and non-conventional stakeholders, primarily through rescEU and UCPM involvement in high-profile disasters (e.g. COVID-19). Its training and exercises and Exchange of Experts (EoE) Programme were invaluable resources in disseminating expertise and stimulating discussions. The UCPM could

improve awareness of the Mechanism and disasters among the public and, to a lesser extent, non-civil protection sectors.

More recent initiatives are also expected to have a positive impact on the UCPM's performance, including the Union Disaster Resilience Goals, the Civil Protection Knowledge Network, scenario building, implementation of the new Training and Exercises Programme, and the ERCC 2.0 initiative.

Factors that facilitated the UCPM's effectiveness included the its adaptability in tailoring the legislative framework to needs emerging from the disaster risk landscape, enhanced cross-sectoral cooperation (including with the private sector, notably in the response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine), mutual trust and understanding between DG ECHO and national counterparts, and Member and Participating States' familiarity with the UCPM. Conversely, **hindering factors** included the changing disaster risk landscape (with increasing complexity and frequency of disasters), the complexity of some administrative procedures, lack of human and financial resources, and the increased focus on response – sometimes to the detriment of preparedness and prevention activities that go beyond supporting capacity development through rescEU and the ECPP.

The **UCPM produced positive unintended effects**, including heightened awareness of civil protection issues and challenges, increasing application of scientific tools and research, and serving as an inspiration for civil protection cooperation networks beyond the Union.

Efficiency

During the evaluation period, the UCPM budget experienced a considerable increase driven by evolving needs and gap assessments; while in 2017 the MFF UCPM budget was about EUR 52 million and there were some absorption problems, at the end of the evaluation period, the MFF budget was significantly higher, reaching EUR 354 million (and the total budget, which included NextGenerationEU funds, EUR 1,061 million).

Overall, the UCPM's budgeting system demonstrated a good level of flexibility to assist Member and Participating States in addressing evolving needs on the ground and unforeseen events. While this flexibility was occasionally (and temporarily) achieved by reshuffling budget from prevention, it was mainly the result of budget reinforcements, frontloads and amendments made possible by the changes introduced by the revisions to the regulation and a budgetary authority that was reactive and supportive to the requests of UCPM for reinforcements to respond to crises (approvals took place in a time range of three weeks to two months). Nevertheless, in some instances, some elements limited the flexibility of the budgetary system during the evaluation period, for example the restricted applicability of NextGenerationEU fund to addressing health-related needs.

The interim evaluation found that the **anticipated benefits** of the UCPM were realised somewhat efficiently and outweighed the costs. However, there is a need for increased clarity on the costs associated with various UCPM activities. Additionally, DG ECHO staff had limited awareness and scrutiny of the cost-effectiveness of UCPM activities. DG ECHO revised the UCPM Decision to reinforce prevention and preparedness, recognising their potential cost-effectiveness. **While stakeholders considered results to have been achieved in the most cost-effective way, it was difficult to determine at macro-level whether the UCPM was the most cost-effective solution overall.** The interim evaluation identified various instances where cost-effectiveness was taken into account during planning, implementation, monitoring, revision/expansion and contract awarding, yet there were opportunities to reduce administrative burden, enhance data management systems, and increase human resources.

On internal monitoring, **the development of additional key performance indicators (KPIs) and various result and output indicators helped to measure the UCPM's performance on response activities.** However, the indicators and processes were insufficient to assess and monitor efficiency and cost-effectiveness, as they did not cover quality, use of resources, costs, or outcomes/impacts.

Finally, UCPM data collection and management systems and tools were not appropriate to support sound collection and analysis of data, with tracking of assistance particularly limited.

Relevance

Overall, the UCPM activities under the prevention, preparedness, and response pillars were appropriate to address EU and national needs.

On **prevention**, various activities demonstrated the UCPM's successful identification of EU and national civil protection needs. These included DG ECHO's funding of research projects to understand the needs of civil protection authorities, the compilation of the overview document of disaster risks in the EU, and recent changes to the PPP. Although stakeholders agree that there is a need for additional investment in prevention initiatives, the relatively limited resources of the UCPM suggests that further efforts could focus on coordinating and mainstreaming disaster risk management in other relevant EU funding instruments.

UCPM activities were highly relevant in ensuring increased **preparedness** to respond to disasters at both national and EU level. Nevertheless, although rescEU is intended to be a last resort tool when ECPP capacities cannot be deployed, some stakeholders raised concerns about the perceived prioritisation of rescEU compared to the ECPP. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that rescEU was used, as it was intended, as a "last resort tool", with the ERCC verifying whether ECPP capacities could have been mobilised in the first instance.

UCPM **response** activities were also relevant to addressing national and EU needs, with requests for assistance (RfA) tailored to the needs of the countries in question.

Overall, the **UCPM was flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground, including unanticipated events**. These included activations in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as its cooperation with the private sector.

Beyond the period evaluated, the UCPM's flexibility might not be sufficient to address new and emerging needs and developments, given the increasing complexity and frequency of disasters (e.g. consequences of climate change). Indeed, concerns were raised about the sustainability of the UCPM's (and, more specifically, the ERCC's) ability to cope with future emergencies, in view of its increased workload. Concerns were also raised about the UCPM's growing role in third countries, with some stakeholders highlighting the need to ensure enhanced clarity in this respect.

The UCPM made significant efforts to address recommendations and lessons identified in external evaluations, particularly recommendations on the PPP, and the Training and Exercises Programme. Similarly, it capitalised and implemented some of the lessons identified in the Lessons Learnt Programme. Nevertheless, the interim evaluation found some margin to improve the systematic implementation and monitoring of lessons and to ensure better tailoring and attribution of those lessons.

Coherence

The interim evaluation found that the UCPM Decision sufficiently defines the prevention, preparedness and response pillars, thereby fostering synergies and complementarities. The expansion of UCPM activities between 2017 and 2022 did not affect its internal coherence.

Although the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines sought to enhance coherence among DRM Summary Reports, there is still some variability in the methodologies employed, risks assessed, and sectors involved. The ECPP and rescEU are inherently coherent, given the latter is designed to be a safety-net, to complement the ECPP in worst-case scenarios when Pool capacity cannot be deployed. The coherence of response activities was largely ensured by the ERCC.

On coherence across prevention, preparedness and response, the Lessons Learnt Programme provided a good forum to exchange lessons and good practices on a wide range of UCPM activities. Nevertheless, the internal re-organisation of DG ECHO somewhat hindered coordination across its

prevention, preparedness and response activities. More specifically, the division between Directorate A (Emergency Management and rescEU) and Directorate B (Disaster Preparedness and Prevention) was not perceived as conducive to coherence³. Stakeholders highlighted that the process of developing capacity at UCPM level should be better informed by scientific evidence and adequate needs assessments, resulting in a clear overview of available capacities and gaps.

UCPM prevention and preparedness activities **successfully established synergies and complementarities with national civil protection activities**. For instance, the EWS was a valuable complement to existing national systems, while the training and exercises offered in the Training and Exercises Programme complemented national civil protection training. The UCPM effectively coordinated its response with national civil protection actors and the private sector. However, a clearer framework is needed to regulate UCPM cooperation with the private sector.

There were synergies and complementarities between UCPM activities and EU-level interventions in other policy fields, although there is room for improvement. For instance, several steps were taken to improve synergies with: humanitarian aid, public health, and home affairs (e.g. EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation). Civil protection actors deployed on missions did not always have a good understanding of humanitarian aid actors. In addition, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the UCPM experienced challenges in coordinating with national authorities beyond civil protection, highlighting the need to increase awareness of the UCPM (e.g. among Ministries of Health and Ministries of Foreign Affairs). Although the UCPM Decision, the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines, and other UCPM initiatives between 2017 and 2022 highlighted the need to consider climate change as a risk driver and its impacts on the increased severity of disasters, evidence shows that the UCPM's environmental sustainability could be improved.

At international level, the UCPM is coherent with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, with DG ECHO and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) taking steps to avoid overlaps and duplication of effort. Despite the UCPM effectively coordinating its response with other international level actors (e.g. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)), the interim evaluation identified some further synergies.

EU added value

The interim evaluation found that the UCPM added value to Member States, Participating States and third countries. It was instrumental in producing results that could not have been achieved at national, regional, or local level alone. The benefits were tangible and clear for all countries involved in civil protection activities (whether receiving or giving), particularly small countries with limited prevention, preparedness and response capacity.

The main elements generating added value for national civil protection activities included enhanced coordination (through the ERCC), pooling of resources (rescEU, ECPP), cost saving, sharing of knowledge and expertise, capacity development through training and exercises, and risk awareness, solidarity and international influence. For instance, the Knowledge Network and the periodic compilation of DRM Summary Reports into an overview document of disaster risks in the EU have intrinsic EU added value for Member and Participating States, notwithstanding some shortcomings and potential to improve.

The potential discontinuation of the UCPM would have negative consequences for Member States, Participating States, third countries, and the civil protection community at large. National, regional and local interventions would likely continue, albeit in a fragmented, less efficient and less effective way. The absence of the UCPM would be difficult to fill through national level interventions or initiatives established via bilateral/regional agreements or multilateral cooperation.

³ The subsequent re-organisation of DG ECHO was beyond the scope of the interim evaluation.

While it is possible to infer that benefits have materialised for all countries involved in civil protection activities, the concrete ways in which the UCPM's external dimension adds value to Member and Participating States remain unclear.

Recommendations

The study proposes eight strategic recommendations, accompanied by a series of operational recommendations to improve the effectiveness, relevance, coherence and EU added value of the UCPM. These are presented below.

1. The European Commission should strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation to prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters

Operational recommendations

- Strengthen cross-sectoral coordination (through the ERCC) with EU and international stakeholders. For example, DG ECHO should consider:
 - a) Continue to develop/ regularly check SOPs and administrative agreements with existing and new stakeholders and for the logistical hubs;
 - b) Further developing ERCC 2.0 initiative, to enable it to become the Commission's cross-sectoral crisis hub for joint situational awareness, early warning, anticipation, information exchange and operational coordination, including between civilian and military stakeholders. This should be done, to the extent possible, in close cooperation with other EU-level crisis management instruments, including those under development (such as the Single Market Emergency Instrument);
 - c) Encouraging regular deployment of Liaison Officers (LOs) from other Commission DGs to DG ECHO;
 - d) Introducing thematic Commission inter-service meetings to deepen understanding of other services' work and focus on streamlining efforts. This would also link civil protection and broader crisis management activities of EU actors more closely, decreasing the risk of fragmentation and duplication of emergency and crisis management structures;
- Sustain efforts to raise awareness of the UCPM among national authorities beyond civil protection (e.g. creating lists of non-civil protection contact points, material/protocols on steps and actors involved in UCPM activations, ad hoc sessions on changes to the Mechanism);
- Establish structural cooperation with the private sector to complement and alleviate national activities (e.g. dedicated workshop on framing cooperation with the private sector, resulting in consistently updated SOPs).

2. DG ECHO should simplify procedures and administrative requirements to enhance flexibility and reduce administrative burden

Operational recommendations

- Simplify the procedures and administrative requirements for UCPM activation, particularly transport and logistics of ECPP deployments, rescEU capacities and in-kind assistance (e.g. automated forms, an optional 'accelerated procedure' for large-scale, complex and transboundary emergencies, incorporating a transport module in CECIS 2.0 to aid follow-up of co-financing);
- Consider increasing the co-financing rate to 100% for transport and operations of ECPP deployments (including feasibility study on the potential (financial) impact).

3. The European Commission should enhance the monitoring systems and tools to track/evaluate the UCPM's performance across prevention, preparedness and response activities

Operational recommendations

- Develop the UCPM-wide monitoring and evaluation (M&E) policy to establish a multiannual framework to measure performance and achievements that covers all UCPM activities (M&E framework, intervention logic, indicator framework across all activities, M&E Plan);
- Improve reporting on budget per activity and pillar to inform decision-making and funding allocation (see recommendation #4);
- Replace standard MS Office tools with more innovative and tailored IT and information management systems to collect and monitor data on UCPM activities. Such a system should ensure common monitoring of ECPP and rescEU capacities, common tracking of the delivery of in-kind assistance, common database of experts, and tracking of implementation of lessons learnt and recommendations identified.

4. The European Commission should streamline and strengthen the UCPM's funding instruments to ensure a common European approach to crisis management

Operational recommendations

- Strengthen links between EU budget instruments to introduce a more streamlined approach and alleviate resources strain (e.g. for cross-sector activities, such as risk mapping);
- Establish a mechanism to ensure safeguards across all phases of disaster risk management cycle in the case of emergencies of an unprecedented scale/multitude;
- Hold discussions on the general funding of the UCPM in light of the evolving disaster risk landscape (e.g. adequacy of the UCPM's general funding, possibilities to ringfence prevention and preparedness budgets);
- Establish sustainable funding for development and maintenance of rescEU capacity.

5. The European Commission should promote further integration of evidence-based knowledge (e.g. scientific findings) and technological innovation in civil protection activities

Operational recommendations

- Introduce structural links between UCPM strategic anticipation and foresight activities and the development of capacity through rescEU and ECPP;
- Ensure that scientific expertise (including generated through UCPM activities) influences the implementation of UCPM activities (e.g. use of the Knowledge Network, implementing ERCC 2.0 by enhancing ERCC anticipatory capacity);
- Further support the enhancement of EWS (e.g. cover more hazards, include additional quality control measures and innovative data sources) to ensure that information is less fragmented across EU and domestic EWS;
- Foster initiatives to support increased quality of DRM Summary Reports, resulting in enhanced comparability for the overview document of disaster risks in the EU;
- Enabling the identification of emerging technological innovation and fostering cooperation with industry;

5. The European Commission should promote further integration of evidence-based knowledge (e.g. scientific findings) and technological innovation in civil protection activities

- Introduce innovative methodologies/tools within the Training and Exercises Programme.
-

6. The European Commission should ensure clarity of the UCPM's role in third countries and disasters not conventionally in the field of civil protection

Operational recommendations

- Develop SOPs for situations where the UCPM is confronted with simultaneous RfA, so that third countries are aware of the functioning and capacity of the Mechanism;
 - Evaluate the feasibility, impact and benefits of revising the UCPM Decision to expand its mandate and resources, given the increasingly cross-sectoral nature of civil protection, and to develop the ERCC as a crisis hub within and outside the EU. The study should clarify the UCPM's interactions with other EU-level crisis management instruments, as well as its role as an international actor.
-

7. DG ECHO should strengthen coherence and leverage untapped synergies between the UCPM and humanitarian aid efforts

Operational recommendations

- Increase knowledge and understanding of the roles, missions, and responsibilities of humanitarian aid actors among the civil protection community within UCPM preparedness activities. This could be carried out through additional training modules, increased joint training, tailored workshops, and the EoE Programme.
-

8. The European Commission should raise awareness of the UCPM and disasters with relevant stakeholders and with the public

Operational recommendations

- Encourage systematic awareness-raising of the Knowledge Network and other less well-known UCPM activities during UCPM events (e.g. training, exercises, DRMKC conferences);
 - Improve communication of UCPM changes and initiatives to Member and Participating States;
 - Step up activities to raise public awareness of the UCPM's activities and civil protection matters (e.g. dedicated communication strategy, social media);
 - Consolidate information on the UCPM for key stakeholders in one main point of access, e.g. the Knowledge Network online platform.
-

RÉSUMÉ EXÉCUTIF – FR

Il s'agit du résumé exécutif de l'évaluation intermédiaire de la mise en œuvre et de la performance de la décision n° 1313/2013/UE relative à un mécanisme de protection civile de l'Union (MPCU), dénommé « mécanisme de l'Union », réalisée par ICF pour le compte de la direction générale de la protection civile et des opérations d'aide humanitaire de la Commission européenne (DG ECHO).

Objectif et étendue de l'étude

Cette évaluation intermédiaire a permis d'évaluer l'efficacité, la pertinence, l'efficience, la cohérence et la valeur ajoutée de l'UE de la décision n° 1313/2013/UE relative à un mécanisme de l'Union entre 2017 et 2022. Plus précisément, elle a aidé la DG ECHO à :

- Comprendre les progrès réalisés dans la mise en œuvre de la décision, y compris les lacunes et les insuffisances ;
- Comprendre dans quelle mesure la décision atteint ses objectifs et les principaux impacts quantitatifs et qualitatifs ;
- Améliorer la mise en œuvre des dispositions législatives existantes ;
- Fournir des éléments pour d'éventuelles propositions de modification de la décision ou de ses actes d'exécution ;
- Contribuer, le cas échéant, à l'examen de la ventilation financière du MPCU, tel que prévu à l'article 19, paragraphe 5, de la décision, et identifier les possibilités d'amélioration de l'exécution du budget du MPCU.

L'évaluation a porté sur les 27 États membres de l'Union européenne (UE)⁴, huit États participants et 19 pays tiers éligibles⁵.

Méthodologie

L'approche de l'évaluation intermédiaire de la décision n° 1313/2013/UE s'est appuyée sur des outils de recherche développés et adaptés pour constituer une base de données riche et complète couvrant un large éventail de parties prenantes. Elle a combiné des méthodes de recherche quantitatives et qualitatives complémentaires qui ont permis de collecter des données à partir de sources pertinentes et d'atténuer, dans la mesure du possible, l'impact des limitations des données. Conformément aux lignes directrices pour une meilleure réglementation (BRG), elle a fourni une base pour la triangulation et la vérification des données provenant de différentes sources afin de répondre aux questions de l'évaluation, d'en tirer des conclusions, de mettre en évidence les enseignements et d'élaborer des recommandations.

L'évaluation intermédiaire a débuté en octobre 2022 et comprenait plusieurs phases : i) lancement ; ii) recherche et consultation ; et iii) analyse, triangulation et synthèse. En outre, l'équipe d'évaluation a entrepris une analyse de base, principalement fondée sur les données rapportées dans les évaluations précédentes du mécanisme de l'Union.

Plusieurs activités de collecte de données ont permis de répondre aux questions de l'évaluation : un examen rapide de la documentation, suivi d'un examen approfondi des données qualitatives et quantitatives, un atelier de démarrage, six études de cas, 108 entretiens avec des informateurs clés, trois groupes de discussion, un atelier de validation par des experts et quatre enquêtes en ligne (ciblant les autorités chargées de la protection civile, les responsables géographiques de la DG ECHO, les formateurs/entrepreneurs de formation et d'exercices, les experts en protection civile participant aux activités du mécanisme de l'Union). Les études de cas comprenaient un examen personnalisé de

⁴ United Kingdom (UK) was included as an EU Member State until 2020 (inclusive).

⁵ Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Türkiye, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ukraine joined the UCPM as a Participating State in April 2023, after the evaluation period.

la documentation pertinente et une série d'entretiens supplémentaires avec des parties *prenantes* clés, sélectionnées pour leur expertise ou leur implication dans le sujet en question. Les activités de consultation ont permis de recueillir les points de vue des parties prenantes sur l'efficacité, l'efficience, la pertinence, la cohérence et la valeur ajoutée européenne du mécanisme de l'Union européenne, les enseignements clés, les principales lacunes et insuffisances au cours de la période d'évaluation, ainsi que les améliorations potentielles à apporter au mécanisme de l'Union à l'avenir.

Principales constatations et conclusions

L'efficacité

Conformément à l'article 3, paragraphe 1, de la **décision relative au mécanisme de l'Union, ce dernier a progressé dans la réalisation de son objectif général**, qui est de favoriser la coopération et la solidarité entre l'Union, les États membres et les États participants. Le programme a facilité la coopération transfrontalière et intersectorielle tout au long de la période d'évaluation, qui s'est améliorée grâce à l'application des leçons tirées des catastrophes majeures.

Les activités qui ont le plus contribué à la réalisation des objectifs spécifiques dans le domaine de la prévention comprennent la cartographie des risques, réalisée grâce aux processus nationaux d'évaluation des risques, le document de synthèse sur les risques de catastrophes dans l'UE, la collecte et la consolidation des rapports de synthèse sur la gestion des risques de catastrophes (GRC) des États membres et des États participants, ainsi que les projets de prévention dans le cadre du programme de prévention et de préparation (PPP). Néanmoins, il existe un désaccord sur la mesure dans laquelle les progrès des activités de prévention peuvent être mesurés, étant donné la portée à long terme de ce travail. En outre, les autorités de protection civile rencontrent souvent des difficultés pour mener à bien les initiatives de prévention (notamment la production de rapports de synthèse sur la gestion des risques de catastrophes), compte tenu de la nature intersectorielle de la prévention des risques de catastrophes et des défis auxquels sont confrontées les autorités de protection civile pour obtenir la coopération d'une grande variété d'acteurs.

Le mécanisme de l'Union a contribué de manière significative à l'amélioration de la préparation, notamment par le biais de la réserve européenne de protection civile (ECPP) et du rescEU, conçu comme un outil de dernier recours à mobiliser dans les pires scénarios de catastrophe lorsque l'aide d'urgence de l'ECPP ne peut pas être mobilisée ou est insuffisante. D'autres activités ont contribué à la réalisation des objectifs de préparation de la GPUC : le programme de formation et d'exercices, les systèmes d'alerte précoce (SAP), les projets de préparation financés dans le cadre du PPP et les lignes directrices relatives au soutien aux pays d'accueil (HNS).

Malgré une augmentation substantielle des activations (principalement due aux incendies de forêt, à la pandémie de COVID-19 et à la guerre d'agression de la Russie contre l'Ukraine), **le mécanisme de l'Union a réussi à maintenir un taux de réponse élevé au cours de la période d'évaluation, contribuant ainsi de manière efficace aux efforts de réponse**. Le Centre de coordination des interventions d'urgence (ERCC) a joué un rôle crucial en assurant une réponse rapide et efficace aux catastrophes en coordonnant et en soutenant une réponse en temps réel aux urgences à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'UE.

Le mécanisme de l'Union a contribué à sensibiliser la communauté de la protection civile et les parties prenantes non conventionnelles aux catastrophes, principalement par le biais du rescEU et de l'implication du mécanisme de l'Union dans des catastrophes très médiatisées (par exemple, COVID-19). Ses formations, ses exercices et son programme d'échange d'experts ont constitué des ressources inestimables pour diffuser l'expertise et stimuler les discussions. Le MPCU pourrait mieux faire connaître le mécanisme et les catastrophes au public et, dans une moindre mesure, aux secteurs ne relevant pas de la protection civile.

Des initiatives plus récentes devraient également avoir un impact positif sur les performances du mécanisme de l'Union, notamment les objectifs de l'Union en matière de résilience aux catastrophes,

le réseau de connaissances en matière de protection civile, l'élaboration de scénarios, la mise en œuvre du nouveau programme de formation et d'exercices, ainsi que l'initiative ERCC 2.0.

Parmi les facteurs qui ont favorisé l'efficacité du mécanisme de l'Union, on peut citer la capacité d'adaptation du cadre législatif aux besoins émergeant du paysage des risques de catastrophes, le renforcement de la coopération intersectorielle (y compris avec le secteur privé, notamment en réponse à la guerre d'agression de la Russie contre l'Ukraine), la confiance et la compréhension mutuelles entre la DG ECHO et les homologues nationaux, ainsi que la familiarité des États membres et des États participants avec le mécanisme de l'Union. À l'inverse, les **facteurs entravant l'action** de la Commission ont été l'évolution du paysage des risques de catastrophes (avec une complexité et une fréquence accrues des catastrophes), la complexité de certaines procédures administratives, le manque de ressources humaines et financières et l'accent mis sur la réaction - parfois au détriment des activités de préparation et de prévention qui vont au-delà du soutien au développement des capacités par le biais du rescEU et de l'ECPP.

Le mécanisme de l'Union a produit des effets positifs inattendus, notamment une sensibilisation accrue aux questions et aux défis de la protection civile, une application plus poussée des outils scientifiques et de la recherche, et une source d'inspiration pour les réseaux de coopération en matière de protection civile au-delà de l'Union.

Efficience

Au cours de la période d'évaluation, le budget du mécanisme de l'Union a connu une augmentation considérable sous l'effet de l'évolution des besoins et de l'évaluation des lacunes ; alors qu'en 2017, le budget du mécanisme de l'Union au titre du CFP était d'environ 52 millions d'euros et qu'il y avait quelques problèmes d'absorption, à la fin de la période d'évaluation, le budget au titre du CFP était nettement plus élevé, atteignant 354 millions d'euros (et le budget total, qui comprenait les fonds de NextGenerationEU, 1 061 millions d'euros).

Dans l'ensemble, le système budgétaire du mécanisme de l'Union a fait preuve d'un bon niveau de flexibilité pour aider les États membres et les États participants à faire face à l'évolution des besoins sur le terrain et aux événements imprévus. Bien que cette flexibilité ait été occasionnellement (et temporairement) obtenue par un remaniement du budget de la prévention, elle était principalement le résultat de renforcements budgétaires, d'avances et d'amendements rendus possibles par les changements introduits par les révisions du règlement et par une autorité budgétaire réactive et favorable aux demandes de renforts du mécanisme de l'Union pour répondre aux crises (les approbations ont eu lieu dans une fourchette de temps de trois semaines à deux mois). Néanmoins, dans certains cas, des éléments ont limité la flexibilité du système budgétaire au cours de la période d'évaluation, par exemple l'applicabilité restreinte du fonds NextGenerationEU pour répondre aux besoins liés à la santé.

L'évaluation intermédiaire a permis de constater que les **avantages escomptés** du mécanisme de l'Union ont été réalisés avec une certaine efficience et qu'ils ont dépassé les coûts. Toutefois, il est nécessaire de clarifier davantage les coûts associés aux diverses activités du mécanisme de l'Union. En outre, le personnel de la DG ECHO n'avait qu'une connaissance et un contrôle limités du rapport coût-efficacité des activités du mécanisme de l'Union. La DG ECHO a révisé la décision relative au MPCU pour renforcer la prévention et la préparation, en reconnaissant leur rapport coût-efficacité potentiel. **Si les parties prenantes considèrent que les résultats ont été obtenus de la manière la plus rentable, il a été difficile de déterminer au niveau macroéconomique si le mécanisme de l'Union était la solution la plus rentable dans l'ensemble.** L'évaluation intermédiaire a identifié plusieurs cas où le rapport coût-efficacité a été pris en compte lors de la planification, de la mise en œuvre, du suivi, de la révision/expansion et de l'attribution des contrats, mais il y avait des possibilités de réduire la charge administrative, d'améliorer les systèmes de gestion des données et d'augmenter les ressources humaines.

En ce qui concerne le suivi interne, l'élaboration d'indicateurs clés de performance (ICP) supplémentaires et de divers indicateurs de résultats et d'extrants a permis de mesurer les **performances du mécanisme de l'Union en matière d'activités de réponse**. Toutefois, les indicateurs et les processus étaient insuffisants pour évaluer et contrôler l'efficacité et la rentabilité, car ils ne couvraient pas la qualité, l'utilisation des ressources, les coûts ou les résultats/impacts. Enfin, les systèmes et outils de collecte et de gestion des données du mécanisme de l'Union n'étaient pas adaptés à la collecte et à l'analyse rationnelles des données, le suivi de l'assistance étant particulièrement limité.

Pertinence

Dans l'ensemble, les activités du mécanisme de l'Union dans les domaines de la prévention, de la préparation et de la réaction ont permis de répondre aux besoins de l'UE et des États membres.

En ce qui concerne la prévention, diverses activités ont démontré que le mécanisme de l'Union avait réussi à identifier les besoins de l'UE et des pays en matière de protection civile. Il s'agit notamment du financement par la DG ECHO de projets de recherche visant à comprendre les besoins des autorités chargées de la protection civile, de la compilation du document de synthèse sur les risques de catastrophes dans l'UE et des changements récents apportés au PPP. Bien que les parties prenantes conviennent de la nécessité d'investir davantage dans les initiatives de prévention, les ressources relativement limitées du mécanisme de l'Union suggèrent que des efforts supplémentaires pourraient être déployés pour coordonner et intégrer la gestion des risques de catastrophes dans d'autres instruments de financement pertinents de l'UE.

Les activités du mécanisme de l'Union se sont avérées très pertinentes pour garantir une meilleure **préparation** à la réponse aux catastrophes, tant au niveau national qu'au niveau de l'UE. Néanmoins, bien que le rescEU soit censé être un outil de dernier recours lorsque les capacités de l'ECPP ne peuvent pas être déployées, certaines parties prenantes se sont inquiétées de la priorité accordée au rescEU par rapport à l'ECPP. Néanmoins, il semble que le rescEU ait été utilisé, comme prévu, comme un « outil de dernier recours », l'ERCC vérifiant si les capacités de l'ECPP auraient pu être mobilisées en premier lieu.

Les activités de **réponse** du MPCU ont également permis de répondre aux besoins nationaux et de l'UE, les demandes d'assistance étant adaptées aux besoins des pays concernés.

Dans l'ensemble, le **mécanisme de l'Union a fait preuve de souplesse pour s'adapter à l'évolution des besoins sur le terrain, y compris à des événements imprévus**. Il s'agit notamment des activations en réponse à la guerre d'agression de la Russie contre l'Ukraine et à la pandémie COVID-19, ainsi que de sa coopération avec le secteur privé.

Au-delà de la période évaluée, la flexibilité du mécanisme de l'Union pourrait ne pas être suffisante pour répondre aux nouveaux besoins et développements, compte tenu de la complexité et de la fréquence croissantes des catastrophes (par exemple, les conséquences du changement climatique). En effet, des inquiétudes ont été exprimées quant à la durabilité de la capacité du mécanisme de l'Union (et plus particulièrement de l'ERCC) à faire face aux futures situations d'urgence, compte tenu de l'augmentation de sa charge de travail. Des inquiétudes ont également été exprimées quant au rôle croissant du MPCU dans les pays tiers, certaines parties prenantes soulignant la nécessité d'assurer une plus grande clarté à cet égard.

Le mécanisme de l'Union a déployé des efforts considérables pour donner suite aux recommandations et aux enseignements tirés des évaluations externes, en particulier les recommandations relatives au PPP et au programme de formation et d'exercices. Par ailleurs, elle a capitalisé et mis en œuvre certaines des leçons identifiées dans le programme des leçons apprises. Néanmoins, l'évaluation intermédiaire a mis en évidence une certaine marge de manœuvre pour améliorer la mise en œuvre et le suivi systématiques des enseignements et pour garantir une meilleure adaptation et une meilleure attribution de ces enseignements.

Cohérence

L'évaluation intermédiaire a permis de constater que la décision relative mécanisme de l'Union définit suffisamment les piliers de la prévention, de la préparation et de la réaction, ce qui favorise les synergies et les complémentarités. L'expansion des activités du mécanisme de l'Union entre 2017 et 2022 n'a pas affecté sa cohérence interne.

Bien que les lignes directrices pour l'établissement des rapports au titre de l'article 6 de 2019 aient cherché à renforcer la cohérence entre les rapports de synthèse sur la gestion des risques de catastrophes, il subsiste une certaine variabilité dans les méthodologies employées, les risques évalués et les secteurs concernés. L'ECPP et le rescEU sont intrinsèquement cohérents, étant donné que ce dernier est conçu comme un filet de sécurité, pour compléter l'ECPP dans les pires scénarios lorsque la capacité du Pool ne peut pas être déployée. La cohérence des activités de réponse a été largement assurée par l'ERCC.

En ce qui concerne la cohérence entre la prévention, la préparation et la réponse, le programme des enseignements tirés a constitué un bon forum pour l'échange d'enseignements et de bonnes pratiques sur un large éventail d'activités du mécanisme de l'Union. Néanmoins, la réorganisation interne de la DG ECHO a quelque peu entravé la coordination entre ses activités de prévention, de préparation et de réaction. Plus précisément, la division entre la direction A (gestion des urgences et rescEU) et la direction B (préparation aux catastrophes et prévention) n'a pas été perçue comme propice à la cohérence. Les parties prenantes ont souligné que le processus de développement des capacités au niveau du mécanisme de l'Union devrait être mieux étayé par des preuves scientifiques et des évaluations adéquates des besoins, ce qui permettrait d'avoir une vue d'ensemble claire des capacités disponibles et des lacunes.

Les activités de prévention et de préparation du mécanisme de l'Union **ont réussi à établir des synergies et des complémentarités avec les activités** nationales de protection civile. Par exemple, le système d'alerte précoce a constitué un complément précieux aux systèmes nationaux existants, tandis que la formation et les exercices proposés dans le cadre du programme de formation et d'exercices ont complété la formation nationale en matière de protection civile. Le mécanisme de l'Union a coordonné efficacement sa réponse avec les acteurs nationaux de la protection civile et le secteur privé. Toutefois, un cadre plus clair est nécessaire pour réglementer la coopération du MPCU avec le secteur privé.

Des synergies et des complémentarités ont été observées entre les activités du mécanisme de l'Union et les interventions de l'UE dans d'autres domaines politiques, même si des améliorations sont possibles. Par exemple, plusieurs mesures ont été prises pour améliorer les synergies avec l'aide humanitaire, la santé publique et les affaires intérieures (par exemple, la réduction des risques chimiques, biologiques, radiologiques et nucléaires (CBRN) de l'UE). Les acteurs de la protection civile déployés en mission n'avaient pas toujours une bonne compréhension des acteurs de l'aide humanitaire. En outre, lors de la pandémie COVID-19, le mécanisme de l'Union a rencontré des difficultés dans la coordination avec les autorités nationales au-delà de la protection civile, soulignant la nécessité de mieux faire connaître le mécanisme de l'Union (par exemple, parmi les ministères de la santé et les ministères des affaires étrangères). Bien que la décision relative au mécanisme de l'Union, les lignes directrices pour l'établissement des rapports au titre de l'article 6 de 2019 et d'autres initiatives du mécanisme de l'Union entre 2017 et 2022 aient mis en évidence la nécessité de considérer le changement climatique comme un facteur de risque et ses incidences sur la gravité accrue des catastrophes, les faits montrent que la viabilité environnementale du mécanisme de l'Union pourrait être améliorée.

Au niveau international, le mécanisme de l'Union est conforme au cadre de Sendai pour la réduction des risques de catastrophe, la DG ECHO et le Bureau des Nations unies pour la réduction des risques de catastrophe (UNDRR) ayant pris des mesures pour éviter les chevauchements et la duplication des efforts. Bien que le mécanisme de l'Union coordonne efficacement sa réponse avec d'autres acteurs

internationaux (par exemple, l'Organisation du traité de l'Atlantique Nord (OTAN), le Bureau de la coordination des affaires humanitaires des Nations unies (OCHA)), l'évaluation intermédiaire a permis d'identifier d'autres synergies.

Valeur ajoutée de l'UE

L'évaluation intermédiaire a permis de constater que le mécanisme de l'Union apportait une valeur ajoutée aux États membres, aux États participants et aux pays tiers. Elle a contribué à produire des résultats qui n'auraient pas pu être obtenus au seul niveau national, régional ou local. Les avantages étaient tangibles et évidents pour tous les pays participant à des activités de protection civile (qu'ils reçoivent ou qu'ils donnent), en particulier les petits pays dont les capacités de prévention, de préparation et de réaction sont limitées.

Les principaux éléments générateurs de valeur ajoutée pour les activités nationales de protection civile ont été le renforcement de la coordination (par l'intermédiaire de l'ERCC), la mise en commun des ressources (rescEU, ECPP), la réduction des coûts, le partage des connaissances et de l'expertise, le développement des capacités par la formation et les exercices, ainsi que la sensibilisation aux risques, la solidarité et l'influence internationale. Par exemple, le réseau de connaissances et la compilation périodique des rapports de synthèse sur la gestion des risques de catastrophes dans un document de synthèse sur les risques de catastrophes dans l'UE présentent une valeur ajoutée intrinsèque pour les États membres et les États participants, malgré certaines lacunes et un potentiel d'amélioration.

L'arrêt éventuel du mécanisme de l'Union aurait des conséquences négatives pour les États membres, les États participants, les pays tiers et la communauté de la protection civile dans son ensemble. Les interventions nationales, régionales et locales se poursuivraient probablement, mais de manière fragmentée, moins efficace et moins efficiente. Il serait difficile de combler l'absence du mécanisme de l'Union par des interventions au niveau national ou des initiatives établies par des accords bilatéraux/régionaux ou par la coopération multilatérale.

S'il est possible de déduire que des avantages se sont matérialisés pour tous les pays impliqués dans des activités de protection civile, les modalités concrètes par lesquelles la dimension extérieure du mécanisme de l'Union apporte une valeur ajoutée aux États membres et aux États participants restent floues.

Recommandations

L'étude propose huit recommandations stratégiques, accompagnées d'une série de recommandations opérationnelles visant à améliorer l'efficacité, la pertinence, la cohérence et la valeur ajoutée européenne du MPCU. Ces recommandations sont présentées ci-dessous.

9. La Commission européenne devrait renforcer la coopération intersectorielle pour prévenir les catastrophes, s'y préparer et y répondre

Recommandations opérationnelles

- Renforcer la coordination intersectorielle (par l'intermédiaire de l'ERCC) avec les parties prenantes européennes et internationales. Par exemple, la DG ECHO devrait envisager de
 - a) Poursuivre l'élaboration/la vérification régulière des procédures opérationnelles standard et des accords administratifs avec les parties prenantes existantes et nouvelles, ainsi que pour les plateformes logistiques ;
 - b) Poursuivre le développement de l'initiative ERCC 2.0, afin de lui permettre de devenir le centre de crise intersectoriel de la Commission pour la connaissance conjointe de la situation, l'alerte précoce, l'anticipation, l'échange d'informations et la coordination opérationnelle, y compris entre les parties prenantes civiles et militaires ; Dans la mesure du possible, ceci devrait être fait en coopération rapprochée avec les autres instruments de gestion de crise de l'UE, y compris ceux en cours de développement (tel que l'instrument du marché unique

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pour les situations d'urgence)c) encourager le déploiement régulier d'officiers de liaison (OL) d'autres DG de la Commission auprès de la DG ECHO ;

d) introduire des réunions thématiques interservices de la Commission afin d'approfondir la compréhension du travail des autres services et de se concentrer sur les efforts de rationalisation. Cela permettrait également de relier plus étroitement les activités de protection civile et de gestion de crise plus large des acteurs de l'UE, réduisant ainsi le risque de fragmentation et de duplication des structures de gestion des urgences et des crises ;

- Poursuivre les efforts de sensibilisation au MPCU parmi les autorités nationales au-delà de la protection civile (par exemple en créant des listes de points de contact pour la protection non civile, des documents/protocoles sur les étapes et les acteurs impliqués dans les activations du MPCU, des sessions ad hoc sur les changements apportés au mécanisme) ;
- Établir une coopération structurelle avec le secteur privé afin de compléter et d'alléger les activités nationales (par exemple, un atelier consacré à l'encadrement de la coopération avec le secteur privé, qui débouche sur des procédures d'exploitation normalisées régulièrement mises à jour).

10. La DG ECHO devrait simplifier les procédures et les exigences administratives afin d'accroître la flexibilité et de réduire la charge administrative

Recommandations opérationnelles

- Simplifier les procédures et les exigences administratives pour l'activation du MPCU, en particulier le transport et la logistique des déploiements d'ECPP, les capacités de rescEU et l'assistance en nature (par exemple, des formulaires automatisés, une « procédure accélérée » facultative pour les urgences à grande échelle, complexes et transfrontalières, l'intégration d'un module de transport dans CECIS 2.0 pour faciliter le suivi du cofinancement) ;
- Envisager d'augmenter le taux de cofinancement à 100 % pour le transport et les opérations de déploiement de l'ECPP (y compris une étude de faisabilité sur l'impact (financier) potentiel).

11. La Commission européenne devrait améliorer les systèmes et les outils de contrôle pour suivre/évaluer les performances du MPCU dans le cadre des activités de prévention, de préparation et d'intervention

Recommandations opérationnelles

- Développer la politique de suivi et d'évaluation (S&E) à l'échelle du MPCU afin d'établir un cadre pluriannuel pour mesurer les performances et les réalisations qui couvrent toutes les activités du MPCU (cadre de S&E, logique d'intervention, cadre d'indicateurs pour toutes les activités, plan de S&E) ;
- Améliorer les rapports sur le budget par activité et par pilier afin d'éclairer la prise de décision et l'affectation des fonds (voir recommandation n° 4) ;
- Remplacer les outils standard de MS Office par des systèmes informatiques et de gestion de l'information plus innovants et mieux adaptés pour collecter et contrôler les données sur les activités du MPCU. Un tel système devrait assurer un suivi commun des capacités de l'ECPP et du rescEU, un suivi commun de la fourniture de l'assistance en nature, une base de

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données commune d'experts et un suivi de la mise en œuvre des enseignements tirés et des recommandations identifiées.

12. La Commission européenne devrait rationaliser et renforcer les instruments de financement du MPCU afin d'assurer une approche européenne commune de la gestion des crises

Recommandations opérationnelles

- Renforcer les liens entre les instruments budgétaires de l'UE afin d'introduire une approche plus rationnelle et d'alléger la pression sur les ressources (par exemple, pour les activités intersectorielles, telles que la cartographie des risques) ;
 - Mettre en place un mécanisme assurant des garanties à toutes les phases du cycle de gestion des risques de catastrophes dans le cas d'urgences d'une ampleur ou d'une gravité sans précédent ;
 - Organiser des discussions sur le financement général du MPCU à la lumière de l'évolution du paysage des risques de catastrophes (par exemple, l'adéquation du financement général du MPCU, les possibilités de délimiter les budgets de prévention et de préparation) ;
 - Mettre en place un financement durable pour le développement et le maintien des capacités du rescEU.
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13. La Commission européenne devrait promouvoir une plus grande intégration des connaissances fondées sur des preuves (par exemple, les résultats scientifiques) et de l'innovation technologique dans les activités de protection civile

Recommandations opérationnelles

- Introduire des liens structurels entre les activités d'anticipation stratégique et de prospective du MPCU et le développement des capacités par le biais du rescEU et de l'ECPP ;
 - Veiller à ce que l'expertise scientifique (y compris celle générée par les activités du MPCU) influence la mise en œuvre des activités du MPCU (par exemple, l'utilisation du réseau de connaissances, la mise en œuvre de l'ERCC 2.0 en renforçant la capacité d'anticipation de l'ERCC) ;
 - Continuer à soutenir l'amélioration des SAP (par exemple, couvrir davantage de risques, inclure des mesures supplémentaires de contrôle de la qualité et des sources de données innovantes) afin de veiller à ce que les informations soient moins fragmentées dans les SAP nationaux et de l'UE ;
 - Encourager les initiatives visant à améliorer la qualité des rapports de synthèse sur la gestion des risques de catastrophes, ce qui permettra d'améliorer la comparabilité du document de synthèse sur les risques de catastrophes dans l'UE ;
 - Permettre l'identification des innovations technologiques émergentes et encourager la coopération avec l'industrie ;
 - Introduire des méthodologies/outils innovants dans le programme de formation et d'exercices.
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14. La Commission européenne devrait veiller à la clarté du rôle du MPCU dans les pays tiers et les catastrophes qui ne relèvent pas traditionnellement du domaine de la protection civile

Recommandations opérationnelles

- Élaborer des modes opératoires normalisés pour les situations dans lesquelles le MPCU est confronté à des demandes d'intervention simultanées, afin que les pays tiers soient conscients du fonctionnement et de la capacité du mécanisme ;
- Évaluer la faisabilité, l'impact et les avantages d'une révision de la décision relative au MPCU afin d'élargir son mandat et ses ressources, compte tenu de la nature de plus en plus intersectorielle de la protection civile, et de faire de l'ERCC une plaque tournante en cas de crise à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'UE. L'étude devrait clarifier les interactions du MPCU avec d'autres instruments de gestion de crise au niveau de l'UE, ainsi que son rôle en tant qu'acteur international.

15. La DG ECHO devrait renforcer la cohérence et exploiter les synergies inexploitées entre le MPCU et les efforts d'aide humanitaire

Recommandations opérationnelles

- Améliorer la connaissance et la compréhension des rôles, missions et responsabilités des acteurs de l'aide humanitaire au sein de la communauté de la protection civile dans le cadre des activités de préparation du MPCU. Cela pourrait se faire par le biais de modules de formation supplémentaires, d'une formation conjointe accrue, d'ateliers sur mesure et du programme « Vers l'Europe ».

16. La Commission européenne devrait sensibiliser les parties prenantes concernées et le public au MPCU et aux catastrophes

Recommandations opérationnelles

- Encourager la sensibilisation systématique au réseau de connaissances et à d'autres activités moins connues du MPCU lors des événements du MPCU (par exemple, formation, exercices, conférences du DRMKC) ;
- Améliorer la communication des changements et des initiatives du MPCU aux États membres et aux États participants ;
- Intensifier les activités visant à sensibiliser le public aux activités du MPCU et aux questions de protection civile (par exemple, stratégie de communication spécifique, médias sociaux) ;
- Consolider l'information sur le MPCU pour les principales parties prenantes dans un point d'accès principal, par exemple la plateforme en ligne du réseau de connaissances.

KURZFASSUNG - DE

Dies ist die Kurzfassung der Zwischenbewertung der Umsetzung und Performance von Beschluss Nr. 1313/2013/EU über ein Katastrophenschutzverfahren der Union (UCPM), die von ICF im Auftrag der Generaldirektion Europäischer Katastrophenschutz und humanitäre Hilfe (DG ECHO) der Europäischen Kommission erstellt wurde.

Zweck und Gegenstand der Studie

Diese Zwischenbewertung evaluiert die Effektivität, Relevanz, Effizienz, Kohärenz und den Mehrwert für die EU von Beschluss Nr. 1313/2013/EU über das Katastrophenschutzverfahren der Union

zwischen 2017 und 2022. Konkret hat die Zwischenbewertung die DG ECHO bei Folgendem unterstützt:

- Den Fortschritt beim Umsetzen des Beschlusses, einschließlich der Lücken und Defizite, zu verstehen;
- Den Umfang, in dem der Beschluss seine Zielsetzungen erreicht hat, sowie die wichtigsten quantitativen und qualitativen Auswirkungen zu verstehen;
- Die Umsetzung von vorhandenen gesetzlichen Bestimmungen zu verbessern;
- Beiträge zu möglichen Vorschlägen zu leisten, um den Beschluss oder seine durchführenden Rechtsakte zu ändern;
- Soweit angebracht, die Prüfung der finanziellen Aufgliederung des Katastrophenschutzverfahrens der Union (UCPM) gemäß Artikel 19(5) des Beschlusses zu unterstützen und potenzielle Verbesserungsmöglichkeiten im Haushaltsvollzug des Katastrophenschutzmechanismus der Union zu identifizieren.

Die Bewertung deckte die 27 Mitgliedsstaaten der Europäischen Union (EU)⁶, acht Teilnehmerländer⁷ und 19 förderfähige Drittländer ab.

Methodik

Die Methodik dieser Zwischenbewertung des Beschlusses Nr. 1313/2013/EU stützte sich auf Forschungsinstrumente, die entwickelt und abgestimmt wurden, um eine vielseitige und umfangreiche Faktenlage aufzubauen, die ein breites Spektrum von Stakeholdern abdeckt. Dabei wurden sich ergänzende quantitative und qualitative Forschungsmethoden kombiniert, um Daten aus relevanten Quellen zu sammeln und die Auswirkungen von Datenlücken so weit wie möglich abzuschwächen. Gemäß den Richtlinien für eine bessere Rechtssetzung (BRG) dienten sie als Grundlage für eine Triangulation und Verifizierung von Daten aus unterschiedlichen Quellen, um Evaluierungsfragen zu beantworten, Schlussfolgerungen zu ziehen, Erkenntnisse hervorzuheben und Empfehlungen zu erarbeiten.

Die Zwischenbewertung begann im Oktober 2022 und umfasste mehrere Phasen: i) Aufnahme des Projekts ii) Forschung und Konsultationsaktivitäten; und iii) Analyse, Triangulation und Synthese. Darüber hinaus hat das Bewertungsteam eine Ausgangsanalyse durchgeführt, die sich hauptsächlich auf Daten aus früheren Bewertungen des UCPM stützte.

Die Evaluierungsfragen wurden durch mehrere Datenerhebungsaktivitäten ermittelt: eine Schnellprüfung der Dokumentation, gefolgt von einer gründlichen Prüfung der qualitativen und quantitativen Daten, ein Workshop zum Auftakt, sechs Fallstudien, 108 Interviews mit Schlüsselexperten, drei Fokusgruppen, ein Workshop zur Expertenvalidierung und vier Online-Umfragen (die auf Katastrophenschutzbehörden, Länderreferenten der DG ECHO, Trainer/Auftragnehmer, die Training und Übungen durchgeführt haben, sowie Experten im Katastrophenschutz, die an Aktivitäten des UCPM teilnahmen, abzielten). Die Fallstudien umfassten eine angepasste Prüfung der relevanten Dokumentation und eine Reihe von oder zusätzlichen Interviews mit wichtigen Stakeholdern, die aufgrund ihrer Expertise oder ihrer Beteiligung an den fraglichen Themen ausgewählt wurden. Bei den Konsultationsaktivitäten wurden die Perspektiven der Stakeholder hinsichtlich der Effektivität, Effizienz, Relevanz, Kohärenz und des EU-Mehrwerts, sowie wichtige Erkenntnisse, Lücken und Defizite im Bewertungszeitraum und künftige Verbesserungsmöglichkeiten für das UCPM-Verfahren gesammelt.

⁶ Das Vereinigte Königreich (VK) wurde bis einschließlich 2020 als EU-Mitgliedsstaat geführt.

⁷ Island, Norwegen, Serbien, Nordmazedonien, Montenegro, Türkei, Albanien, Bosnien und Herzegowina. Nach Ablauf des Bewertungszeitraums ist die Ukraine dem UCPM im April 2023 als Teilnehmerland beigetreten.

Hauptergebnisse und Schlussfolgerungen

Effektivität

Gemäß Artikel 3(1) des UCPM-Beschlusses hat **das UCPM Fortschritte in Richtung seines allgemeinen Ziels gemacht, die Zusammenarbeit und Solidarität zwischen der Union und den Mitgliedsstaaten und Teilnehmerländern zu fördern**. Das UCPM hat im Bewertungszeitraum die länder- und sektorenübergreifende Zusammenarbeit gefördert, die anhand von Erkenntnissen aus großen Katastrophen verbessert werden konnte.

Zu den Aktivitäten, die am meisten zum Erreichen bestimmter Zielsetzungen im Bereich der Prävention beigetragen haben, zählen das Risiko-Mapping, das durch nationale Risikobewertungsverfahren erreicht wird, das Übersichtsdocument über das Katastrophenrisiko in der EU, die Zusammenstellung der zusammenfassenden Berichte über Katastrophenrisiko-Management von Mitgliedsstaaten und Teilnehmerländern sowie Präventionsprojekte mit dem Aktionsprogramm zur Verhütung von und Vorbereitung auf Katastrophen. Allerdings besteht Uneinigkeit darüber, in welchem Umfang der Fortschritt im Bereich der Vorsorgeaktivitäten gemessen werden kann, da solche Arbeiten langfristig angelegt sind. Darüber hinaus haben Katastrophenschutzbehörden häufig Schwierigkeiten, Vorsorgeinitiativen durchzuführen (insbesondere bei dem Erstellen von zusammenfassenden Berichten über das Katastrophenrisiko-Management), was im sektorenübergreifenden Wesen des Katastrophenschutzes und den Herausforderungen für die Katastrophenschutzbehörden bei der Zusammenarbeit mit vielen unterschiedlichen Akteuren begründet liegt.

Das UCPM hat erheblich zu einer verbesserten Katastrophenbereitschaft beigetragen, insbesondere durch den European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) und rescEU, ein letztes Mittel, das in extremen Katastrophenszenarios mobilisiert wird, wenn die Notfallhilfe vom ECPP nicht mobilisiert werden kann oder nicht ausreicht. Es haben auch andere Aktivitäten zum Erreichen der Katastrophenbereitschaftsziele der UCPM beigetragen: Das Trainings- und Übungsprogramm, Frühwarnsysteme (EWS), Bereitschaftsprojekte, die unter dem Aktionsprogramm zur Verhütung von und Vorbereitung auf Katastrophen finanziert wurden, sowie Richtlinien für die Unterstützung durch den Gastgeberstaat (HNS).

Trotz einer erheblichen Zunahme der Aktivierungen (vor allen Dingen aufgrund von Waldbränden, der COVID-19-Pandemie und Russlands Angriffskrieg in der Ukraine) **hat das UCPM im Bewertungszeitraum eine hohe Reaktionsrate bewahrt und effektiv zum Katastrophenschutz beigetragen**. Das Zentrum für die Koordination von Notfallmaßnahmen (ERCC – Emergency Response Coordination Centre) hat eine wichtige Rolle dabei gespielt, im Katastrophenfall für schnelle und effiziente Reaktionen zu sorgen, indem es die Reaktionen auf Notfälle innerhalb und außerhalb der EU zeitnah koordinierte und unterstützte.

Das UCPM hat zur Bewusstseins-schaffung für Katastrophen innerhalb der Katastrophenschutz-Gemeinschaft und bei nicht-konventionellen Stakeholdern beigetragen, vorrangig durch die Beteiligung von rescEU und UCPM an Katastrophen von großer öffentlicher Bedeutung (z. B. COVID-19). Seine Trainings und Übungen und das Exchange of Experts (EoE) Programm waren wertvolle Ressourcen, um Expertise zu verbreiten und Diskussionen anzuregen. Das UCPM konnte das Bewusstsein über das Verfahren und über Katastrophen in der Öffentlichkeit verbessern und zu einem geringeren Grad auch im nicht-zivilen Katastrophenschutz-Sektor.

Es wird außerdem erwartet, dass jüngere Initiativen ebenfalls positive Auswirkungen auf die Performance des UCPM haben werden, einschließlich der Union Disaster Resilience Goals, das Civil Protection Knowledge Network, der Aufbau von Szenarien, die Umsetzung des neuen Trainings- und Übungsprogramms und die ERCC 2.0 Initiative.

Zu den Faktoren, die die Effektivität des UCPM ermöglichten, zählten seine Anpassungsfähigkeit, die gesetzlichen Rahmen an die Bedürfnisse der Katastrophenrisikolage abzustimmen, die verbesserte

sektorenübergreifende Zusammenarbeit (einschließlich des privaten Sektors, insbesondere in Reaktion auf Russlands Angriffskrieg in der Ukraine), dem gegenseitigen Vertrauen und Verständnis zwischen der DG ECHO und nationalen Gegenstücken und der Vertrautheit der Mitgliedsstaaten und Teilnehmerländer mit dem UCPM. Im Gegensatz dazu zählten zu den **hemmenden Faktoren** die sich ändernde Katastrophenrisikolage (mit zunehmender Komplexität und Häufigkeit der Katastrophen), die Komplexität einiger Verwaltungsabläufe, der Mangel an Personal und finanziellen Ressourcen, und der erhöhte Fokus auf die Reaktion – manchmal zum Nachteil von Bereitschafts- und Präventionsaktivitäten, die über die Unterstützung einer Kapazitätsentwicklung durch rescEU und den ECPP hinausgehen.

Das **UCPM hat positive, ungewollte Wirkungen hervorgerufen**, einschließlich eines erhöhten Bewusstseins über Fragen und Herausforderungen im Katastrophenschutz und des vermehrten Einsatzes von wissenschaftlichen Instrumenten und Forschung. Außerdem diente es als Inspiration für Kooperationsnetze für den Katastrophenschutz jenseits der Union.

Effizienz

Im Verlauf des Bewertungszeitraums wurde das Budget des UCPM aufgrund von sich entwickelnden Bedürfnissen und Mängelanalysen deutlich angehoben. Während 2017 das Budget des MFF UCPM noch bei etwa 52 Millionen Euro lag und Absorptionsprobleme entstanden, war das Budget des MFF am Ende des Bewertungszeitraums mit 354 Millionen Euro erheblich höher (und das Gesamtbudget mit NextGenerationEU-Mitteln bei 1.061 Millionen Euro).

Insgesamt hat das Haushaltssystem des UCPM ein gutes Maß an Flexibilität gezeigt, um Mitgliedsstaaten und Teilnehmerländern dabei zu helfen, die sich entwickelnden Bedürfnisse vor Ort und unvorhergesehene Ereignisse zu bewältigen. Während diese Flexibilität gelegentlich (und kurzfristig) durch eine Umverteilung des Budgets von der Vorsorge erreicht wurde, war sie hauptsächlich auf eine Aufstockung des Budgets, Vorverteilungen und Änderungen zurückzuführen, die durch die Neufassungen der Vorschriften und einer Haushaltsbehörde ermöglicht wurden, die schnell die Anfragen des UCPM auf Verstärkung unterstützt hat, um auf Krisen zu reagieren (Genehmigungen erfolgten innerhalb von drei Wochen bis zwei Monaten). Nichtsdestotrotz beschränkten im Bewertungszeitraum in manchen Fällen einige Elemente die Flexibilität des Haushaltssystems, beispielsweise die begrenzte Nutzung von NextGenerationEU-Mitteln, um auf Gesundheitsbedürfnisse zu reagieren.

Die Zwischenbewertung ergab, dass der erwartete Nutzen der UCPM einigermaßen effizient realisiert wurde und die Kosten überwiegt. Es bedarf jedoch einer größeren Klarheit über die mit den verschiedenen Aktivitäten verbundenen Kosten. Darüber hinaus hatten die Mitarbeitenden der DG ECHO nur begrenzte Kenntnisse und Kontrolle über die Kosteneffektivität der Aktivitäten des UCPM. Die DG ECHO hat den UCPM-Beschluss überarbeitet, um die Vorsorge und Bereitschaft zu stärken und ihre potenzielle Kosteneffektivität zu erkennen. **Während Stakeholder der Meinung waren, dass die Ergebnisse auf die kosteneffektivste Weise erreicht wurden, ließ sich auf Makro-Ebene nur schwerlich feststellen, ob das UCPM insgesamt die kosteneffektivste Lösung war.** Bei der Zwischenevaluierung wurden verschiedene Fälle festgestellt, in denen die Kosteneffizienz bei der Planung, Durchführung, Überwachung, Überarbeitung/Erweiterung und Auftragsvergabe berücksichtigt wurde. Es gab jedoch Möglichkeiten, den Verwaltungsaufwand zu reduzieren, die Datenmanagementsysteme zu verbessern und das Personal zu verstärken.

Im Bereich der internen Überwachung haben **die Entwicklung von zusätzlichen Performanceindikatoren (KPIs) und die verschiedenen Ergebnis- und Output-Indikatoren dabei geholfen, die Performance des UCPM bei Reaktionsaktivitäten zu messen.** Allerdings reichten die Indikatoren und Prozesse nicht aus, um die Effizienz und Kosteneffektivität zu bewerten und zu überwachen, da sie Qualität, Ressourcennutzung, Kosten und Ergebnisse/Auswirkungen nicht abdeckten. Schließlich waren die Systeme und Werkzeuge zu Datenerfassung und Datenmanagement

nicht geeignet, um eine fundierte Datensammlung und -analyse zu unterstützen, wobei die Verfolgung der Hilfsmaßnahmen besonders eingeschränkt war.

Relevanz

Insgesamt waren die UCPM-Aktivitäten unter den Säulen Vorsorge, Bereitschaft und Reaktion angemessen, um die Bedürfnisse der EU und nationale Bedürfnisse zu erfüllen.

Im Bereich der **Vorsorge** haben verschiedene Aktivitäten die erfolgreiche Identifikation seitens des UCPM der Katastrophenschutzbedürfnisse der EU und auf nationaler Ebene demonstriert. Dazu zählt die Finanzierung seitens der DG ECHO von Forschungsprojekten, um die Bedürfnisse von Katastrophenschutzbehörden zu verstehen, die Zusammenstellung des Übersichtsdocuments der Katastrophenrisiken in der EU und jüngste Änderungen am Aktionsprogramm zur Verhütung von und Vorbereitung auf Katastrophen. Obwohl Stakeholder übereinstimmen, dass zusätzliche Investitionen für Vorsorgeinitiativen erforderlich sind, lassen die relativ begrenzten Mittel des UCPM darauf schließen, dass weitere Bemühungen sich darauf konzentrieren könnten, das Katastrophenschutzmanagement in anderen relevanten Finanzierungsinstrumenten der EU zu koordinieren und zu mainstreamen.

Die Aktivitäten des UCPM waren sehr relevant dabei, die **Bereitschaft** zu erhöhen, um auf nationaler und EU-Ebene auf Katastrophen zu reagieren. Obwohl rescEU als letztes Mittel gedacht ist, wenn die Kapazitäten des ECPP nicht eingesetzt werden können, haben manche Stakeholder Bedenken über die wahrgenommene Priorisierung von rescEU im Vergleich zum ECPP vorgebracht. Nichtsdestotrotz deuten die Fakten darauf hin, dass rescEU wie geplant als „letztes Mittel“ verwendet wurde, wobei das ERCC prüfte, ob die Kapazitäten des ECPP an erster Stelle hätten mobilisiert werden können.

Die Reaktionsaktivitäten des UCPM waren ebenfalls relevant, um die Bedürfnisse auf nationaler und EU-Ebene zu erfüllen, wobei die Hilfsanfragen (RfA - Requests for Assistance) auf die Bedürfnisse der fraglichen Länder abgestimmt sind.

Generell konnte sich das **UCPM flexibel auf die sich entwickelnden Bedürfnisse vor Ort einstellen, auch auf unvorhergesehene Ereignisse**. Dies umfasst Aktivitäten in Reaktion auf Russlands Angriffskrieg in der Ukraine und die COVID-19-Pandemie sowie seine Zusammenarbeit mit dem privaten Sektor.

Über den Bewertungszeitraum hinaus reicht die Flexibilität des UCPM möglicherweise nicht aus, um neue Bedürfnisse und Entwicklungen zu bewältigen, wenn man die zunehmende Komplexität und Häufigkeit von Katastrophen in Betracht zieht (z. B. die Folgen des Klimawandels). Tatsächlich wurden Bedenken vorgebracht, ob das UCPM (und insbesondere das ERCC) angesichts des zunehmenden Arbeitspensums nachhaltig in der Lage sein wird, künftige Notfälle zu bewältigen. Außerdem wurden Bedenken über die wachsende Rolle des UCPM in Drittländern vorgebracht, wobei manche Stakeholder den Bedarf nach verbesserter Transparenz in dieser Hinsicht betonten.

Das UCPM hat erhebliche Anstrengungen unternommen, um die Empfehlungen und Erkenntnisse umzusetzen, die sich aus externen Beurteilungen ergaben, insbesondere die Empfehlungen über das Aktionsprogramm zur Verhütung von und Vorbereitung auf Katastrophen und das Trainings- und Übungsprogramm. Ebenso konnte es einige der Erkenntnisse, die im Lessons Learnt Programm identifiziert wurden, nutzen und umsetzen. Nichtsdestotrotz konnte die Zwischenbewertung noch einige Verbesserungsmöglichkeiten identifizieren, um die systematische Umsetzung und Überwachung der Erkenntnisse zu verbessern und dafür zu sorgen, dass diese Erkenntnisse besser abgestimmt und zugeordnet werden.

Kohärenz

In der Zwischenbewertung wurde festgestellt, dass der UCPM-Beschluss die Säulen Vorsorge, Bereitschaft und Reaktion ausreichend definiert und daher Synergien und Komplementarität

fördert. Die Expansion der Aktivitäten des UCPM zwischen 2017 und 2022 hat seine interne Kohärenz nicht beeinträchtigt.

Obwohl Artikel 6 der Berichtsrichtlinien aus dem Jahr 2019 darauf ausgerichtet war, die Kohärenz zwischen den zusammenfassenden Berichten über das Katastrophenrisiko-Management zu verbessern, treten in den verwendeten Methodologien, bewerteten Risiken und beteiligten Sektoren immer noch Abweichungen auf. Das ECPP und rescEU sind grundsätzlich kohärent, wobei letzteres als Sicherheitsnetz zur Ergänzung des ECPP gedacht ist, wenn die Kapazität des Pools nicht eingesetzt werden kann. Die Kohärenz der Reaktionsaktivitäten wurde im Großen und Ganzen durch das ERCC sichergestellt.

Was die Kohärenz in den Bereichen Vorsorge, Bereitschaft und Reaktion angeht, hat das Lessons Learnt Programm ein gutes Forum geboten, um Erfahrungen und bewährte Praktiken über ein breites Spektrum an UCPM-Aktivitäten auszutauschen. Nichtsdestotrotz hat die interne Umstrukturierung der DG ECHO die Koordinierung ihrer Vorsorge-, Bereitschafts- und Reaktionsaktivitäten behindert. Insbesondere wurde die Aufteilung zwischen Direktorat A (Notfallmanagement und rescEU) und Direktorat B (Katastrophenbereitschaft und -vorsorge) nicht als kohärenzförderlich angesehen⁸. Stakeholder haben hervorgehoben, dass der Prozess zur Kapazitätsentwicklung des UCPM besser durch wissenschaftliche Nachweise und angemessene Bedarfsbewertungen informiert werden sollte, was zu einem klaren Überblick über die verfügbaren Kapazitäten und Lücken führen würde.

Die Vorsorge- und Bereitschaftsaktivitäten des UCPM haben **erfolgreich Synergien und Komplementarität mit nationalen Katastrophenschutzaktivitäten etabliert**. Beispielsweise war das Frühwarnsystem (EWS) eine wertvolle Ergänzung zu vorhandenen nationalen Systemen, während die Schulungen und Übungen im Trainings- und Übungsprogramm das nationale Katastrophenschutztraining ergänzten. Das UCPM hat seine Reaktion effektiv mit Akteuren im nationalen Katastrophenschutz und aus dem Privatsektor koordiniert. Es ist jedoch ein eindeutigerer Rahmen erforderlich, um Zusammenarbeit des UCPM mit dem Privatsektor zu regeln.

Es gab Synergien und Komplementarität zwischen den Aktivitäten des UCPM und Interventionen in anderen Bereichen der Politik auf EU-Ebene, aber es bestehen immer noch Verbesserungsmöglichkeiten. Beispielsweise wurden mehrere Maßnahmen ergriffen, um die Synergien mit den folgenden Bereichen zu verbessern: humanitäre Hilfe, öffentliche Gesundheit und Innenpolitik (z. B. chemische, biologische, radiologische und nukleare (CBRN) Risikominderung der EU). Akteure im Katastrophenschutz auf Missionseinsatz hatten nicht immer ein gutes Verständnis von den Akteuren im Bereich der humanitären Hilfe. Darüber hinaus hatte das UCPM während der COVID-19-Pandemie Schwierigkeiten damit, über den Katastrophenschutz hinaus mit den nationalen Behörden zu koordinieren, was auf die Notwendigkeit hinweist, die Bekanntheit des UCPM zu verstärken (z. B. bei Gesundheitsministerien und auswärtigen Ämtern). Obwohl der UCPM-Beschluss, der Artikel 6 der Leitlinien zur Berichterstattung aus dem Jahr 2019 und andere Initiativen des UCPM zwischen 2017 und 2022 die Notwendigkeit betonten, den Klimawandel und seine Auswirkungen auf die erhöhte Schwere von Katastrophen als einen Risikofaktor zu betrachten, zeigt die Zwischenbewertung, dass die ökologische Nachhaltigkeit des UCPM verbessert werden könnte.

Auf internationaler Ebene ist das UCPM kohärent mit dem Sendai Rahmenwerk für Katastrophenvorsorge, mit der DG ECHO und dem United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) und ergreift Schritte, um Überschneidungen und Doppelarbeit zu vermeiden. Obwohl das UCPM seine Reaktion effektiv mit anderen Akteuren auf internationaler Ebene koordiniert hat (z. B. mit der North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), dem United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)), hat die Zwischenbewertung zusätzliche Synergien identifiziert.

⁸ Die spätere Umstrukturierung der DG ECHO fiel nicht mehr unter den Umfang dieser Zwischenbewertung.

Mehrwert für die EU

In der Zwischenbewertung wurde festgestellt, dass das UCPM für die Mitgliedsstaaten, Teilnehmerländer und Drittländer einen Mehrwert darstellte. Es war ausschlaggebend daran beteiligt, Ergebnisse zu erzielen, die auf nationaler, regionaler oder lokaler Ebene allein nicht erreichbar gewesen wären. Die Vorteile waren greifbar und eindeutig für alle Länder, die an Katastrophenschutzaktivitäten beteiligt waren (ob entgegennehmend oder bereitstellend). Dies galt insbesondere für kleine Länder mit begrenzter Vorsorge-, Bereitschafts- und Reaktionskapazität.

Zu den Hauptelementen, die Wert für nationale Katastrophenschutzaktivitäten schöpften, gehören die verbesserte Koordinierung (durch das ERCC), die Ressourcenbündelung (rescEU, ECPP), Kosteneinsparungen, Austausch von Wissen und Erfahrung, Kapazitätsentwicklung durch Training und Übungen und Risikobewusstsein, Solidarität und internationaler Einfluss. Beispielsweise erzielen das Knowledge Network und die regelmäßige Zusammenstellung von zusammenfassenden Berichten über das Katastrophenrisiko-Management in einem Übersichtsdokument der Katastrophenrisiken in der EU einen intrinsischen EU-Mehrwert für die Mitgliedsstaaten und Teilnehmerländer, ungeachtet einiger Defizite und Verbesserungsmöglichkeiten.

Die potenzielle Einstellung des UCPM hätte negative Folgen für Mitgliedsstaaten, Teilnehmerländer, Drittländer und die gesamte Katastrophenschutzgemeinschaft. Nationale, regionale und lokale Interventionen würden wahrscheinlich weiterhin stattfinden, jedoch auf fragmentierte, weniger effiziente und weniger effektive Weise. Die Abwesenheit des UCPM ließe sich nur schwerlich durch Interventionen oder Initiativen auf nationaler Ebene, die auf bilateralen/regionalen Vereinbaren oder multilateraler Zusammenarbeit beruhen, ausgleichen.

Während man zu dem Schluss kommen kann, dass alle Länder, die an Katastrophenschutzmaßnahmen teilgenommen haben, davon profitiert haben, bleibt die konkrete Art und Weise, in der die externe Dimension des UCPM für die Mitgliedsstaaten und die teilnehmenden Länder einen Mehrwert darstellt, unklar.

Empfehlungen

Die Studie macht acht strategische Empfehlungen, die von einer Reihe operationeller Empfehlungen begleitet werden, um die Effektivität, Relevanz, Kohärenz und dem Mehrwert des UCPM für die EU zu verbessern. Diese Empfehlungen werden nachfolgend präsentiert.

1. Die Europäische Kommission sollte die sektorübergreifende Kooperation zur Katastrophenvorsorge, -bereitschaft und -reaktion stärken

Operationelle Empfehlungen

- Stärken der sektorenübergreifenden Koordination (durch das ERCC) mit der EU und internationalen Stakeholdern. Beispielsweise sollte die DG ECHO folgende Maßnahmen in Betracht ziehen:
 - a) Weiterhin Standardbetriebsverfahren und Verwaltungsvereinbarungen mit vorhandenen und neuen Stakeholdern und für die logistischen Knotenpunkte entwickeln / regelmäßig prüfen.
 - b) Die Initiative ERCC 2.0 weiterentwickeln, damit sie der sektorübergreifende Krisenknotenpunkt der Kommission für gemeinsame Lageerkennung, Frühwarnung, Vorausplanung, Informationsaustausch und betriebliche Koordination werden kann, was auch zivile und militärische Stakeholder umfasst. Dies sollte so weit wie möglich in enger Zusammenarbeit mit anderen Krisenmanagement-Instrumenten auf EU-Ebene geschehen, einschließlich der in der Entwicklung befindlichen Instrumente (z. B. das Binnenmarkt-Notfallinstrument);

1. Die Europäische Kommission sollte die sektorübergreifende Kooperation zur Katastrophenvorsorge, -bereitschaft und -reaktion stärken

- c) Den regulären Einsatz von Verbindungsbeamten von anderen DGs der Kommission bei der DG ECHO anregen;
- d) Thematische, kommissionsservice-übergreifende Versammlungen einführen, um das Verständnis der Arbeit in anderen EU-Diensten zu verstärken und Abläufe zu straffen. Dies würde auch die Katastrophenschutz- und breiteren Krisenmanagement-Aktivitäten von Akteuren in der EU enger verknüpfen und damit das Risiko einer Fragmentierung und Verdoppelung der Notfall- und Krisenmanagementstrukturen verringern;
- Sich weiterhin bemühen, das UCPM über den Katastrophenschutz hinaus unter nationalen Behörden bekannt zu machen (z. B. Listen mit Kontaktstellen für den nicht-zivilen Katastrophenschutz, Protokolle über die Schritte und Akteure, die an den Aktivierungen des UCPM beteiligt waren, Ad-hoc-Sitzungen über Änderungen am Mechanismus);
- Etablieren einer strukturellen Zusammenarbeit mit dem privaten Sektor, um die nationalen Aktivitäten zu ergänzen und zu fördern (z. B. dedizierter Workshop über einen Rahmen für die Zusammenarbeit mit dem privaten Sektor, was zu einheitlich aktualisierten Standardbetriebsverfahren führen würde).

2. Die DG ECHO sollte die Verfahren und administrativen Anforderungen vereinfachen, um die Flexibilität zu verbessern und den Verwaltungsaufwand zu verringern.

Operationelle Empfehlungen

- Die Verfahren und administrativen Anforderungen für die Aktivierung des UCPM vereinfachen, insbesondere den Transport und die Logistik von ECPP-Einsätzen, rescEU-Kapazitäten und Sachleistungen (z. B. automatisierte Formulare, wahlweise ein „beschleunigtes Verfahren“ für große, komplexe und grenzübergreifende Notfälle, wobei ein Transportmodul in CECIS 2.0 integriert werden wollte, um die Nachfolge für die Kofinanzierung zu erleichtern);
- In Betracht ziehen, die Kofinanzierungsrate für den Transport und die Operation von ECPP-Einsätzen (einschließlich einer Machbarkeitsstudie über die potenziellen (finanziellen) Auswirkungen) auf 100 % zu erhöhen.

3. Die Europäische Kommission sollte die Überwachungssysteme und Instrumente zum Nachverfolgen/Bewerten der Performance des UCPM in den Bereichen Vorsorge, Bereitschaft und Reaktion verbessern

Operationelle Empfehlungen

- Eine UCPM-übergreifende Überwachungs- und Bewertungsrichtlinie erarbeiten, um ein mehrjähriges Rahmenwerk zu erstellen, mit dem die Performance und Zielerreichung aller UCPM-Aktivitäten gemessen werden können (Überwachungs- und Bewertungsrahmen, Interventionslogik, Indikatorrahmen, Überwachungs- und Bewertungsplan);

3. Die Europäische Kommission sollte die Überwachungssysteme und Instrumente zum Nachverfolgen/Bewerten der Performance des UCPM in den Bereichen Vorsorge, Bereitschaft und Reaktion verbessern

- Die Berichterstattung über den Haushalt pro Aktivität und Säule verbessern als Grundlage für die Entscheidungsfindung und Mittelzuweisung (siehe Empfehlung Nr. 4);
- Die normalen MS Office-Tools mit innovativeren und maßgeschneiderten IT- und Informationsmanagementsystemen ersetzen, um Daten über die Aktivitäten des UCPM zu sammeln und zu überwachen. Ein derartiges System sollte für die gemeinsame Überwachung von Kapazitäten des ECP und rescEU, das gemeinsame Verfolgen von Sachleistungen, gemeinsame Expertendatenbanken, und das Nachverfolgen der Umsetzung von bisherigen Erkenntnissen und Empfehlungen sorgen.

4. Die Europäische Kommission sollte die Finanzierungsinstrumente des UCPM straffen und stärken, um für eine gemeinsame europäische Herangehensweise an das Krisenmanagement zu sorgen

Operationelle Empfehlungen

- Die Verbindungen zwischen den Haushaltsinstrumenten der EU stärken, um einen strafferen Ansatz einzuführen und die Ressourcenbelastung zu verringern (z. B. sektorenübergreifende Aktivitäten wie das Risiko-Mapping);
- Einrichtung eines Mechanismus zur Gewährleistung von Schutzmaßnahmen in allen Phasen des Katastrophenrisikomanagements bei Notfällen von beispiellosem Ausmaß;
- Diskussionen über die allgemeine Finanzierung des UCPM angesichts der sich weiterentwickelnden Katastrophenrisikolandschaft führen (z. B. die Angemessenheit der allgemeinen Finanzierung, und Möglichkeiten, um die Budgets für Vorsorge und Bereitschaft zweckzubinden);
- Etablieren einer nachhaltigen Finanzierung für die Entwicklung und Aufrechterhaltung der rescEU-Kapazität.

5. Die Europäische Kommission sollte die weitere Integration von evidenzbasiertem Wissen (z. B. wissenschaftliche Erkenntnisse) und technologische Innovationen in den Katastrophenschutz-Aktivitäten fördern

Operationelle Empfehlungen

- Strukturelle Verbindungen zwischen der strategischen Antizipation und Zukunftsforschung des UCPM und der Kapazitätsentwicklung durch rescEU und ECPP etablieren;
- Sicherstellen, dass wissenschaftliche Kompetenz (auch diejenige, die aus den Aktivitäten des UCPM entstand) in die Umsetzung der Aktivitäten des UCPM einfließt (z. B. die Nutzung des Knowledge Network; Implementierung von ERCC 2.0 durch die Stärkung der antizipativen Kapazität des ERCC zu stärken);

5. Die Europäische Kommission sollte die weitere Integration von evidenzbasiertem Wissen (z. B. wissenschaftliche Erkenntnisse) und technologische Innovationen in den Katastrophenschutz-Aktivitäten fördern

- Die Verbesserung des Frühwarnsystems weiter unterstützen (z. B. weitere Gefahren abdecken, zusätzliche Maßnahmen zur Qualitätskontrolle und innovative Datenquellen einführen), um dafür zu sorgen, dass die Informationen in den Frühwarnsystemen auf EU- und nationaler Ebene weniger fragmentiert sind;
- Initiativen fördern, um die Qualitätssicherung der zusammenfassenden Berichte über das Katastrophenrisiko-Management zu unterstützen, was zu einer verbesserten Vergleichbarkeit des Übersichtsdokuments über das Katastrophenrisiko in der EU führen würde;
- Die Identifizierung neuer technologischer Innovationen ermöglichen und die Zusammenarbeit mit der Industrie fördern;
- Innovative Methodologien/Werkzeuge im Rahmen des Trainings- und Übungsprogramms einführen.

6. Die Europäische Kommission sollte die Rolle des UCPM in Drittländern und bei Katastrophen klären, die normalerweise nicht unter den Katastrophenschutz fallen

Operationelle Empfehlungen

- Standardbetriebsverfahren für Situationen entwickeln, in denen das UCPM mit gleichzeitigen Hilfsanfragen konfrontiert ist, damit Drittländer mit der Funktionsweise und Kapazität des Mechanismus vertraut sind;
- Die Machbarkeit, Auswirkungen und Vorteile einer Überarbeitung des UCPM-Beschlusses evaluieren, um sein Mandat und Ressourcen in Anbetracht des zunehmend sektorenübergreifenden Wesens des Katastrophenschutzes auszuweiten, um das ERCC zu einem Krisenknotenpunkt innerhalb und außerhalb der EU zu entwickeln. Die Studie sollte die Wechselwirkung des UCPM mit anderen Krisenmanagementinstrumenten auf EU-Ebene sowie seine Rolle als internationaler Akteur klären.

7. Die DG ECHO sollte die Kohärenz zwischen dem UCPM und humanitärer Hilfe stärken und ungenutzte Synergien ausschöpfen

Operationelle Empfehlungen

- Kenntnis und Verständnis der Rollen, Missionen und Verantwortungsbereiche von Akteuren im Bereich der humanitären Hilfe in der Katastrophenschutzgemeinschaft innerhalb der Bereitschaftsaktivitäten des UCPM erhöhen. Dies könnte anhand von zusätzlichen Schulungsmodulen, vermehrten gemeinsamen Schulungen, maßgeschneiderten Workshops und anhand des EoE-Programms erfolgen.

8. Die Europäische Kommission sollte das Bewusstsein für das UCPM und den Katastrophenschutz bei den relevanten Stakeholdern und der Öffentlichkeit stärken

Operationelle Empfehlungen

- Bei Veranstaltungen des UCPM (z. B. Training, Übungen, DRMKC-Konferenzen) eine systematische Aufklärung über das Knowledge Network und andere, weniger bekannte Aktivitäten des UCPM fördern;
 - Die Kommunikation über Veränderungen und Initiativen des UCPM an Mitgliedsstaaten und teilnehmende Länder verbessern;
 - Aktivitäten zur öffentlichen Aufklärung über die UCPM-Aktivitäten und den Katastrophenschutz stärken (z. B. eine dedizierte Kommunikationsstrategie, soziale Medien);
 - Informationen über das UCPM für wichtige Stakeholder an einem einzigen Zugriffspunkt konsolidieren, z. B. der Online-Plattform des Knowledge Network.
-

1 INTRODUCTION

This is the Revised Final Report of the independent interim evaluation commissioned by the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) to support its interim evaluation of the implementation and performance of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). The interim evaluation was carried out by ICF on behalf of the European Commission between September 2022 and September 2023.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Section 1** presents the objectives and scope of the evaluation;
- **Section 2** provides an overview of the background to the interim evaluation, focusing on the policy and legal context and presenting the baseline of the implementation of the Directive. It also includes the theory of change (ToC) of the Decision;
- **Section 3** presents the baseline analysis;
- **Section 4** includes the methodological approach, its main limitations and mitigation measures;
- **Section 5** presents the findings for each evaluation criterion. Each has been divided into two or more sub-sections that answer one or more evaluation questions;
- **Section 6** presents the main conclusions of the interim evaluation and suggests recommendations for the Commission.

The main report is supported by several annexes (sent in a separate document):

- **Annex 1:** List of acronyms;
- **Annex 2:** Glossary of terms;
- **Annex 3:** Revised evaluation framework;
- **Annex 4:** List of documents reviewed;
- **Annex 5:** Overview of stakeholders consulted;
- **Annex 6:** Approach to cost-benefit analysis (CBA);
- **Annex 7:** Case studies;
- **Annex 8:** Example indicator framework;
- **Annex 9:** Stakeholder Synopsis Report;
- **Annex 10:** Terms of reference.

1.1 *Objectives and scope of the interim evaluation*

This independent evaluation was commissioned by the European Commission's DG ECHO to support its interim evaluation of the implementation and performance of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). The study findings will feed into the staff working document prepared by the Commission to present to the European Parliament and the Council by 31 December 2023, in line with Article 34 of the Decision. This independent evaluation, which covers the period from January 2017 to December 2022, will support the Commission to:

- Understand progress in implementing the Decision, including any gaps or shortcomings;
- Understand the extent to which the Decision is achieving its objectives and the main quantitative and qualitative impacts;
- Improve the implementation of existing legislative provisions;
- Provide inputs for possible proposal(s) to amend the Decision or its implementing acts;
- Inform, where appropriate, the review of the financial breakdown of the UCPM as set out by Article 19(5) of the Decision, and identify potential room for improvement in the UCPM budget implementation.

In line with the Better Regulation Guidelines (BRG), this interim evaluation assesses the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, and EU added value of the UCPM across its three pillars (prevention, preparedness, response) and cross-pillar/horizontal activities. It also identifies success factors, good practices and lessons from the implementation of the Decision. The study evaluates actions carried out under the UCPM framework spanning prevention, preparedness, and response to natural and man-made disasters. While acknowledging that the terms natural and man-made disasters do not fully encompass the multifaceted nature of disasters (namely, the complex interactions between human activities, environmental conditions, and socio-political factors)⁹⁹, the evaluation uses these terms, in line with the Decision and with Article 196 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

As an interim evaluation, this study reflects the fact some UCPM elements and components were introduced at different times, and some of the expected activities, outputs, results and impacts of the Decision have yet to materialise (e.g. Article 6(4) of the Decision only entered into effect in mid-2021). Specific attention is paid to new Participating States and the extent to which the UCPM can effectively expand. The interim evaluation also pays particular attention to the UCPM's capacity to intervene in conflict-affected countries, in particular through the case study on the Ukrainian crisis, thus shedding light on the consequences of this type of activation.

The interim evaluation has a strong summative focus, but, as an interim evaluation, also includes some formative assessment. It identifies some aspects of the UCPM that may require direct adjustment in order to improve its functioning, as well as wider strategic orientations, including consideration on whether further legislative changes are warranted. It is framed by the evaluation questions agreed with the Commission in the evaluation framework. It also gathers data on the sustainability of the UCPM budget and how today's investments might be managed in the future, considering potential changes in the financial frameworks.

Figure 1. Scope of the interim evaluation

GEOGRAPHICAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 27/8* EU Member States; > 8** UCPM Participating States; > 19 eligible third countries; > Other third countries involved in UCPM activities; 	TEMPORAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > All activities since the Interim evaluation of the UCPM 2014–2016 and until the end of the evaluation period, i.e. January 2017– December 2022 <p><i>The study may review documents published before 2017 and after December 2022 where relevant.</i></p>	LEGAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Decision No 1313/2013/EU; Decision 2014/762/EU; Regulation (EU) 2016/369; Regulation (EU) 2018/1475; Decision (EU) 2019/420; Decision (EU) 2019/1310; Decision (EU) 2020/547; Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521; Regulation (EU) 2021/836; Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1956; Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/706
STAKEHOLDERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > DG ECHO officials; > Relevant European Commission DGs (e.g. DG CLIMA, DG HOME) and EU Agencies; > International partners; > National/regional civil protection/maritime authorities (and where applicable other relevant sectors); > Trainers and national training coordinators; > Experts participating in UCPM activities (e.g. Knowledge Network, deployed through ECPP, PPP project leads) > Professional organisations involved in the running of the Mechanism > Other relevant initiatives and actors in the field of civil protection (e.g. PPRD South III, private sector non-traditional civil protection actors) 	ACTIVITIES <p>Main activities of the UCPM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Prevention activities (e.g. compilation and dissemination of information on disaster risks) > Preparedness activities (e.g. ERCC, rescEU) > Response activities (e.g. delivery of equipment and deployment of experts) > Horizontal activities (e.g. advisory mission) 	THEMATIC <p>Natural disaster, e.g.: Geological risks (earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, etc) Hydro-meteorological and climate risks (extreme heat and drought, forest fires, floods, windstorms, etc.)</p> <p>Man-made disasters: Malicious disasters (e.g. cyber-attack, CBRN attacks) Non-malicious disasters (e.g. marine pollution) Other disasters (e.g. displacement of persons).</p>

Notes: *United Kingdom (UK) was eligible as an EU Member State until 2020 (inclusive); ** Bosnia and Herzegovina (September 2022) and Albania (November 2022) recently joined the UCPM; Ukraine joined the UCPM in April 2023, outside the scope of the interim evaluation.

⁹⁹ At international level, there is a growing trend to change how disasters are described. For example, the expression 'natural disasters' is criticised for overlooking human influence and the socio-political context of events (e.g. UNDRR; Mizutori, M., *Time to say goodbye to 'natural' disasters*, 2020, <https://www.preventionweb.net/blog/time-say-goodbye-natural-disasters>).

2 BACKGROUND TO THE INTERIM EVALUATION






2.1 Overview of the UCPM

This section provides an overview of the UCPM's general and specific objectives, the evolution of the UCPM's legal framework, its main activities, and budget.

2.1.1 UCPM objectives

The TFEU gives the EU a guiding role in the field of civil protection, mandating it to 'encourage cooperation between Member States in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing and protecting against natural or man-made disasters'^{10,11}: the UCPM is at the core of that work. Established in 2001¹², it provides a framework for stronger cooperation across the EU's 27 Member States and Participating States¹³ in the field of civil protection to improve prevention, preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters¹⁴. Table 1 presents the general and specific objectives of the UCPM.

Table 1. General and specific objectives of the UCPM

UCPM objectives		Relevant pillar(s)
General	Specific	
Strengthen the cooperation between Member and participating States to facilitate coordination in the field of civil protection in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters	Achieve a high level of protection against disasters by preventing or reducing their potential effects, by fostering a culture of prevention and by improving cooperation between the civil protection and other relevant services	
	Enhance preparedness at national and Union level to respond to disasters;	
	Facilitate rapid and efficient response in the event of disasters or imminent disasters	
Promote solidarity between the Member and Participating States through practical cooperation and coordination , without prejudice to the Member States' primary responsibility to protect people,	Increase public awareness and preparedness for disasters	
	Increase the availability and use of (scientific) ¹⁵ knowledge on disasters ¹⁶	

¹⁰ The term 'man-made disasters' is now largely replaced by 'human-induced disasters'; however, this report uses 'man-made disasters' for consistency and alignment with relevant legislation.

¹¹ Article 196(1) TFEU.




¹² Council Decision of 23 October 2001 establishing a Community mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions, OJ L 297, 15/11/2001, P. 0007-0011.

¹³ As of June 2023, the UCPM has nine Participating States: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Ukraine and Türkiye. Ukraine joined the UCPM in April 2023 (outside the scope of this evaluation).

¹⁴ Article 1(2) Decision No 1313/2013/EU provides that the protection to be ensured by the UCPM shall 'cover primarily people, but also the environment and property, including cultural heritage, against all kinds of natural and man-made disasters, including the consequences of acts of terrorism, technological, radiological or environmental disasters, marine pollution, hydrogeological instability and acute health emergencies, occurring inside or outside the Union'.

¹⁵ While the Decision refers to 'scientific knowledge on disasters', the report refers to the entire knowledge base relevant for the management of disasters and is accordingly noted as '(scientific) knowledge' for clarity.

¹⁶ The focus is on this pillar, as the most relevant, with cross-cutting considerations of the availability of scientific knowledge in conclusions.

the environment, and property, including cultural heritage	Step up cooperation and coordination activities at cross-border level and between Member States prone to the same types of disasters	  
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Source: Decision No 1313/2013/EU, UCPM 2022 programme statement, Terms of Reference.

Notes: Key to symbols for the pillars:



The UCPM is a complex instrument that supports Member and Participating States in civil protection, intervening in all phases of the disaster risk management cycle (prevention, preparedness, response). Through its external dimension, the UCPM strengthens the EU as a global actor, expanding solidarity beyond EU borders¹⁷.

2.2 Evolution of the UCPM legal framework

In 2009, with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, civil protection became a self-standing policy area with its own legal basis: Article 196(1) of the TFEU provides that the Union ‘shall encourage cooperation between Member States in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing and protecting against natural or man-made disaster’.

In civil protection, the main responsibility for protecting citizens and the environment lies with the Member States, while the EU coordinates, supports and complements national actions on risk prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. Provided with this new legal basis, Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a UCPM was adopted, repealing the previous Council Decision.

During the evaluation period (2017-2022), the UCPM was strengthened through several legislative and operational changes, in particular amendments adopted in 2018, 2019 and 2021 (see Figure 2). Triggers for these changes were the need to increase capacity and interlinkages in 2017, and to better respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

¹⁷ European Commission, ‘UCPM Programme Statement. Heading 2: Resilience and values’, 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/about_the_european_commission/eu_budget/ps_db2023_ucpm_h2.pdf

Figure 2. Main legislative changes to the UCPM, 2017-2022

Noteworthy legislative acts from before the evaluation temporal scope (before 2017)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 2001/792/EC Council Decision establishing a Community mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions > Art. 196 TFEU 'Civil Protection' > Decision (EU) 1313/2013 ('UCPM Decision'). > Commission Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU 	
Legislative developments throughout evaluation temporal scope (2017-2022)	
Key:	> UCPM > RescEU > Other
2018	> Integration of European Medical Corps in the Voluntary Resource pool (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/142).
2019	> Redefinition of the European Civil Protection Pool Decision (EU) 2019/420 and implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1310). > Establishment and defining capacities of the rescEU reserve pool (Decision EU/ 2019/420 and Commission Implementing Decisions (EU) 2019/570, 2019/1310, 2019/1930).
2020	> Reinforcement of rescEU's medical stockpiling capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/414) > Definition of rescEU capacities established to respond to low probability risks with a high impact (Definition of the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/452) > Mobilisation of the Contingency Margin in 2020 to provide emergency assistance to Member States and further reinforce the UCPM/rescEU in response to the COVID-19 outbreak (Decision (EU) 2020/547)
2021	> Reinforcement of the UCPM Decision , including the following main changes: revising rescEU capacities, development of Union Resilience Goals and a more flexible UCPM budget structure (Regulation (EU) 2021/836) > Definition of rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents (Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/88) > Definition of stockpiling rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1886) > Establishment and organisation of the Knowledge Network (Implementing Decision 2021/1956)
2022	> Reinforcement of rescEU shelter capacities and the modification of quality requirements for Emergency Medical Teams Type 3 capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/288) > Reinforcement of rescEU transport and logistics capacities , e.g. also to respond to low probability high impact disasters (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/461) > Definition of rescEU mobile laboratory capacities and rescEU CBRN detection, sampling, identification and monitoring capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/465) > Definition of rescEU emergency energy supply capacities (Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/1198) > Establishment of criteria and procedures for recognising long-standing commitment and extraordinary contributions to the UCPM (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/706)

Source: ICF elaboration

In 2017, the long and severe forest fires across several European countries (including Portugal, Spain, Italy, Croatia and France) highlighted the need to strengthen the UCPM. Despite very significant efforts from Member and Participating States and the coordination efforts by the European Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), not all requests for assistance (RfA) could be met¹⁸. Decision (EU) 2019/420 of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU was subsequently adopted in order to¹⁹:

- Strengthen Union response capacity by creating a common European reserve of resources, 'rescEU';
- Further develop mutual assistance, consisting of pre-committed national capacities offered by countries participating in the European Civil Protection Pool (ECP) by setting higher or new EU co-financing (in UCPM deployments);

¹⁸ European Commission DG ECHO (2017) Annual Report.

¹⁹ European Parliament (2022) Union Civil Protection Mechanism. Legislative Train. Available here: [08 2022 | A Stronger Europe in the World | Union Civil Protection Mechanism 2021-2027 \(europa.eu\)](#)

- Improve prevention and preparedness to enhance Member States' disaster risk management;
- Create a Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network (Knowledge Network).

Decision 2019/420 aimed to address the limitations and issues identified by the 2017 interim evaluation²⁰ by introducing new reporting provisions and revising the voluntary pool (changing its name to the ECPP and increasing its financing). The ECPP brings together resources from Member and Participating States, such as forest fire fighting, water purification, CBRN and other rescue or medical teams, ready for deployment to a disaster zone at short notice. Other important changes introduced by Decision 2019/420 (in addition to those in Figure 2) included a substantial amendment to Article 6 (risk management)²¹. Decision 2019/420 introduced new reporting obligations for Member States on risks with a cross-border impact (para 1), a new specific consultation mechanism to enhance appropriate prevention and preparedness planning among Member States prone to similar types of disasters (para 2), and new rules for when a Member State frequently requests the same type of assistance through the UCPM for the same type of disaster (para 4). Article 6(3) was introduced, requiring the Commission and Member States to develop reporting guidelines for the submission of the summary referred in para 1 (d)²². However, the UCPM still mainly relied on Member States' resources.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly tested the UCPM's ability to respond to a large-scale, high-impact, low-probability (Hi-Lo) disaster happening simultaneously across several Member and Participating States. On 2 June 2020, the Commission tabled a proposal to reinforce the UCPM and the crisis management system, resulting in the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2021/836 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU. That revision:

- Enhanced the analytical, monitoring, and anticipatory capabilities of the ERCC;
- Reinforced the rescEU reserve by granting the Commission the possibility to directly procure elements;
- Introduced Union Disaster Resilience Goals to enhance the resilience of the Union and Member States by establishing baseline objectives to steer prevention and preparedness action in the area of civil protection. The Goals are closely linked to scenario building, assessing the risks, capability gaps and elements to close those gaps;
- Established a more flexible budget structure (e.g. carry-over for response activities) to increase UCPM efficiency;
- Significantly developed scenario-building and disaster management planning. The revised Article 10 provides that planning includes scenario-building at Union level for disaster prevention, preparedness, and response, taking into account the work on the Union Disaster Resilience Goals and by the Knowledge Network, and based on additional data sources, including the overview of risk²³.

In recent years, the Commission has adopted several implementing measures to shape the UCPM legal framework. Commission Implementing Decision 2021/1956 established the Knowledge Network, which strengthens the UCPM by increasing cooperation, coordination, skills, and expertise in Member and Participating States (see next section). Eleven rescEU implementing acts have been

²⁰ European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the UCPM 2014-2016, 2017*, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2017-06/ucpm_-_opc_report_0.pdf

²¹ Decision (EU) 2019/ 420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313 / 2013/ EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019D0420>

²² In 2019, the Commission adopted reporting guidelines on disaster risk management for the submission of summaries of risk assessments and risk management capabilities in order to guide Member States in their reporting obligations (European Commission, *Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management*, Article 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU, 2019).

²³ Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2021.185.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ:L:2021:185:TOC

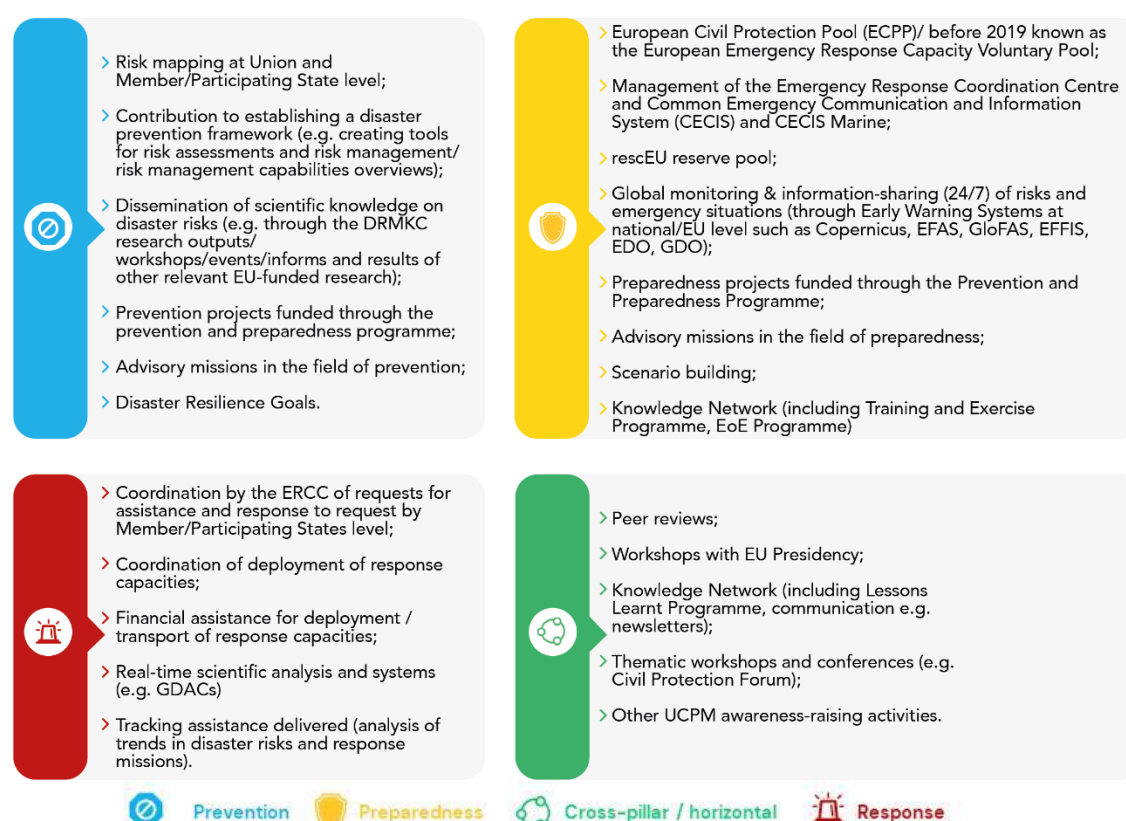
adopted, reflecting the regular analysis of identified and emerging risks, as well as capacity and gaps at Union level, which revealed the need to support civil protection activities by providing medical stockpiling, shelter capacity, and CBRN detection capability.

Although it falls outside the UCPM legal framework, the European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA) was established in 2021 to strengthen health security coordination within the EU during preparedness and crisis response times. HERA was set up to strengthen the Union's ability to prevent, detect, and rapidly respond to cross-border health emergencies by ensuring the development, manufacturing, procurement, stockpiling and equitable distribution of key medical counter-measures²⁴.

2.2.1 UCPM activities and functioning

The UCPM's three strands of activities cover the main phases of the disaster management cycle – prevention, preparedness and response (see Figure 3). This section provides an overview of the activities per pillar.

Figure 3. Overview of UCPM activities across pillars



Source: ICF elaboration

2.2.1.1 Prevention

The UCPM's prevention activities include actions to: improve the knowledge base on disaster risks; support and promote national risk assessments; promote the sharing of good practices; establish and regularly update a cross-sectoral overview and map of natural and man-made disaster risks the Union may face; promote the use of various Union funds which may support sustainable disaster

²⁴ Commission Decision of 16 September 2021 establishing the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (2021/C 393 I/02); European Commission, *Introducing HERA, the European Health Emergency preparedness and Response Authority, the next step towards completing the European Health Union*, 2021.

prevention; and highlight the importance of risk prevention through awareness-raising, public information and education.

Decision No 1313/2013/EU requires Member States to develop **risk assessments** (at national or appropriate sub-national level) and share a summary with the Commission, focusing on key risks (i.e. DRM Summary Reports). The 2019 revision of Decision No 1313/2013/EU introduced additional reporting obligations for Member and Participating States. They are now required to report the prevention and preparedness measures taken to address risks with a cross-border impact, as well as low probability risks with a high impact²⁵. Where a country frequently requests the same type of assistance through the UCPM for the same type of disaster, the Commission may request additional information on specific prevention and preparedness measures and, where appropriate, propose the deployment of an expert team or recommend steps to strengthen the level of prevention and preparedness in the Member State concerned (see Box 1).

Building on nationally assessed disaster risks and taking a coherent approach across different policy areas that may address or affect disaster prevention, Decision No 1313/2013 (Article 5(1)(c)) requires the Commission to prepare an **EU-level overview of the natural and man-made disaster risks**²⁶. During the period covered by this evaluation, such cross-sectoral overviews were issued in 2017 and 2020²⁷.

Box 1. DRM Summary Reports and risk management capability

Regular assessments of disaster risks, capability, and sharing risk information at EU level are crucial elements of the disaster risk management work under the UCPM. Today, National Risk Assessments are established practice in all Member States, typically embedded in their national legislative or policy frameworks. DRM Summary Reports differ in the types of risks covered: some focus on natural hazards, others include technological accidents, while others cover different types of threats, including social unrest or even military threat. The UCPM legislation is not prescriptive, but, rather, recommends taking an all-hazards approach, in line with other relevant international frameworks (e.g. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/G20 framework on disaster risk assessment and risk finance). Recent trends in DRM Summary Reports reflect a growing recognition that risks are interdependent and characterised by a high degree of complexity, with an associated multi-risk assessment/analysis.

Following the 2019 revision, the Commission adopted reporting guidelines on disaster risk management for the submission of summaries of risk assessments and risk management capabilities to guide Member States in their reporting obligations²⁸. These guidelines are non-binding and are designed to help with summarising the relevant aspects of: a) risk assessment (focusing on key risks), b) risk management capability assessment, and c) a description of priority prevention and preparedness measures addressing key risks with cross-border impacts and, where appropriate, low probability risks with a high impact. They are based on scientific research²⁹.

Since 2015, the UCPM and JRC have run the **DRMKC**, a platform for Member States to exchange science and knowledge in a holistic and cross-sectoral way. It goes beyond the strict civil protection

²⁵ Article 6(3) Decision No 1313/2013/EU (consolidated version).

²⁶ European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face*, Staff Working Document, 2020, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/89fcf0fc-edb9-11eb-a71c-01aa75ed71a1>

²⁷ Ibid.; European Commission, Reporting guidelines on disaster risk management, Article 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU, 2019, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2019.428.01.0008.01.ENG&toc=OJ:C:2019:428:TOC

²⁸ European Commission, Reporting guidelines on disaster risk management, Article 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU, 2019, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2019.428.01.0008.01.ENG&toc=OJ:C:2019:428:TOC

²⁹ European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment*, Joint Research Centre (JRC), 2019, https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC114650/jrc114650_nrarecommendations_updatedfinal_online1.pdf

agenda, linking science and knowledge to climate adaptation, international sustainable development, and more. The DRMKC works to anticipate, respond to and support recovery from disasters such as wildfires, droughts and floods. A key initiative is its Risk Data Hub, a database designed to collect risk and loss data from natural and technological hazards³⁰. Its outputs include a video series on the science around different types of hazard and papers, reports and policy briefs on various research domains and policy areas. During the evaluation period, for example, it published two flagship reports as part of a series on 'Science for disaster risk management' (in 2017³¹ and 2020³²), and in 2020³³ it published an analysis of National Risk Assessments. Since the creation of the Knowledge Network, the DRMKC has played a central role in its science pillar activities.

One of the novelties of the 2021 legislative revision was the introduction of **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** in the area of civil protection to support prevention and preparedness actions in the event of disasters that cause, or are capable of causing, multi-country, transboundary effects. The Goals aim to enhance the resilience of the Union and Member States. They will be based on current and future scenarios, including the impacts of climate change on disaster risks, data on past events and cross-sectoral impact analysis, with particular attention paid to vulnerable groups. The Goals are to be established in the form of Commission recommendations, based on close cooperation with Member States. On 8 February 2023, the Commission adopted the first Commission Recommendation on Disaster Resilience Goals, with an accompanying Communication setting out the policy context and proposing flagship initiatives to support the implementation of the Goals (see Figure 4)³⁴.

Figure 4. Union Disaster Resilience Goals

Disaster Resilience Goals



Source: DG ECHO.

³⁰ European Commission, DRMKC Risk Data Hub, JRC, 2023, <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/risk-data-hub/#/>

³¹ European Commission, Science for disaster risk management 2017: knowing better and losing less, JRC, 2017, <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/knowledge/science-for-drm/science-for-disaster-risk-management-2017>

³² European Commission, Science for disaster risk management 2020: acting today, protecting tomorrow', JRC, 2020, <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/knowledge/science-for-drm/science-for-disaster-risk-management-2020>

³³ European Commission, Recommendations for national risk assessment for disaster risk management in EU, JRC, 2020, <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/knowledge/science-for-drm/nra>

³⁴ Commission Recommendation of 8 February 2023 on Union disaster resilience goals 2023/C 56/0, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32023H0215%2801%29&qid=1676531610023>; European Commission, Communication on European Union Disaster Resilience Goals: Acting together to deal with future emergencies, COM/2023/61 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2023%3A61%3AFIN&qid=1675958089171>

2.2.1.2 Preparedness

Preparedness activities represent the majority of the UCPM's work. Chapter III of Decision No 1313/2013/EU (preparedness) covers a number of actions on the part of both the European Commission and Member States.

DG ECHO manages the **ERCC**, which coordinates, monitors and supports (in real-time) the response to emergencies at Union level, working in close contact with national civil protection authorities and relevant Union bodies to promote a cross-sectoral approach to disaster management. The Centre monitors events around the globe 24/7 and ensures rapid deployment of emergency support through its direct link with national civil protection authorities.

The ERCC uses the **Common Emergency Communication and Information System** (CECIS), an online application for the real-time exchange of information and communications with civil protection authorities in Member States. CECIS enables communication and sharing of information between the ERCC and Member States' contact points³⁵. A newer version (CECIS 2.0), with additional functionality and a more user-friendly interface, is in development.

Other important services, including **EWS**, (such as the Geographic Information System and the Copernicus programme for emergency management, climate change, and security, Galileo and GovSatCom) support the activities of the UCPM within and outside the EU. A close partnership with the Commission's JRC facilitates a solid scientific base and collaboration across Member States, e.g. on flood, wildfire and drought monitoring and early warning.

Decision No 1313/2013/EU provides that Member States shall, on a voluntary basis, develop modules, response capacity and experts within their competent services (particularly civil protection or other emergency services), which could be made available for intervention upon request through the UCPM. Modules comprise Member and Participating States' resources and can be dispatched at very short notice following a request for assistance through the ERCC³⁶.

The Decision regulates the European Civil Protection Pool (ECP) (previously named European Emergency Response Capacity), which consists of a pool of voluntary pre-committed response capacities of Member and Participating States and includes modules, other response capacity, and categories of experts. These capacities cover a wide range of services, such as urban search and rescue (USAR) teams, medical treatment, water purification modules, or forest firefighting. Resources are available for immediate deployment worldwide, following a request for assistance through the ERCC. All of these response capacities are certified before being registered in CECIS' designated section for ECP (as per Article 6(4) Implementing Decision No 2014/762/EU) and deployed under the UCPM. DG ECHO awards annual adaptation grants to support this process by co-funding the upgrade or repair of response capacity. Certification involves the participation of emergency teams in disaster simulation exercises to test their procedures with peers, ensuring high operational standards during international deployment. The certification of resources in the ECP generally follows a three-step process: consultative visit, table-top exercise, and field exercise³⁷. As of

³⁵ Other general preparedness actions undertaken by the Commission (DG ECHO) include working with Member States to develop transnational detection and EWS, establishing and managing the capability to mobilise and dispatch expert teams, and maintaining a network of trained experts who can be available at short notice to assist the ERCC in monitoring information and facilitating coordination. (see Article 8 Decision No 1313/2013 (consolidated version)).

³⁶ Modules shall also satisfy a number of additional conditions. For instance, they must be interoperable and be able to cooperate with other Union bodies and/or international institutions, particularly the UN (see Article 9(2) Decision No 1313/2013 (consolidated version)). Other Member States' actions include identifying experts, providing other response capacity, and designating contact points (see Article 9 Decision No 1313/2013 (consolidated version)).

³⁷ European Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) and USAR teams follow World Health Organization (WHO) and INSARAG classification methodology; European Commission, Guidelines on certification and registration of response capacities in the European Civil Protection Pool, 2019, [https://erccportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/DesktopModules/ResponseCapacity/Documents/Certification Guidelines - October 2019.pdf](https://erccportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/DesktopModules/ResponseCapacity/Documents/Certification%20Guidelines%20-%20October%202019.pdf); Commission Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU; UN INSARAG, Preparedness and response: background of INSARAG external classification (IEC), n.d., <https://www.insarag.org/iec/background-of-insarag-external-classification-iec/>

1 January 2023, there were 123 committed/offered ECPP capacities, out of which the number of registered, fully fledged, Pool capacities is 85.³⁸

The 2019 revision introduced a new reserve of European response capacities, '**rescEU**'³⁹ (see Box 2).

Box 2. rescEU

rescEU is designed to be an additional safety net, to be mobilised in worst-case disaster scenarios when emergency assistance from the Pool or voluntary contributions from Member States cannot be mobilised or are insufficient. It aims to enhance the protection of citizens from disasters and the management of emerging risks, strengthening European preparedness for disasters. Regulation (EU) 2021/836 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU strengthened this initiative, allowing the Commission to directly acquire, rent, lease and stockpile identified rescEU capacities. As a European reserve of capacities, rescEU resources include a fleet of firefighting aeroplanes and helicopters, medical evacuation aeroplanes, and a stockpile of medical equipment and field hospitals for use in health emergencies. In addition, the rescEU reserve includes mobile shelters for those displaced and is developing a reserve to respond to CBRN (detection, sampling, identification and monitoring, CBRN decontamination capacity, CBRN strategic stockpiles), an emergency energy supply capacity, as well as transport and logistics capacities.

rescEU involves two elements:

- **rescEU proper** (100% co-financing), where a general agreement covers the geographical distribution and type/number of capacities to be procured. Development costs are fully financed for capacities addressing Hi-Lo risks⁴⁰. Here the Commission signs single grant agreements with Member States to procure capacity;
- **rescEU transition** (75% co-financing), a provisional arrangement (valid until 1 January 2025) to ensure that the maximum number of existing aerial firefighting capacities would be available from summer 2019 (and every summer thereafter) to bridge the gap until additional capacity can be purchased on the market.

rescEU capacities are available for response operations under the UCPM following a request for assistance. The decision on their deployment is taken by the Commission, in close coordination with the requesting State and the Member State owning, renting, or leading the capacity.

The **Knowledge Network** is another crucial preparedness activity organised by the UCPM. Launched in 2021, the Knowledge Network aggregates, processes and disseminates knowledge and information relevant to the UCPM, bringing together relevant civil protection and disaster management actors, centres of excellence, universities, and researchers. It has introduced a new Science Pillar, coordinated by the DRMKC, and continues the work towards building a shared science-based knowledge base for prevention, preparedness and response policy and practice. The Knowledge Network also incorporates several longstanding elements of the UCPM, such as the EoE Programme (see Figure 3). This Programme provides additional opportunities for the exchange of specialist knowledge and allows civil protection experts from UCPM Member or Participating States (or eligible third countries) to be seconded on short-term exchanges to share experiences and gain in-depth technical skills.

³⁸ As of December 2022, the committed/offered capacities were 124. Germany withdrew its Standing Engineering Capacity (SEC) in January 2023.

³⁹ Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU; European Commission, Civil Protection Performance.

⁴⁰ European Commission, *rescEU: EU that protects. European response to disasters*, n.d., https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/resceu_en.pdf

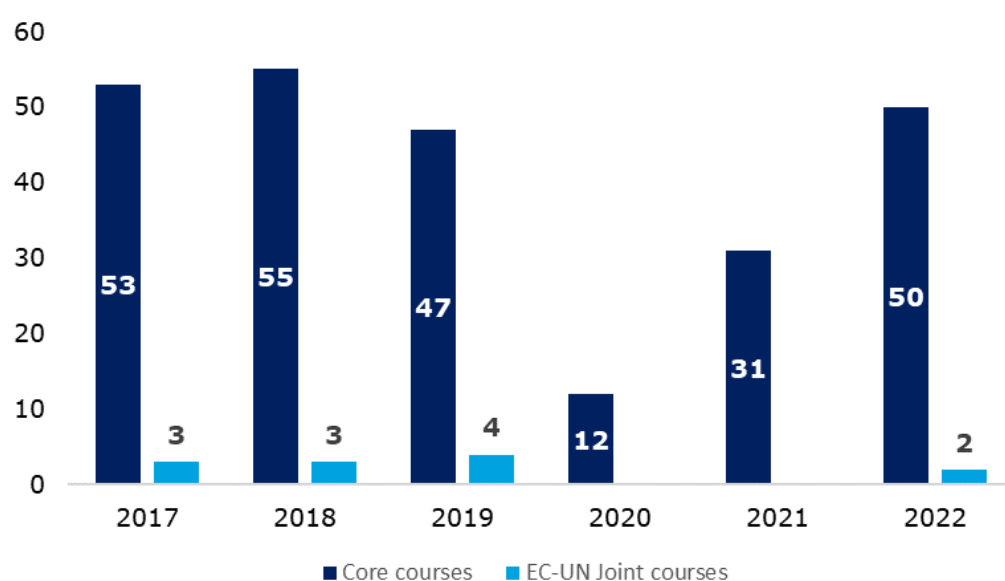
Another longstanding UCPM activity under the Knowledge Network is UCPM training courses and exercises, which will be brought together in the new UCPM Training and Exercises Programme (currently being designed, to be implemented from September 2023)⁴¹:

- Training Programme for civil protection and emergency management personnel supplements the national training offered to experts by their home country to better prepare them for international deployments under the UCPM;
- Civil Protection Exercises, which provide learning and testing opportunities for UCPM intervention teams and experts through exercise scenarios that closely mimic real-life situations faced by disaster response teams. These include field and table-top exercises (EU MODEX), full-scale exercises (FSX), plug-in exercises, and host nation support table-top exercises outside the EU⁴².

The UCPM **Training Programme** is designed for civil protection and emergency management personnel to enhance prevention, preparedness and disaster response by ensuring compatibility and complementarity between the intervention teams and other intervention support, as well as by improving the competence of the experts involved.

The training courses complement the national training provided to experts by their home country or organisation. A total of 248 training courses took place during the evaluation period (see Figure 5), with a further 12 courses run jointly with the UN between 2017 and 2022.

Figure 5. Training courses, 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, DG ECHO internal data.

The **Exercises Programme** offers civil protection exercises that enhance prevention, preparedness and disaster response, as well as improving collaboration between European civil protection authorities and teams. There are several types⁴³:

- EU MODEX exercises, including table-top and field exercises;

⁴¹ Tender specifications - part 2, [https://www.bcgrowthhub.com/storage/3b94c9cf-757a-4ec0-9d7e-15aeaf0d0615/Tender specifications - part 2.pdf](https://www.bcgrowthhub.com/storage/3b94c9cf-757a-4ec0-9d7e-15aeaf0d0615/Tender%20specifications-part%202.pdf)

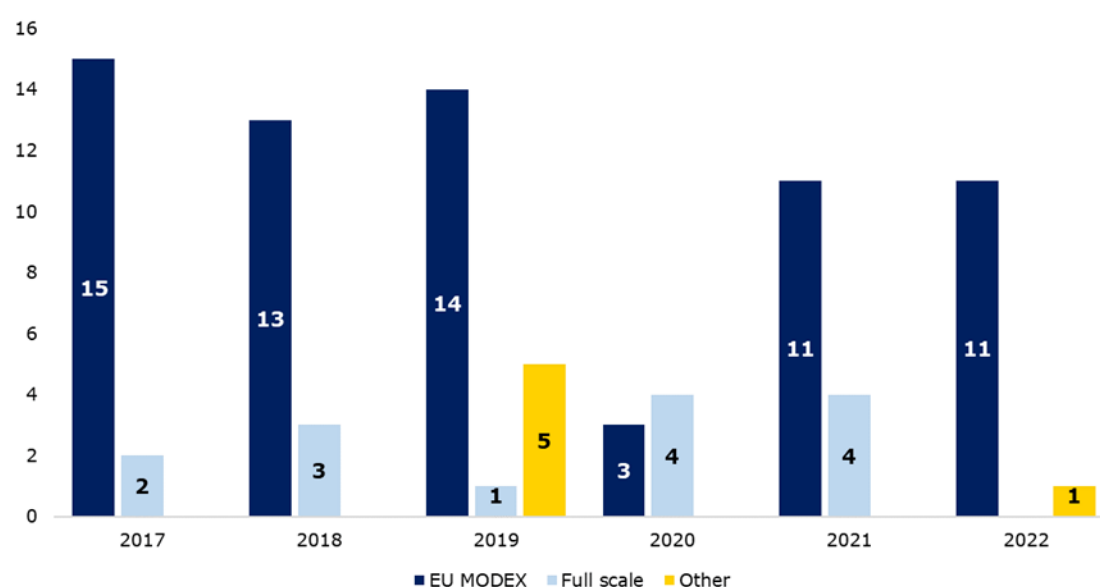
⁴² UCPM Knowledge Network, Civil protection exercises, n.d., <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/disaster-preparedness/civil-protection-exercises#bcl-inpage-item-761>

⁴³ UCPM Knowledge Network, Civil protection exercises, n.d., <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/disaster-preparedness/civil-protection-exercises#bcl-inpage-item-761>

- FSX, including table-top exercises, command post exercises;
- Other exercises, including plug-in exercises, and host nation support table-top exercises outside the EU.

A total of 92 exercises took place throughout the evaluation period (see Figure 6). For the EU MODEX exercises, the number includes digital exercises developed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 6. Exercises, by type, 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, DG ECHO internal data⁴⁴. Notes: For **FSX**, the numbers indicate the number of exercises **financed** per year; number of FSX conducted between 2017 and 2022 is 19.

The new Training and Exercises Programme will bring these two activities under the same umbrella and introduce several innovations. For instance, the training programme will include a deployable expert pathway, comprising the completion of all courses and participation in EU MODEX exercises (first a table-top exercise and then a field exercise).

2.2.1.3 Response

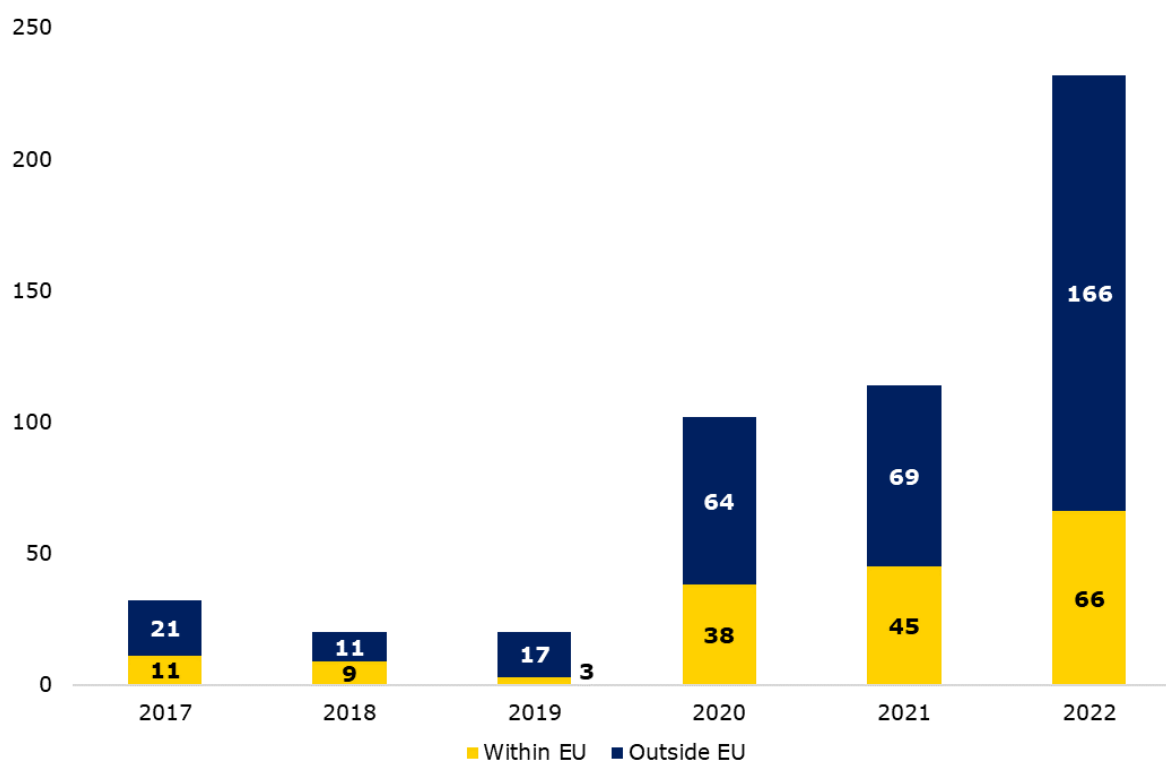
Chapter IV of Decision No 1313/2013/EU regulates UCPM response activities. Following a request for assistance, the ERCC mobilises in-kind assistance, teams, modules and expertise. The request can be made through the ERCC, the UN and its agencies, or an international organisation. The ERCC coordinates the delivery of assistance to disaster-stricken countries, ensures the rapid, efficient and effective deployment of the emergency support, and acts as a coordination hub between Member and Participating States, the affected country, and civil protection and humanitarian experts.

For responding to disasters outside the Union, DG ECHO supports consistency in delivery of assistance through several actions, including maintaining a dialogue with Member and Participating States' contact points, inviting Member and Participating States to deploy specific capacities, facilitating the coordination of the assistance, and liaising with the affected country. The Commission informs the European External Action Service (EEAS) to allow for consistency between the civil protection operation and overall Union relations with the affected country. The UCPM may also be used to provide civil protection support to consular assistance to the citizens of the Union in disasters in third countries. This was particularly important for the repatriation of EU citizens stranded in third

⁴⁴ For the FSX, the number indicates the exercises *financed*, not the actual year the exercise took place. 'Other' exercises include plug-in host nation support and table-top exercises outside the EU.

countries during the COVID-19 outbreak. Non-EU countries account for around two-thirds of UCPM activations⁴⁵, highlighting the importance of the UCPM's external dimension and its international relevance in response activities (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. Overview of total UCPM activations, within and outside the EU, 2017-2022



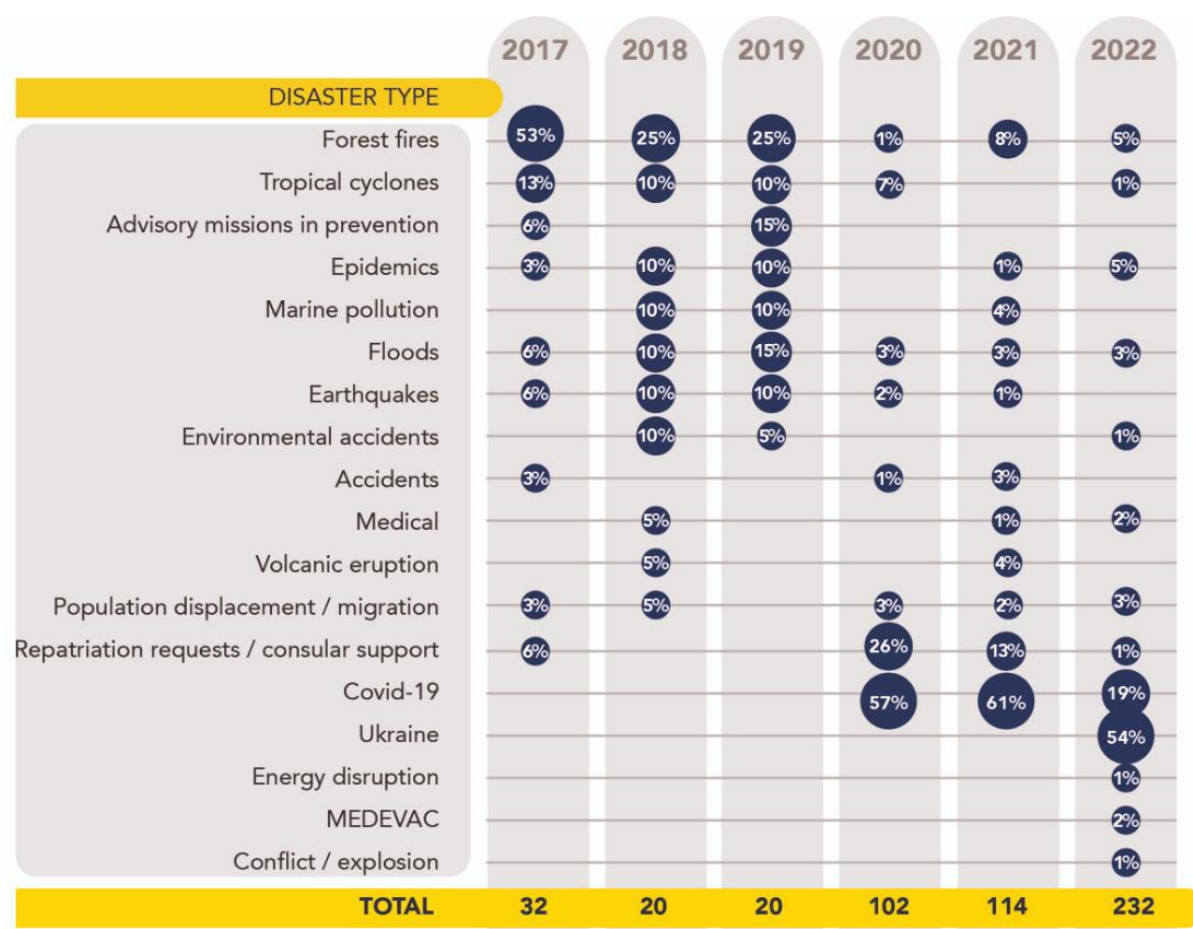
Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of DG ECHO internal data, DG ECHO annual reports, and Lessons Learnt Programme meeting minutes.

Notes: Of the 166 activations outside the EU, 126 were RfA from Ukraine.

The evaluation period saw a significant increase in the number of UCPM activations and evolution of the types of hazards covered (see Figure 8). There was a spike in UCPM activations in 2017 compared to the years before the evaluation period, reflecting the devastating forest fires season that year. Similarly, the unprecedented number of UCPM activations in 2020 and 2021 were caused by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁴⁵ European Commission, Civil protection – performance, n.d., https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/programme-performance-overview/civil-protection-performance_en

Figure 8. UCPM activations, by type, 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Between 2017-2019, natural events represented over 50% of all annual activations. This pattern changed substantially from 2020 following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2020-2021, COVID-19 represented over 50% of activations per year. While the average annual number of natural event activations remained consistent between 2017-2022, they represented less than one-quarter of activations between 2020-2022. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine represented 54% of the activations in 2022.

2.2.14 Horizontal activities across pillars

Through the **Knowledge Network**, the UCPM framework ensures the continuous exchange of knowledge and information involving **all areas of activity** under the UCPM. This is done through a number of actions, including:

- **Knowledge Network Partnerships projects**⁴⁶, which provide opportunities for networking, collaboration and partnership-building among civil protection and disaster risk management actors. The current focus is on developing and supporting thematic communities to underpin the Knowledge Network pillars by producing, exchanging, disseminating, and applying knowledge, good practices, skills, and expertise. Between 2020 and 2022, 19 projects were awarded funding under the Knowledge Network Partnership, with a total budget of around EUR 11 million;

⁴⁶ As of 2023, the Knowledge Network Partnerships projects are incorporated in the Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness (KAPP) call.

- Development of the Knowledge Network **online platform**⁴⁷, which serves as the information and collaboration hub for the civil protection and disaster risk management community in Europe. It is where the community comes together across risk-based themes to share their expertise, learn from others, debate issues of importance, and build new synergies and projects;
- **Lessons Learnt Programme**, which identifies and shares lessons and good practices from UCPM deployments and horizontal, cross-cutting activities to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the UCPM as a whole.

Other activities include the organisation of thematic workshops and conferences, scientific advice and innovation (in collaboration with the DRMKC), as well as partnership facilitation opportunities to bring the civil protection and disaster management communities closer together and foster their collaboration.

DG ECHO manages the **Peer Review Programme** for Member and Participating States, as well as eligible third countries⁴⁸. The main objective is to facilitate the sharing of good practices in disaster risk management through an independent analysis carried out by a team of experts (peers) selected from different UCPM countries. Seven peer reviews were carried out between 2017 and 2022 – three in 2018 (Tunisia, North Macedonia, Cyprus), three in 2019 (Serbia, Portugal, Algeria) and one in 2022 (Romania)^{49,50}. On average, four peers participated in each review, which took an average nine days. DG ECHO developed a Disaster Risk Management Peer Review Assessment Framework (PRAF) in 2020-2021. Member and Participating States can volunteer for fully-fledged peer reviews or thematic peer reviews. The themes covered include risk governance, risk assessment, risk management planning, risk prevention measures, preparedness, emergency response, recovery and lessons learnt. Peer reviews support countries in taking stock of strengths and weaknesses and put forward recommendations to increase effectiveness.⁵¹

DG ECHO organises **advisory missions in the field of prevention and preparedness**, where experts from Member and Participating States are deployed at the request of a national government or international institution. In 2018-2019, advisory missions on forest fire prevention and preparedness took place in Portugal and Georgia. From 2020-2021, COVID-19 prevented advisory missions, with missions resuming in 2022 as part of a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project in Cuba, on strengthening capacities in the event of disasters and focusing on search and rescue (SAR) training within collapsed structures. Bearing in mind the current budgetary allocation of EUR 100,000 annually for such missions, the planning is to have two advisory missions each year (in 2023 two took place, one in Sri Lanka, on responses to marine pollution and one in Ukraine, on medical evacuations).

The UCPM co-finance projects supporting Member and Participating States' efforts in the field of disaster prevention and preparedness (under the **PPP**). Funding opportunities are available through annual calls for proposals, helping civil protection authorities and other relevant actors to develop actions for disaster risk management. The 2021-2025 multiannual work programme groups them under the Disaster Resilience Goals grants, containing two specific actions for grants:::

- **Action 2.1.1** Pan-European prevention and preparedness projects and UCPM exercises: this covers **multi-country prevention and preparedness projects** (formerly part of the Track II call and the Knowledge Partnership call) and **FSX**. Since 2023, these topics are covered under the Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness (KAPP) call..;

⁴⁷ Knowledge Network, <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu>

⁴⁸ EU Neighbourhood countries and Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) beneficiary countries that are not Participating States.

⁴⁹ European Commission, Peer review programme, n.d., https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/peer-review-programme_en

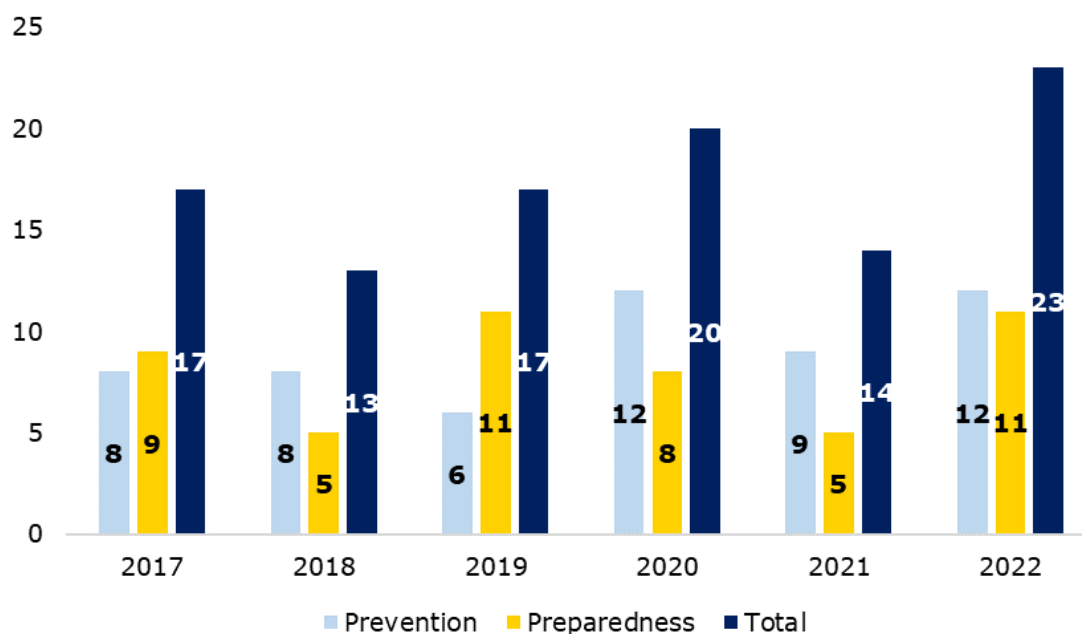
⁵⁰ A peer review for Moldova was conducted in 2023, final report not yet published.

⁵¹ European Commission, *Lessons learnt wildfires & floods: reinforcing prevention*, 2023.

- **Action 2.1.2. Technical Assistance for Disaster Risk Management:** this covers **single country grants for disaster risk management** (Track I).

A total of **103 prevention and preparedness projects** were awarded during the evaluation period (see Figure 9)⁵². Of these, **49 focused on prevention** and **54 on preparedness**. The average EU contribution was around EUR 500,000.

Figure 9. Prevention and preparedness projects awarded, 2017-2022



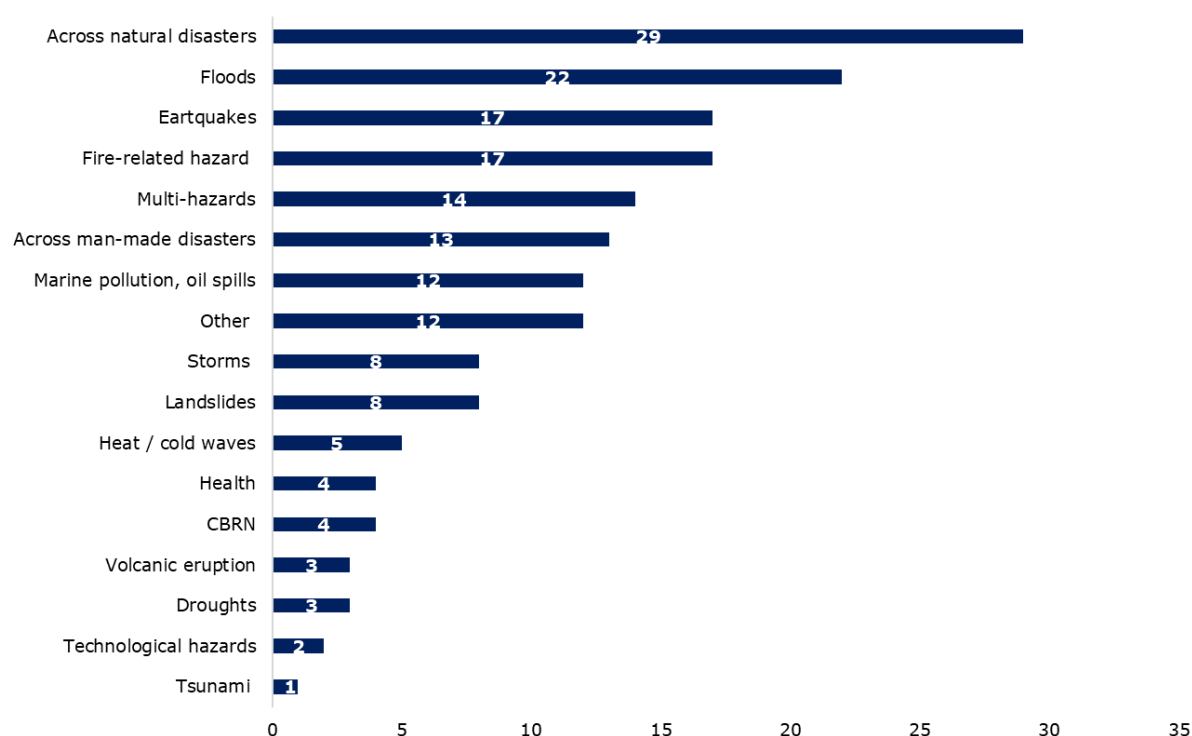
Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO, *Overview of the past Track I and Track II projects*⁵³.

The main hazard types covered by these prevention and preparedness projects was the risk of floods, although a majority covered several types of natural disasters (see Figure 10). Multi-hazards projects cover multiple hazards with a cascading effect on one another. The categories of man-made hazards and across natural disasters cover multiple hazards within each of the categories, such as floods *and* earthquakes for natural disasters.

⁵² DG ECHO, Prevention and preparedness projects in civil protection, 2023, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection/prevention-and-preparedness-projects-civil-protection_en

⁵³ European Commission, *Overview of the past Track I and Track II projects*, n.d., https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection/prevention-and-preparedness-projects-civil-protection/overview-past-track-i-and-track-ii-projects_en

Figure 10. Prevention and preparedness projects, types of hazards covered, by number of projects, 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO, Overview of the past Track I and Track II projects.

In 2023, one of the disaster resilience grants introduced the **Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness ('KAPP')**, merging the calls for the PPP (multi-country grants), Knowledge Network Partnership projects, and FSX⁵⁴. KAPP calls are now structured across the following topics: 1) KAPP-PV 'prevention', 2) KAPP-PP 'preparedness' and 3) KAPP-EX FSX⁵⁵.

Through its **external dimension** (spanning its three pillars), the UCPM focuses on **strengthening cooperation with the EU's immediate neighbouring countries** at bilateral and regional level, notably through the regional programmes financed by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-GE). It also maintains a dialogue with the Union for the Mediterranean and finances a number of prevention and preparedness projects with a cross-border dimension in third countries⁵⁶.

2.2.2 UCPM budget

The timeframe of this interim evaluation covers two Multiannual Financial Frameworks (MFF), namely MFF 2014-2020 and MFF 2021-2027. The budget allocation for the UCPM over these two financial cycles illustrates the increase in the frequency and variety of crises to which the Mechanism reacted. From 2014-2019, the average yearly budget allocated to the UCPM through the MFF was EUR 51 million, rising to EUR 618 million in 2020. Overall, **the total budget of the UCPM for the**

⁵⁴ European Commission, *Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) Call for proposals - Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness (KAPP)*, 2023.

⁵⁵ Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network, *Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness*, 2023, <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/knowledge-action-prevention-preparedness>

⁵⁶ European Commission, *Civil protection – performance*, 2023, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/programme-performance-overview/civil-protection-performance_en

programming period 2021-2027 (EUR 3,562 million) represented a significant increase compared to MFF 2014-2020 (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Development of UCPM funding, 2014-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data provided in the Terms of Reference for the interim evaluation.

Notes: the period evaluated here covers the years 2017-2022.

Compared to the previous MFF cycle, the financial envelope for 2021-2027 comprises funds from the **MFF** and an additional allocation from **NextGenerationEU** funding. While introduction of the rescEU reserve already provided an increase to the UCPM budget through the MFF since 2019⁵⁷, the most significant increase came through NextGenerationEU, a temporary reinforcement addressing the recovery needs of the EU and its Member States in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although access to NextGenerationEU was perceived as a strong reinforcement of the UCPM budget, it came with conditionalities and could only be used for preparedness measures clearly related to the difficulties faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and to address the risk of further waves of COVID-19 and major crises of a similar nature.

Finally, in 2021, part of the budget allocated under Next Generation EU was transferred to the recently established Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA), which co-delegates to DG ECHO implementation of the budget.

2.3 Revised theory of change

Table 2 illustrates the revised ToC underpinning this interim evaluation. Starting from the draft version prepared at project inception, the interim evaluation has reconstructed the ToC throughout the project, based on the evidence collected from the various tasks. The ToC summarises the context and rationale for the intervention and identifies its key elements. The revised ToC reflects evaluation findings on achievement of each of the elements (see Section 5.1). The degree of achievement is illustrated in the form of a traffic light assessment:

- **Green:** elements that were achieved fully or to a large extent;
- **Yellow:** elements that were partially achieved;

⁵⁷ There was funding to rescEU from 2017, but the main increase was in 2019.

- **Red:** elements that were not achieved or achieved to a very limited extent;
- **Grey:** elements for which the information collected was insufficient to assess their level of implementation.

Table 2 briefly explains the elements included in the ToC and summarises the main changes to the draft version prepared at project inception.

Table 2. ToC: key elements and changes since inception

Element	Changes compared to draft ToC
Objectives that the intervention sought to achieve	Unchanged
Inputs , i.e. financial, institutional and human resources	Updated the financial updates.
Activities under the UCPM between 2017-2022, structured as per UCPM pillars	Revised the number of activities carried out with updated data from DG ECHO: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of DRM Summary Reports submitted - Number of peer reviews carried out - Number of training initiatives; - Number of exercises - Number of Knowledge Network Partnership projects - Number of activations
Results of activities in the short term (results), medium term (outcomes) and long term (impacts)	Unchanged
Underlying assumptions explaining the casual links between the different elements	Unchanged
External factors influencing the effects of the intervention	Refined to reflect evaluation findings (see Section 5.1.2), adding the administrative complexities and human and financial resources available at national level

Figure 12. Revised ToC

Context: Europe is affected by a wide array of adverse events – including natural and man-made disasters – causing devastation of human life, property, environment and cultural heritage, and damage has been on the rise for decades and is expected to continue (e.g., as a result of climate change). Some of these events overwhelm national response capacities, forcing states to rely on solidarity from other countries. When countries face simultaneous risks or disasters, they are unable to assist other countries (e.g., 2017 forest fires, 2020 COVID-19 pandemic).

External factors: Increase of Hi-Lo probability emergencies (i.e. unpredictable nature of future risks and challenges) ♦ Increased need for assistance due to higher intensity, frequency and duration of disasters ♦ Impact of climate change on resources dedicated to disaster prevention and preparedness (e.g. competing budgetary demands) ♦ Level of willingness to cooperate among MS / PS ♦ Political considerations affecting cooperation / actions in third countries ♦ Complex administrative procedures in Member and Participating States ♦ Available human and financial resources at national level

Union Civil Protection Mechanism

General objective: to strengthen the cooperation between the Union and the Member States (MS) / Participating States (PS) and to facilitate coordination in the field of civil protection in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters, within and outside the EU.



Assumptions (objectives and inputs > activities and outputs)

Financial: DG ECHO has sufficient human and financial resources to implement / coordinate UCPM activities ♦ National authorities have sufficient financial resources to participate in UCPM activities ♦ Budget is sufficiently flexible and predictable to allow for proper planning of activities across the three pillars and adapt to evolving needs. **Operational:** The necessary infrastructure is in place to deliver UCPM activities ♦ All activities are implemented efficiently ♦ MS / PS are willing to participate in UCPM activities (i.e. UCPM activities are in line with national priorities) ♦ UCPM activities remain relevant in a changing landscape

Assumptions (activities and outputs > results, outcomes and impacts)

UCPM activities effectively involve all relevant stakeholders across sectors, considering their specific needs ♦ UCPM activities address a wide range of hazard types and adapt to the changing context ♦ Timing of the delivery of UCPM outputs is appropriate ♦ Disaster prevention and preparedness actions (including financial support) are effectively implemented ♦ CP experts and teams are well trained ♦ Positive relationships and collaborative environment between DG ECHO and all stakeholders involved, including with actors on the ground (i.e. MS/PS authorities, CP experts, NGOs, international organisations (e.g. UN agencies), other Commission services / EU institutions)

3 BASELINE ANALYSIS

To provide a baseline for this interim evaluation, this section provides an outline of the situation at the time of the previous evaluation in 2017, with particular focus on the main areas of improvement and related recommendations. Accordingly, the preliminary baseline in the Inception Report was expanded with the findings from all documentation reviewed for the evaluation. As in the Inception Report, the baseline is drafted per pillar.

3.1 Findings across all pillars

Sources

Baseline data extracted from:

- European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism 2014-2016;
- European Commission, Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face, 2020.

3.1.1 Monitoring system

The 2017 interim evaluation revealed that the **UCPM monitoring system** did not allow for a comprehensive follow-up of actions undertaken. The evidence for monitoring UCPM progress against indicators included:

- Participating States' reports on the implementation of the disaster prevention framework by providing summaries of their DRM Summary Reports and risk management capabilities;
- Progress in increasing readiness to disasters;
- Progress in improving response to disasters;
- Progress in increasing public awareness and preparedness for disasters.

These tools presented several limitations, including a lack of comprehensive reporting of progress due to challenges in measurement and large differences between individual response operations. **Monitoring tools and systems should be improved** and implemented to measure the effectiveness of UCPM activities more accurately and consistently. This should include a performance monitoring framework (e.g. KPIs for each UCPM activity), specific tools (e.g. data collection and aggregation exercises) and a reporting cycle (at least annually). Monitoring human resources allocations would also be helpful in assessing the management of the UCPM and its components.

3.2 Prevention

Sources

Baseline data extracted from:

- European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017;
- European Commission, Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face, 2018;
- JRC Science for Disaster Risk Management, DG ECHO, Early Warning Systems (EWS) Expert Group meeting minutes (2016), 2017.

3.2.1 National risk assessment (including Disaster Risk Management Summary Reports) and EU overview of risks

Compared to the previous evaluations, the 2019 amendment of the UCPM Decision for the UCPM further emphasised disaster risk management planning and the development of **DRM**

Summary Reports by Member and Participating States. This legal basis was crucial to the development of national risk assessment processes and DRM Summary Reports, which underpinned the mapping of EU-wide risks and enhanced prevention activities. However, some areas were found to be underreported/underdeveloped in the DRM Summary Reports (e.g. climate change adaptation, health, environment). The UCPM should support Member and Participating States to improve the quality and scope of their DRM Summary Reports, particularly for topics not previously systematically reported. Closer national-level cooperation with ministries and departments covering other policy areas should be supported, such as the organisation of a workshop on comprehensive risk assessments prior to submission of the next DRM Summary Reports.

The Commission's **2017 overview of natural and man-made disasters** underlined specific issues and related recommendations for DRM Summary Reports, including:

- Varying methodologies and scenarios across Member States do not always allow replicable and comparable results;
- A number of DRM Summary Reports take an all-hazard approach while using a single-hazards assessment. Where the interaction of different threats and their consequences are considered, the contribution of the risk assessment exercise for the emergency management decision-making process could be reinforced;
- Better understanding of the regional dimension of certain disaster risks through assessments and planning assumptions at a regional scale (e.g. earthquake, extreme weather, pandemic, animal diseases, terrorism, cybercrime) could reinforce the added value for European disaster management cooperation, as disasters happen irrespective of national borders – either through small-scale events localised in border regions, or large-scale events with impacts across different countries;
- Addressing the interdependencies and cascading effects of disaster risks could improve the management of complex disasters by bringing together competent authorities and streamlining approaches at all levels of disaster risk governance;
- Increasing awareness of a changing risk landscape (including through research and foresight) sheds light on new and emerging risks that could be more of a focus in DRM Summary Reports.

Best practices included DRM Summary Reports encompassing the impact of climate change, the cross/border and regional dimension, and when the legislative framework requires relevant authorities to carry out regular risk analysis activities. Other best practices identified included multi-stakeholder involvement for the development of DRM Summary Reports, the use of specific data and scientific tools (e.g. historical records and databases of events, impacts and recorded loss and damage), lessons, risk matrices, and research, innovation and scientific projects that can inform the risk assessment process (e.g. development of scenarios). In addition to recorded disaster losses from past events, it suggested that the process could consider potential estimated losses resulting from possible future events. Finally, Member States could look to current and emerging risks of neighbouring states in order to better understand measures in place.

3.2.2 DRMKC⁵⁸

Research activities carried out by the DRMKC (launched in 2015) increased and some improvements were detected in **EWS**. The aim of the DRMKC is to bring together science and policy through the connection of communities, facilitating the exploitation of research results and their implementation in operations, as well as testing and adopting new technologies. However, knowledge about these activities was not sufficiently disseminated among Member and Participating States and relevant practitioners. It would be beneficial for the UCPM to build on the existing civil protection knowledge base (across all pillars) to **enhance visibility and relevance**. It could be useful to invest in raising

⁵⁸ For consistency with the 2017 interim evaluation of the UCPM, the DRMKC is presented under the prevention pillar.

awareness of this knowledge base (and the DRMKC), e.g. through a workshop for practitioners in Member and Participating States, a survey of practitioners' research and knowledge needs, enhanced visibility on the DG ECHO website and websites of national civil protection authorities. The results of the research, together with planned research, should be more clearly signposted on JRC and DG ECHO websites.

3.2.3 Awareness-raising activities and UCPM visibility⁵⁹

Between 2014-2016, EUR 1.1 million was committed for **awareness-raising activities**. Workshops, meetings, exchanges of experience and practices, for example, were considered relevant to prevention needs at national level, but only met the needs of experts within the sector and were not considered wholly relevant to the needs of the wider public. Between 2014-2016, the UCPM was not very effective in raising public awareness and preparedness for disasters. Stakeholders with prior knowledge of the UCPM responding to the public consultation (PC) criticised the UCPM's contribution to increasing the general public's preparedness for disasters. The Special Eurobarometer survey in 2017 showed that most of the general public believed that insufficient efforts were made to prepare for disasters.

There would be a benefit to enhancing UCPM visibility and emergency and disaster prevention awareness (e.g. biannual special Eurobarometer survey, more information for third countries via fact sheets, targeted information campaigns). As the population in Europe becomes increasingly diverse, there is a need for multilingual and multicultural communications that are culturally adapted. Different demographics are likely to access information in different ways, with younger generations primarily accessing information through social media and less likely to trust the information they are reading, often cross-checking and cross-referencing across multiple channels.

3.3 Preparedness

Sources

Baseline data extracted from:

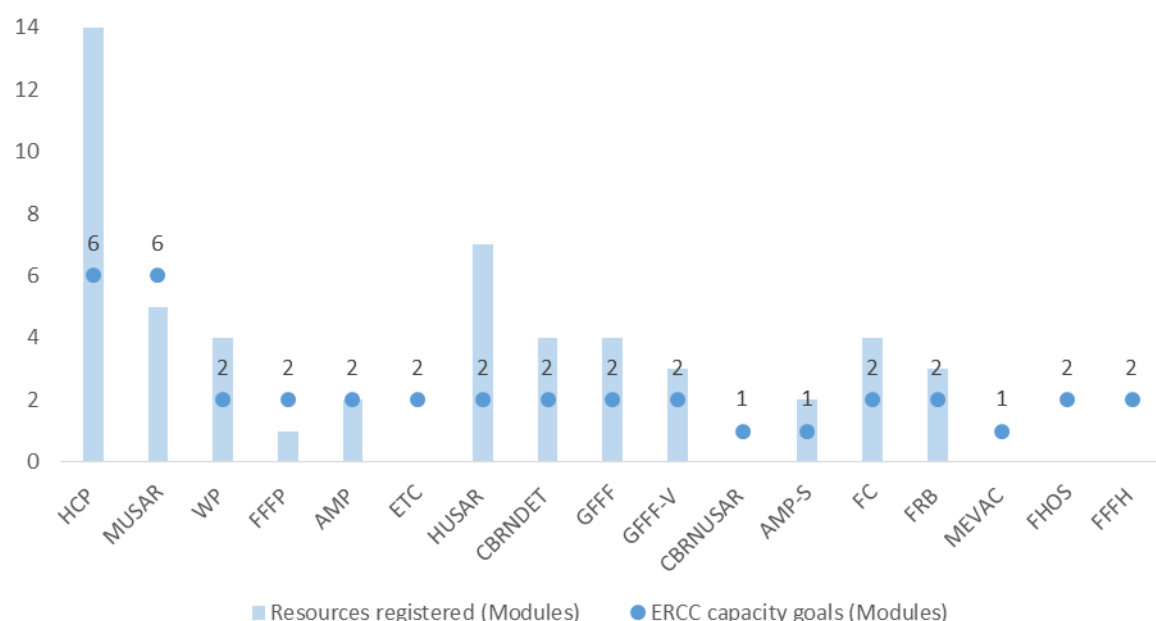
- European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017;
- DG ECHO, Early Warning System, minutes, 2017;
- JRC, Forest fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa, 2017.

3.3.1 EERC (now ECPP)

Between the launch of the **EERC** in October 2014 and the end of 2016, 16 Member and Participating States committed 77 response capacities to the EERC. The EERC enhanced the preparedness of the UCPM and of Member and Participating States to respond to disasters, although its implementation suffered from delays, legal issues and some capacity gaps (see Figure 13). The development of the **EERC Voluntary Pool**, although slow, improved preparedness and raised overall capacity. It was recommended that the capacity goals in the Voluntary Pool be set according to commonly agreed criteria (e.g. number of times a module was requested and deployed; approximate average cost of a single module of that capacity type; size of the module; likelihood of certain emergencies).

⁵⁹ For consistency with the 2017 interim evaluation of the UCPM, awareness-raising is presented under the prevention pillar.

Figure 13. EERC: capacity goals and resources registered, 2014-2016



Source: European Commission, Report on progress made and gaps remaining in the European Emergency Response Capacity and 2014 UCPM Implementing Decision

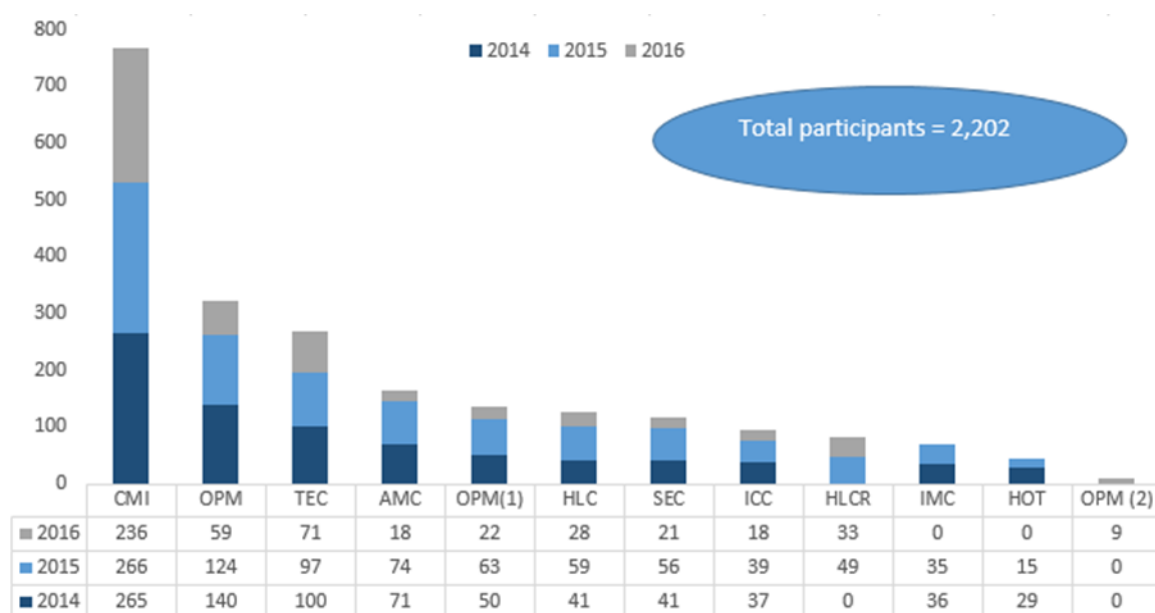
On the **deployment of experts**, it was recommended that DG ECHO organise a general call for experts to select EU Civil Protection Teams (EUCPT), after which experts could express their availability. DG ECHO could then select the experts (based on existing criteria) for deployment. The UCPM could also benefit from a reduction in the pool of experts by creating micro-pools to increase the relevance/quality of experts.

3.3.2 UCPM Training and Exercises Programme

The UCPM Training Programme was found to be very effective in enhancing the preparedness of the UCPM to respond to disasters. Between 2014 and 2016, EUR 13.4 million was committed to cover 100% of the costs of training courses⁶⁰. Over that period, 1,680 experts participated in at least one UCPM training course (see Figure 14). Prior to 2013, 2,255 experts attended one or more courses. The annual average participation for the applicable financial framework was 740. Around 15% of the experts training during the evaluation period were women. Shortcomings of the UCPM Training Programme included a lack of internal evaluation of the training courses and individual assessment of participants, as well as a relatively low rate of deployment compared to the number of people trained (see recommendations below).

⁶⁰ European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism 2014-2016, 2017.

Figure 14. UCPM Training Programme, numbers of participants, 2014-2016



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data from DG ECHO.

UCPM exercises were considered valuable in strengthening preparedness to respond to disasters at Member and Participating State level, as well as at EU level.

37 EU Module exercises (EU MODEX) were conducted between 2014-2016 (14 table-top exercises and 23 field exercises), 10 exercises were organised under cycle 4 (2013-2014), 11 exercises under cycle 5 (2014-2015), 14 under cycle 6 (2015-2016) and 4 under cycle 7 (2016-2017). Five FSX were organised between 2014-2016.

A budget of EUR 26.6 million was committed for up to 85% of eligible costs for exercises⁶¹.

Ensuring an appropriate balance between the different types of modules covered in the exercises was challenging. Accordingly, the interim evaluation recommended considering a needs assessment based on specific criteria (how often modules are used in response operations, share of modules registered, share of modules in the Voluntary Pool, minimum guarantee for refresher possibilities)⁶².

Several **recommendations** were made to enhance the UCPM Training Programme and Exercises, including⁶³:

- Base the specific choice for EU MODEX exercises on clear criteria to ensure a good balance of topics (e.g. between USAR and less common exercises);
- Streamline the database of trained experts by establishing clear criteria and monitoring the quantity and quality of training received, as well as when participants last attended training;
- Improve the drafting of expert profiles/types;
- Evaluate experts' performance in the training/exercise and deployment;
- Establish a selected pool of qualified trainers;
- Develop a number of key concepts (i.e. mission (deployment); training, exercise; certification of experts);
- Introduce a fully fledged UCPM e-Learning Centre;
- Mapping (as per DG ECHO) national level civil protection training.

⁶¹ European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism 2014-2016, 2017.

⁶² Voluntary Pool is now the ECPP.

⁶³ European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism 2014-2016, 2017.

3.3.3 EoE Programme

Between 2014-2016, almost EUR 2.2 million was committed to cover 100% of the costs of the **EoE Programme**. DG ECHO should increase the impact of the programme at national level by encouraging more active involvement of national civil protection authorities in monitoring the cascading of knowledge process.

3.3.4 EWS

Between 2014-2016, the **EWS** contributed to the development and integration of transnational detection and early warning/alert systems, ultimately leading to better preparedness and more effective response to disasters. However, there was scope for more involvement of the scientific community in developing the European Flood Awareness System (EFAS). The EFAS sent information about upcoming flood events to those National Hydrological Services (NHS) that were members of the EFAS partner network, the ERCC and the COPERNICUS rush mode mapping service. In this context, better awareness of the possibilities of EWS could have clear advantages, and DG ECHO should enhance its cooperation with Member and Participating States to raise awareness of the possibilities of these systems and other EWS at national level.

The **European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS)** first came into operation in 2000 and was adopted as one of the components of the EU Copernicus programme in 2015. It provides support for DG ECHO and for the Directorates-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) (DG GROW) and Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO). It offers reliable information on conditions that might trigger fire and provides a platform for countries to exchange good practices on fire prevention and activities related to fire management. Areas for improvement include the importance of moving beyond Europe and developing a near-real time forecasting component, thereby improving functionalities, data access, user-friendliness and the overall danger forecasting system.

DG ECHO could develop, strengthen and pool scientific and technical approaches to assess hazards, i.e. by developing detection methods, assessing vulnerabilities, and developing communication and awareness-raising policies at European level (e.g. through the JRC, European Space Agency, Copernicus network, and relevant Directorates-General such as Research and Innovation (DG RTD), Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME), Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) and Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT). In this context, **EWS harmonisation** would be beneficial by possible generating foresight in certain areas and providing better quality responses on the ground.

3.4 Response

Sources

Baseline data extracted from:

- European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017;
- European Court of Auditors (ECA), Union Civil Protection Mechanism: the coordination of responses to disasters outside the EU has been broadly effective, 2016;
- DG ECHO, Outcomes of the lessons learned meeting on the UCPM operations in 2017, 2018;
- DG ECHO, European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) Snapshot report 2022. State-of-play on 01/01/2023;
- DG ECHO, Lessons and good practices identified from TAST [Technical Assistance and Support Teams] deployments, 2019;

- European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Consolidating the EU-Civil Protection Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory, 2020.

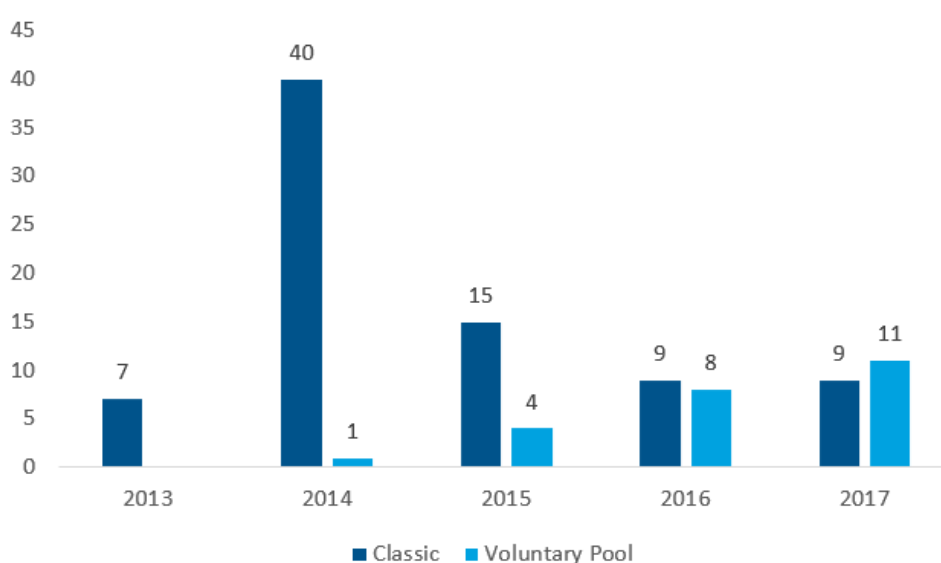
3.4.1 UCPM activations and coordination of RfA

Overall, the UCPM was broadly effective in facilitating the coordination of responses to disasters within and outside the Union. The crucial contribution to achieving a rapid and efficient response in the event of disaster was the effective flow of information and coordination of disaster response at EU level through the ERCC.

Between 2014 and 2016, the UCPM was activated by providing two types of assistance – expertise and in-kind assistance (majority) and in-kind assistance only (e.g. migration crisis). Although both types of support were relevant to the mandate of the Mechanism, **better exploitation of the pool of expertise** during response operations could boost the relevance of response activities. In 2017, faced with multiple requests to respond to the same type of disaster (forest fires), the UCPM was not always able to offer the assistance required, as the emergencies were taking place simultaneously and there was insufficient response capacity to meet all needs.

Figure 15 shows the number of classic and Voluntary Pool deployments between 2013 and 2017. Classic deployments refer to ad hoc contributions to a UCPM activation, outside the pre-committed reserves of the Voluntary Pool.

Figure 15. Classic and Voluntary Pool deployments, 2013-2017



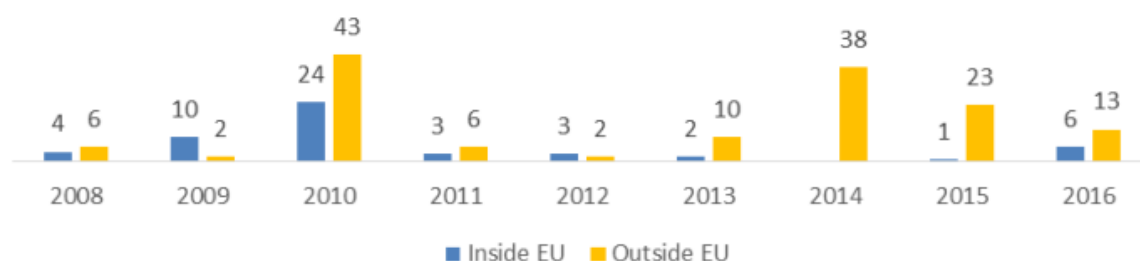
Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

The **proportions of emergencies within and outside Europe** varied. Between 2014 and 2016, on average, 33% of requests (21 out of 64) came from within the EU, with the remainder from third countries. The time between activation of the Mechanism and the request for specific assistance, as well as between offer and acceptance of the offer, **was shorter for disasters in the EU**⁶⁴. This reflected a higher level of awareness of the Mechanism and its procedures among Member and Participating States. Occasionally, for responses to disasters occurring outside the EU, there was a **need to gaining an improved understanding of the context and needs of local stakeholders**. This could be improved by partners growing their links with local communities, authorities and

⁶⁴ Due to the way information was registered in CECIS, the 2017 interim evaluation struggled to access information to produce statistics, overviews and comparisons of UCPM interventions.

contractors on the ground. Figure 16 shows the number of UCPM modules deployed within and outside the EU between 2008 and 2016.

Figure 16. UCPM activations within and outside the EU, 2008-2016



Source: DG ECHO, last update 24 February 2017

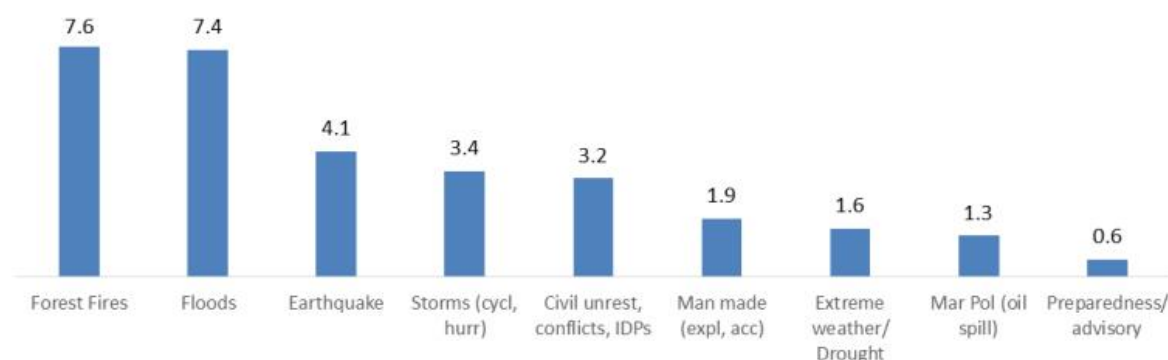
Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO data.

For responses outside the EU, the **blurred definition of civil protection interventions in humanitarian aid** operations presented a challenge and impacted the achievement of UCPM objectives. The 2017 interim evaluation concluded that it would be beneficial to better define the scope of civil protection interventions outside the EU, including a clearer distinction between civil protection interventions and humanitarian interventions by DG ECHO or international organisations and partners. According to the European Court of Auditors, **potential synergies** had yet to be fully exploited between the civil protection and humanitarian assistance areas. For instance, DG ECHO field network staff were experts in the UN humanitarian aid system, but untrained in matters of civil protection. The 2018 outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on UCPM operations suggested increasing training on humanitarian principles and including technical experts in missions.

The flexibility, adaptability and scalability of **Technical Assistance and Support Teams (TAST)** was seen as an essential element for the optimal functioning of a deployed EUCPT. The reinforcement of information and communications technology (ICT) equipment (e.g. additional laptops or phones) was perceived as an area for improvement in the context of the forest fires in Chile, in 2017, for example. Indeed, there is no common or homogeneous approach to using information management tools (e.g. SharePoint, DropBox, Google Drive). The use of cloud-based systems depends on the TAST. It was noted that it would be desirable to identify a single agreed tool, which would facilitate the ERCC's access to information and ensure consistency across deployments (e.g. earthquake in Ecuador, hurricane in Haiti in 2016).

Figure 17 presents the average annual numbers of hazards leading to an activation between 2007 and 2016. Forest fires and floods were the most common causes, followed by earthquakes, storms and civil unrest.

Figure 17. Hazards leading to UCPM activations, per year, 2007-2016



Source: DG ECHO, last update 30 May 2017

Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO data, 2017.

The main challenges and areas for improvement identified in the 2017 interim evaluation related to the quality and speed of response, and issues with transport grants.

Quality and speed of response

- The **actual speed and efficiency of response could not be measured precisely**. There were limitations in monitoring processes and an absence of a baseline or existing targets (e.g. response speed). It was suggested to **assess the speed of response as standard practice** after every response operation within or outside the EU. The outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the UCPM activations revealed that, in 2017, the **average speed** of civil protection assistance readiness to intervene (from acceptance of the offer to readiness for deployment) was **20.7 hours**, with the fastest being one hour;
- To improve the quality and speed of response operations, especially the quality of requests, it was suggested that the ERCC should be enabled to play a stronger role in **clarifying requests before publishing them on CECIS**. More specific requests can save time for requesting or receiving states or the ERCC. This could be achieved through a standardised glossary of civil protection terms and concepts to reduce ambiguities. Additionally, although the Commission activated the Mechanism for responding to emergencies on a timely basis, additional time could be gained through better use of the **pre-alert** phases;
- **Improve CECIS by developing dedicated tools for statistics and introducing a search tool**, including search by type of emergency, year and month of request, Participating State requesting/providing support, disaggregated data or breakdown for each type of module requested/provided, and a search tool by tags (i.e. finding certain key works in specific fields);
- To improve the efficient identification of the most appropriate experts for deployment, add a search tool with detailed characteristics, enabling search of their last year of deployment, number of deployments, and qualitative information on performance. In the 2017 system, identification was only possible for experts already in the database;
- Strengthen certain **EU delegations** in civil protection through **engaging civil protection advisors** (e.g. similar to specialised counter-terrorism advisors).

Finally, according to the European Economic and Social Committee, major natural disasters in recent years (mass fires in southern Europe in 2017 and 2021, floods in central and northern Europe in 2014 and 2021, earthquakes in Haiti in 2010, etc.) and the increase in their frequency and intensity undermine existing response mechanisms such as the UCPM, which is simultaneously confronted with other complex crises (e.g. migratory, health, humanitarian).

Transport grants:

- Details on the assistance provided by Participating States against the reimbursement required were collected through a general text string. Information about transport grants should be **recorded in greater detail** to facilitate establishment of cost benchmarks;
- Consider raising the minimum amount eligible for transport grants (from EUR 2,500) to lower the relative administrative burden. Alternatively, simplify the administrative procedures for low-level reimbursements of under EUR 10,000;
- **Comparability of data could be improved** by recording information consistently using pre-defined entries or by developing/purchasing software allowing for the entry of single data and automatic reporting. For instance, data could be collected on: type of assistance (e.g. in-kind assistance or module, Voluntary Pool/general pool, Participating State or third country where the operation took place, number of module team members deployed); Participating States should be asked to fill out an online form about what was included in the operation;
- To clarify the **appropriateness of transport costs**, benchmarks could be established for unit cost ranges and the characteristics of transport costs;
- **Explain transport procedures** through training, workshops or a handbook, including the use of the transport grant, broker, and pooling. This would improve understanding and potentially increase take-up. Table-top exercises (including pooling of transport resources) were recommended, as well as a set of transport pooling case studies.

3.5 Horizontal/cross-pillar activities

Sources

Baseline data extracted from:

- European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017;
- DG ECHO, Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the UCPM operations in 2017, 2018;
- European Commission, Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020), 2021.

Horizontal/cross-pillar activities included the Peer Review Programme, Lessons Learnt Programme, prevention and preparedness missions, and the PPP.

3.5.1 Peer Review Programme

Areas for improvement identified in the 2017 evaluation were the follow-up of reviews, improved resources, and the difficulties for smaller Member and Participating States to implement peer review findings due to funding limitations.

More specifically, it was recommended to establish a **follow-up** three years after its completion to understand how the Peer Review Programme recommendations were incorporated by Member and Participating States and third countries (e.g. mapping progress or state of play)⁶⁵. It was suggested that 5% of the Peer Review Programme budget could be set aside for such follow-up.

Another recommendation was the need for **better visibility** of the Peer Review Programme, such as a dedicated section on the DG ECHO website featuring a factsheet and highlighting recommendations and results through an interactive map (allowing visitors to click on a country and find the details on the programme and its results).

⁶⁵ European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017.

3.5.2 Lessons Learnt Programme

Overall, the stakeholders consulted generally considered the Lessons Learnt Programme effective, although the **implementation of lessons** was an area of concern⁶⁶. This was partly due to the number of potential lessons identified, not all of which had the same priority or feasibility for follow-up and implementation.

The **take-up of lessons** learnt from the programme would be improved through their systematic capture from all activities, e.g. by organising workshops, lessons learnt sessions after every series of exercise and training, and adopting a matrix structure for classification and monitoring.

3.5.3 Prevention and preparedness missions

According to the 2017 interim evaluation, there were some concerns about these missions, notably the process of identifying the relevant Participating States or third countries, as well as whether the structure and approach to prevention and preparedness missions could achieve **better value for money**.

It was unclear how these missions **complemented other mechanisms** for building prevention and preparedness capacity in third countries. The recommendations of the 2017 evaluation and the 2018 lessons learnt outcomes meeting were to:

- **Improve access and information** about the prevention and preparedness missions in **third countries**, with consistent lessons learnt events after every activity. The extent to which third countries were aware (or had the possibility) of inviting an EU advisory mission was an area of concern;
- **Make a factsheet available** on the purpose and possibilities of the prevention and preparedness missions (advisory missions);
- **Enhance visibility and accessibility** of missions by launching an annual 'expression of interest' from third-country governments, including a needs statement;
- **Ensure follow-up** of all prevention and preparedness missions through a short summary report three years later to assess the state of play of the country's civil protection system and take-up of any recommendations made;
- **Use advisory and capacity-building missions to enhance development of preparedness plans** with national authorities and international organisations in most vulnerable/disaster prone areas.

3.5.4 Prevention and preparedness projects

Between 2014 and 2016, 33 **preparedness projects** were selected and nearly EUR 17 million was committed to this component of the UCPM. The average project cost was EUR 691,000. Figure 18 presents the main expected results of preparedness projects between 2014 and 2016.

⁶⁶ European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017.

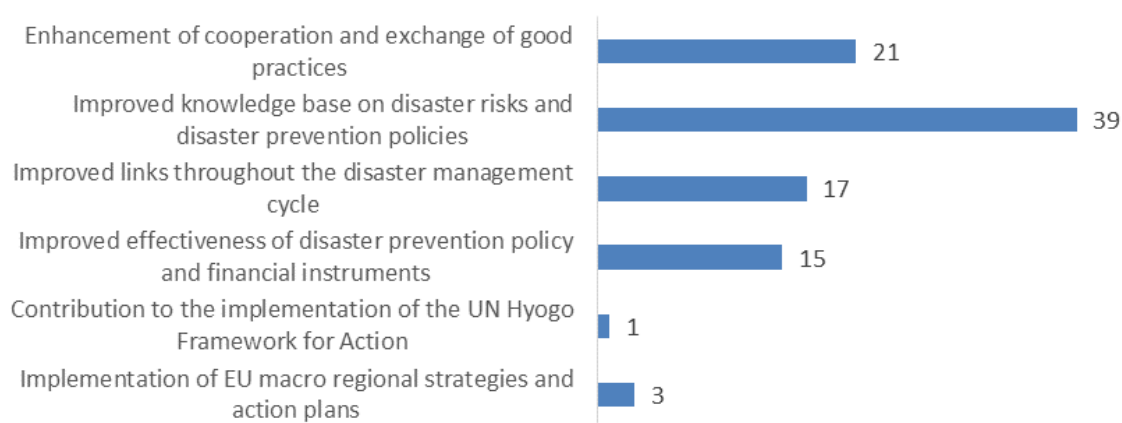
Figure 18. Preparedness projects (PPP): main expected results



Source: ICF elaboration, based on preparedness projects mapped.

Between 2014 and 2016, 40 **prevention projects** were selected and more than EUR 22 million was committed to this UCPM component (see Figure 19). The average project value was EUR 610,000 (with EU funding averaging EUR 470,000). The total EU contribution to these projects was around EUR 18.7 million. The success rate of applications for prevention projects was 39%. Figure 19 presents the main results of prevention projects between 2014 and 2016. Overall, prevention projects contributed to a) improving the knowledge base on disaster risks and disaster prevention policies and raising awareness of disaster prevention, leading to a better understanding of approaches to adapting to future impacts of climate change, and b) enhancing cooperation and exchange of good practices in prevention. However, concerns included the dissemination, visibility and sustainability of results (see preparedness recommendations).

Figure 19. Prevention projects (PPP): main expected results



Source: ICF elaboration, based on prevention projects mapped.

For better impact, the UCPM should ensure **complementarity with other EU funds** (e.g. on climate change adaptation, floods, the Seveso Directive). Specific contact points could be set up within DG ECHO and other Commission services to establish areas of complementarity and potential overlap and to ensure more consistent EU-wide funding and activities for 2020 onwards.

Other recommendations to maximise the relevance, added value and sustainability of **prevention and preparedness projects** included:

- Draft specific selection criteria (given the high levels of funding available via Cohesion Funds) on disaster risk prevention and management to avoid duplication and maximise EU added value. The selection criteria could include elements related to sustainability;
- Organise joint kick-off and closure meetings with project coordinators to foster sustainability and avoid duplication;
- Consult project coordinators and partners after projects finish to establish sustainability.

Recommendations from the 2021 evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020) included:

- Increase awareness, accessibility and engagement with ongoing and past EU-funded projects on civil protection prevention and preparedness and their results;
- Establish an internal planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) policy to assess the performance and quality of the PPP;
- Introduce clearer requirements for DG ECHO's Desk Officers, including enhanced communication and engagement with PPP beneficiaries;
- Introduce the possibility to request project extension/expansions;
- Continue to further simplify the PPP reporting and monitoring mechanism;
- Facilitate access to national level data for PPP applicants;
- Support the creation of a forum to integrate national civil protection authorities from eligible third countries on specific PPP-related needs and expectations into existing and/or incoming platforms and dialogues;
- Consider more sources in the analysis of EU and national needs prior to Civil Protection Committee (CPC) meetings;
- Raise awareness of the PPP and provide guidance on successfully applying for funding to overcome varying involvement across national contexts and entities;
- Provide soft guidance on the minimum information that should be provided in applications to national authorities for endorsement;
- Include end users and relevant stakeholders in project design through steering committees and regular workshops;
- Pay more attention to end users' capacity and sustainability in project proposals.

4 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This section provides an overview of the methodological approach for this interim evaluation, covering the inception, research and consultation, and analysis phases. Section 4.1 presents the data collection methods and tools used, before discussing the analytical approach (Section 4.2). It concludes with an overview of methodological limitations and mitigation measures (Section 4.3).

4.1 *Methodological approach and data collection tools*

The methodological approach was informed by research tools developed and tailored to build a robust and comprehensive evidence base. It combined complementary quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect data from relevant sources and mitigate the impact of data limitations to the extent possible. In line with the BRG, the methodological approach provided a basis for triangulation and verification of data from different sources to answer the evaluation questions, draw conclusions, highlight lessons and develop recommendations.

The interim evaluation began in October 2022 and comprised the following phases:

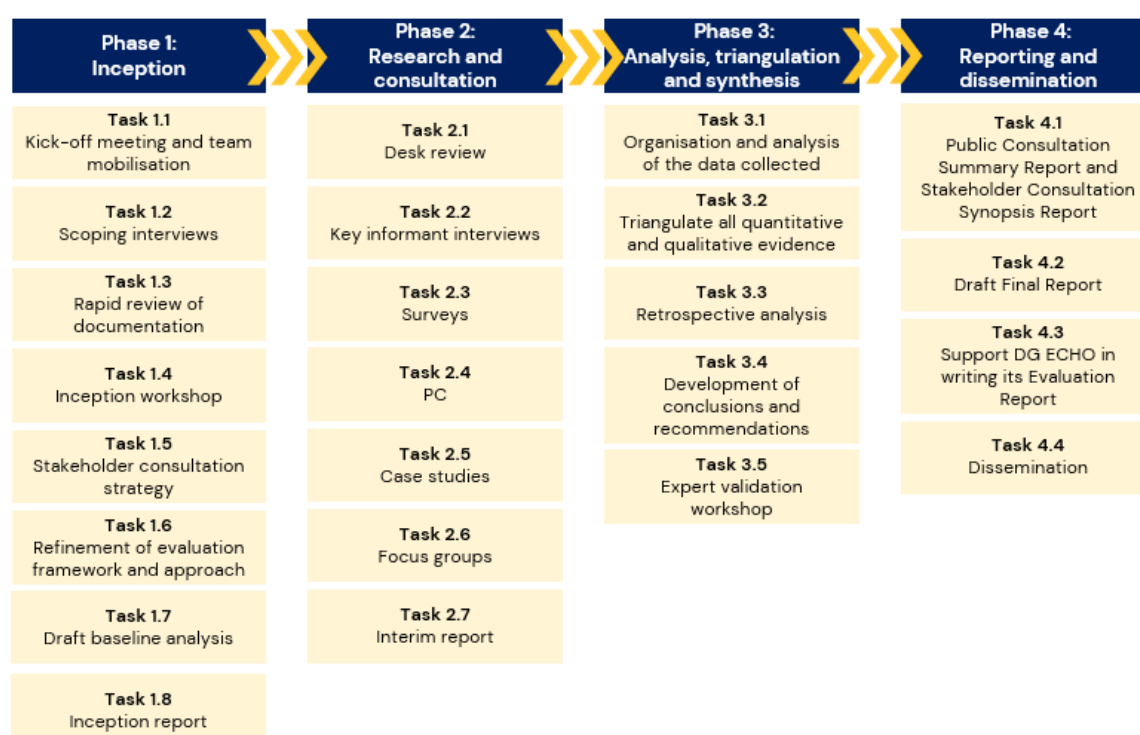
- **Inception phase.** The purpose of this phase was to ensure a thorough understanding of key aspects of the interim evaluation and refine the methodological approach. It consisted of several tasks: a kick-off meeting, scoping interviews, rapid review of documentation, an inception workshop, definition of the stakeholder consultation strategy, refinement of the

evaluation framework, and a draft baseline analysis. The results of these activities were presented in an Inception Report;

- **Research and consultation phase.** The aim of the research and consultation phase was to collect primary data and gather and analyse secondary data to inform wider evaluation activities. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The evaluation team carried out the following activities: desk review, key informant interviews, surveys, PC, case studies, focus groups. The preliminary findings stemming from initial key informant interviews and desk research were summarised in an Interim Report, which provided preliminary answers to the evaluation questions;
- **Analysis, triangulation, and synthesis phase.** The objective of this phase was to systematically analyse, validate, triangulate, and synthesise the data collected in previous phases to provide robust evidence-based answers to the evaluation questions, draw conclusions, and recommendations. Activities implemented during this phase included: organisation and analysis of the data collected, triangulation of quantitative and qualitative evidence, a retrospective analysis, development of conclusions and recommendations, and an expert validation workshop.
- **Reporting and dissemination phase.** The objective of this phase was to produce the final deliverables and accompanying annexes of the evaluation, and successfully disseminate the results of the evaluation to different audiences at different levels. This phase included the preparation of the Public Consultation Factual Summary Report, Stakeholder Consultation Synopsis Report, this Final Report, as well as support to DG ECHO in writing its Evaluation report (Staff Working Document) and dissemination of results (e.g. through a one page “Flash Report”).

Each phase is detailed in the following sub-sections. Figure 20 provides an overview of the methodological approach.

Figure 20. Overview of methodological approach



Source: ICF elaboration.

4.1.1 Inception phase

The objective of the inception phase was to provide a foundation and finalised approach for subsequent evaluation phases. This was achieved through the following activities:

- **Scoping interviews:** 11 scoping interviews were conducted with relevant DG ECHO, HERA and JRC staff. These interviews provided the evaluation team with an overview of key areas of focus and main stakeholders' expectations, as well as with an overview of stakeholders to contact and documentation to review;
- **Rapid review of documentation:** the evaluation team gathered and examined relevant documentation and data, including publicly available information and internal documents, statistics, and other data provided by DG ECHO. The purpose of this rapid review was to identify any significant data gaps that needed to be addressed by requesting additional information from DG ECHO and other relevant stakeholders. This task paved the way for the full-in depth review of all sources in subsequent phases;
- **Inception workshop:** an inception workshop was held on 20 October 2022 to discuss and refine the intervention logic, ToC, evaluation framework, and selection of case studies. The workshop was attended by the Expert Panel and the Steering Group;
- **Refinement of evaluation framework and approach:** the evaluation team refined the evaluation framework and intervention logic, as well as the methodological approach. Changes and adjustments reflected feedback received during scoping interviews and the inception workshop, as well as insights from other data gathered. This task also entailed the refinement and finalisation of research tools to collect and analyse data (e.g. interview and survey questionnaires);
- **Baseline analysis:** the evaluation team conducted a baseline analysis, primarily informed by the previous UCPM interim evaluation and other relevant documentation. The analysis revolved around the UCPM pillars of prevention, preparedness and response, with an added focus on cross-pillar elements.

4.1.2 Research and consultation phase

The objective of the research and consultation phase was to collect primary data and gather and analyse secondary data to inform the wider evaluation activities. Tasks included an in-depth desk review of available documentation and stakeholder consultations (108 interviews, four surveys, three focus groups, one PC). The evaluation team also undertook six case studies, each informed by an in-depth desk review of relevant documentation and tailored interviews with stakeholders.

4.1.2.1 Desk review

The evaluation team conducted an in-depth analysis of existing documentation, including materials shared by relevant stakeholders. All relevant qualitative and quantitative data were mapped and reviewed.

Findings from the **qualitative** desk research were extracted by evaluation criteria and evaluation questions. Documents reviewed included DG ECHO annual reports, internal meeting minutes, final and progress reports from relevant activities, evaluations, summary documents from the Lessons Learnt Programme's annual and thematic meetings, and other relevant publications (see Annex 4 for full list). The evaluation team also undertook a separate qualitative analysis of the DRM Summary Reports shared by DG ECHO to explore the different methods used by Member and Participating States and assess their compliance with reporting guidelines.

The evaluation team attended the annual Lessons Learnt Programme meeting on 2022 UCPM activations, on 24 and 25 April 2023 in Brussels. The meeting minutes were used to inform the evaluation findings.

The evaluation team also conducted a **quantitative** analysis of data on several UCPM elements: UCPM activations (by year and emergency type), PPP, UCPM Training Programme, Civil Protection Exercises, DRM Summary Reports, transport co-financing, Lessons Learnt Programme, EoE Programme, rescEU, and the ECPP.

4.1.2.2 Stakeholder consultation

The evaluation team conducted extensive stakeholder consultation, including 108 interviews, four online surveys, three virtual focus groups, and one PC.

It ran a **key informant interview campaign** targeting: 1) **national authorities** (including civil protection, marine pollution, and other relevant authorities, such as health authorities); 2) **DG ECHO officers**; 3) **EU stakeholders**; 4) **international organisations/partners**; 5) **professional organisations** involved in supporting the implementation of UCPM activities; and 6) **experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities** (including experts deployed, project coordinators of UCPM-funded projects) (see Annex 5 for full list).

The evaluation team conducted **108 interviews** with the following stakeholders:

- 36 national authorities⁶⁷;
- 24 DG ECHO officers;
- 27 EU stakeholders;
- Eight international stakeholders;
- Three professional organisations supporting the implementation of UCPM activities;
- 10 experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities.

It also conducted **four online surveys** with 1) **national authorities**; 2) **DG ECHO officers**; 3) **trainers**, Training and Exercise Programme contractors and national training coordinators; and 4) **experts** in civil protection participating in UCPM activities. Table 3 presents an overview of the responses to the four surveys.

Table 3. Overview of responses to four surveys

Survey	Responses received	Invitations sent
National authorities	58 ⁶⁸	400 ⁶⁹
DG ECHO desk officers	38	190
Trainers/Training and Exercise Programme contractors/national training coordinators	59	118
Experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities	21	136

The evaluation team organised and facilitated **three virtual focus groups**. The first engaged national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection, the second targeted DG ECHO officers, and the third engaged researchers from academic institutions, the JRC, and one expert from the World Bank.

⁶⁷ These include 33 national civil protection/marine pollution authorities, as well as one representative from the private donations hub established in Belgium, one representative from the Governmental Strategic Reserve Agency in Poland, and one representative from the Polish Ministry of Health.

⁶⁸ These include 44 Member States, 4 Participating States, and 10 third countries.

⁶⁹ The survey was sent to all national authorities' email addresses by DG ECHO, including national civil protection authorities, marine pollution authorities and other related services (such as firefighting services).

Overall, the goal of the focus groups was to explore aspects of interest emerging from the key informant interviews that warranted further exploration and discussion. They also aimed to discuss topics where data or insights were limited, in order to narrow some data gaps. The key lines of enquiry for each focus group were selected based on participants' expertise and relationship with the UCPM. They were circulated to participants in advance, together with briefing materials, to maximise effectiveness and efficiency.

To capture the view of the general public on the UCPM, the evaluation team developed a tailored questionnaire. This PC was launched by DG ECHO on the European Commission's website on 14 April 2023 and ran until 21 July 2023. The 'Have your say' portal also provided the opportunity for entities to upload position papers.

The Public Consultation Summary Report was submitted as a separate project deliverable.

4.1.2.3 Case studies

The evaluation team undertook **six case studies** to develop a more in-depth understanding of how the UCPM performed across different, recurring, internal and unexpected challenges (see Figure 21).

Two case studies focused on emergencies that traditionally led to a UCPM activation – **forest fires** and **floods**. Three case studies focused on unexpected emergencies for which the UCPM was activated, namely the **Beirut port explosion**, the **COVID-19 pandemic**, and **Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine**. The final case study explored the integration between **UCPM preparedness activities**⁷⁰, given the numerous changes between 2017 and 2022.

The evaluation team worked with DG ECHO to prevent overlaps with case studies conducted in the context of the parallel 'Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations (2018-2022) and the evaluation of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation'. Accordingly, the scope of two case studies was adjusted: the case study on the COVID-19 UCPM activation was revised to focus on in-kind assistance, while the case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine was refocused on cross-sectoral cooperation in the hubs established in Romania, Slovakia and Belgium. The case studies described here complement those developed in the parallel evaluation of humanitarian logistics.

⁷⁰ As this case study includes an assessment of the Framework Contract on the provision of ad hoc training that ICF recently signed on behalf of the Civitas Soteria consortium with DG ECHO, in particular the first specific contract in November 2022 (a workshop on the certification process of the ECPP), the analysis was conducted by an external expert.

Figure 21. Overview of case studies

	TYPE(S) OF EMERGENCY	RATIONALE	UCPM PILLAR(S)	INFORMS QUASICOUNTERFACTUAL ASSESSMENT
TYPES OF EMERGENCIES TRADITIONALLY LEADING TO UCPM ACTIVATIONS				
1 Forest fires	Climate risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > High number of UCPM activations > Recent UCPM developments (rescEU) > Covered in 2017 Evaluation 	   	✓
2 Floods	Hydro-meteorological climate risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Among costliest disasters > Rapidly increasing in intensity and frequency 	   	✓
UNEXPECTED EMERGENCIES				
3 Beirut port explosion	Accident (explosion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Man-made disaster; > Activation outside of Europe 	   	✗
4 COVID-19	Biological / medical; Consular support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > EU-wide, simultaneous emergency > Led to significant UCPM developments > Focus on in-kind assistance 	 	✗
5 Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine	Conflicts, migration flows; Consular support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Largest UCPM activation > Rare opportunity to observe UCPM response in real time > Focus on cross-sectoral cooperation and SI, RO and BE hubs 	 	✗
PREPAREDNESS / CROSS-PILLAR ACTIVITIES				
6 Integration between preparedness activities	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Gap highlighted in previous evaluation > Several measures adopted during the evaluation period 	 	✓

Source: ICF elaboration.

Notes: Legend -

 Prevention
  Preparedness
  Cross-pillar / horizontal
  Response

For each case study, tailored questionnaires were used to interview relevant stakeholders. Table 4 presents a summary of the interviews for each case study.

The answers to the evaluation questions are corroborated by the case studies findings. Where a case study is mentioned in the footnotes, it can be taken that the conclusions drawn from that case study mirror stakeholders' consultations and relevant documents reviewed in the case study in question.

Table 4. Interviews for each case study

Case study	Interviews conducted
Forest fires	12 interviews
Floods	9 interviews
Beirut port explosion	16 interviews
COVID-19	11 interviews
Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine	17 interviews
Integration between preparedness activities	13 interviews

4.1.3 Analysis, triangulation and synthesis phase

The objective of the analysis, triangulation and synthesis phase was to systematically assess the evidence base generated during the interim evaluation with a view to answering the evaluation questions, formulating robust conclusions and recommendations, and reporting on interim evaluation activities and results. The evaluation team analysed, triangulated and synthesised the data collected in the previous phases to provide robust evidence-based answers to the evaluation questions. Steps included:

- **Organisation and analysis of the data:**
 - Using '**outcome harvesting**', the evaluation team examined the extent to which the changes (outcomes in the ToC) were the result of the UCPM intervention (inputs in the ToC);
 - In the context of three case studies, the evaluation team carried out a qualitative **quasi-counterfactual assessment** to assess the added value of the UCPM compared to assistance provided through bilateral agreements (see Section 4.1.2.3);
 - The evaluation team carried out a **cost-benefit analysis (CBA)** to analyse how costs and benefits compared and evolved over time in order to assess the efficiency of the UCPM (see Annex 6);
- **Triangulation and synthesis:** the evaluation team reviewed and triangulated all qualitative and quantitative evidence collected. This included a cross-examination of evidence gathered through different data collection tools (see Section 4.1.2.1 and Section 4.1.2.2) and results from the analytical exercises. It held an internal workshop to discuss the findings and streamline the approach for the reporting phase;
- **Retrospective analysis:** the evaluation team produced a detailed analysis of the findings of the interim evaluation for each evaluation question and judgement criterion;
- **Development of conclusions and recommendations:** based on the evaluation findings, the team drafted key conclusions (see Section 6) and lessons learnt (see boxes across the document), as well as seven strategic recommendations with related operational recommendations (see Section 7).

Finally, the evaluation team organised an **expert validation workshop** with the Expert Panel in order to refine and validate the main findings, lessons and conclusions, as well as to draft recommendations. Similarly, the **Draft Final Report meeting with the Steering Group** provided an opportunity to discuss the conclusions and recommendations and gather views on their relevance, feasibility, and acceptability.

4.2 Methodological limitations and mitigation measures

The interim evaluation was characterised by some methodological challenges and limitations. These are discussed below, alongside the mitigation measures and strategies adopted.

- **Lack of comprehensive data and data discrepancies in respect of some UCPM activities.** Missing or contradictory data were encountered, particularly in budget-expenditure, breakdown of deployments (i.e. numbers of requests for services/deployments by classic/ECPP/rescEU), financial classification of activities (e.g., Lessons Learned Programme), and UCPM activations. Discrepancies were identified between the analysis of raw CECIS data provided by the ERCC to the evaluation team and figures on UCPM activations reported in DG ECHO annual reports. To mitigate against the impact of these inconsistencies in available data, the evaluation team:
 - Communicated the main data gaps to DG ECHO and sent a data gaps document, which DG ECHO disseminated across its units. The data gaps document was regularly updated, reflecting any new gap;

- Conducted targeted interviews with stakeholders to identify additional information and/or clarify some of the information received;
 - Prioritised use of DG ECHO annual reports and lessons learnt meeting outcome documents and slides in order to have consistent data on the number of UCPM activations between 2017 and 2022, as well as breakdowns of deployments;
 - Prioritised use of internal DG ECHO documents and figures on breakdown of deployments (between rescEU, ECPP, and classic deployments).
- **Low response rate from stakeholders during consultation activities.** This was due to the unavailability of national civil protection authorities, experts and DG ECHO stakeholders, given multiple ongoing emergencies during the course of the interim evaluation. This issue may have been exacerbated by stakeholder fatigue (i.e. when stakeholders have been consulted too frequently for too many overlapping projects).
 - Several evaluation stakeholders were deployed/busy with ongoing emergencies during the data collection phase (e.g. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Türkiye-Syria earthquake of February 2023, floods in the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy in May 2023). These circumstances saw some interviews cancelled or rescheduled and had an impact on survey response rates;
 - Low response rate was also associated with stakeholder fatigue, given the simultaneous rollout of consultation activities for the 'Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations (2018-2022) and the evaluation of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation (2020-2022)'.
 - **Limitations to stakeholders' knowledge and understanding of full range of UCPM activities.** The UCPM covers a wide range of activities, funding opportunities, and programmes, meaning that, inevitably, some stakeholders were very familiar with some, but not all, of them. As a result, data on certain UCPM activities could be collected only from a minority subset of stakeholders directly involved or exposed. Certain findings are substantiated by interviews with a small number of stakeholders – either the sole contributors offering insights on specific UCPM activities or those holding key positions significantly impacting UCPM development (e.g. national civil protection authorities with extensive involvement in the UCPM over the evaluation period).
 - **Delayed conclusion of case studies.** Low response rates delayed the completion of several case studies, as some stakeholders possessed key data sources necessary for their analysis. Several mitigation measures were taken:
 - All consultation activities were extended, providing stakeholders sufficient time to submit data to inform the interim evaluation. Surveys were closed on 2 May 2023, with final interviews carried out in the week of 22 May 2023;
 - To increase response rates, DG ECHO sent reminders and regularly encouraged stakeholders to participate;
 - The evaluation team followed up with stakeholders who did not respond to initial invitations, sending reminders via email and making phone calls as necessary.
 - **Delayed receipt of contact details for civil protection experts.** This resulted in a smaller number of experts interviewed compared to what was initially envisioned. To mitigate this limitation, the evaluation team extended the timeframe for consultation activities to allow sufficient time to schedule interviews with experts once their contact details were received.
 - **Inability to undertake a comprehensive CBA,** given the availability of predominantly qualitative data rather than quantitative data. DG ECHO and the evaluation team agreed to:
 - a) carry out a qualitative assessment of the costs and benefits, how they compare to one

another, and level of efficiency for the whole UCPM; and b) a full-fledged CBA of some UCPM components in the framework of the case studies, namely forest fires, floods, the Beirut port explosion, COVID-19, and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (see Annex 6).

- **Delay in the timeline of two case studies.** The case studies on COVID-19 and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine were delayed while their scope was adjusted to avoid overlaps with parallel evaluations. The evaluation team actively requested information on the case studies conducted by other contractors involved with these evaluations, allowing them to adjust the scope and avoid unnecessary duplication of work.

5 EVALUATION FINDINGS

This section presents the interim evaluation findings across the BRG criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value.

Each subsection opens with a box introducing the key findings and judgement criteria for each evaluation question. Findings and evidence are then presented in a narrative form, supported by boxes illustrating specific examples, graphs and tables. Throughout the sections, bold text highlights main findings and/or important evidence.

5.1 *Effectiveness*

This subsection assesses the extent to which the UCPM has effectively achieved and/or is on track to achieve its general and specific objectives (see Section 1.1), highlighting key success areas and room for improvement, as well as the internal and external factors that hindered or facilitated its effectiveness during the evaluation period.

- 5.1.1 EQ1: To what extent did the UCPM achieve its specific objectives (Article 3(1) of the Decision) further supporting, complementing and facilitating Member States' action for civil protection in the areas of prevention, preparedness for and response to natural and man-made disasters?

Overall, the UCPM has progressed towards the specific objectives set in Article 3(1) of the Decision. These are:

- **Prevention:** to achieve a high level of protection against disasters by preventing or reducing their potential effects, fostering a culture of prevention, and improving cooperation between the civil protection and other relevant services;
- **Preparedness:** enhance preparedness at national and Union level to respond to disasters, and increase the availability and use of scientific knowledge on disasters;
- **Response:** facilitate rapid and efficient response in the event of disasters or imminent disasters and mitigate their immediate consequences;
- **Cross-pillar/horizontal:** increase public awareness and preparedness for disasters.

The following subsections describe the key evaluation findings on the extent to which the UCPM progressed towards its specific objectives (per pillar). The key findings will be discussed by sub-question. Across the section, the term 'mitigation measures' refers to measures taken by DG ECHO, where applicable, to ensure that the UCPM continued to progress across its general and specific objectives, notwithstanding the challenges faced (e.g. introducing digital options for activities during COVID-19).

5.1.1.1 EQ1.1 To what extent did the UCPM achieve its specific objectives in the field of **prevention** within the timeframes set by the Decision? To what extent are suitable mitigation measures in place in case objectives will not be met in the set time?

Key findings

- Overall, projects and activities funded by UCPM effectively contributed to preventing disasters, reducing their potential effects, and promoting a culture of prevention;
- There is some disagreement on the extent to which progress towards **prevention activities** can be measured, given the long-term and cross-sectoral nature of prevention work and the lack of investment at national level. These factors impede assessments of the links between risk reduction and the prevention measures in place;
- Risk mapping activities including DRM Summary Reports have the most significant impact on enhancing prevention, followed by **prevention projects** funded under the PPP;
- Whilst most Member and Participating States submit DRM Summary Reports to DG ECHO, the quality and harmonisation of these reports has significant margins for improvement if they are to be comparable at EU level;
- Advisory missions in the field of **prevention** and the DRMKC foster a culture of prevention, albeit to a more limited extent;
- The impact of advisory missions in the field of prevention was mostly felt in third countries. However, their effectiveness is limited by a lack of awareness of these advisory missions;
- The impact of the DRMKC is limited by data availability and applicability of outputs for the civil protection community.

Judgement criteria:

- JC1.1: UCPM funded projects and other activities aiming to increase awareness of disasters were overall implemented as planned;
- JC1.2: Increased civilian and institutional awareness of disaster prevention at EU, MS, PS and TC level can at least be partly attributed to UCPM activities;
- JC1.4: The (prevention) mitigation measures in place were effective and suitable.

Judgment criteria JC1.1 and JC1.2 will be addressed collectively, as activities contributed to progress on both. Similarly, mitigation measures will be discussed when relevant activities are mentioned (JC1.4).

During the evaluation period, the UCPM progressed towards achieving a high level of protection against disasters by preventing or reducing their potential effects and fostering a culture of prevention. UCPM prevention activities and projects were implemented as planned.

Projects and activities funded by the UCPM effectively contributed to preventing disasters, reducing their potential effects and promoting a culture of prevention. However, there is still room for improvement in raising risk awareness. The majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM contributed to preventing and reducing potential disasters by fostering a culture of prevention⁷¹. UCPM prevention activities also generated momentum, prompting further activities in prevention⁷². Two EU stakeholders noted that the World Bank study commissioned by DG ECHO, 'Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling-up disaster risk management

⁷¹ Interviews with: national authorities (14); DG ECHO (6); EU stakeholders (9); international stakeholders (4). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (21/27); national authorities (41/49); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (18/21).

⁷² Interviews with: national authorities (6); international stakeholders (2). See case study on forest fires in Annex 7.

investments', was an important tool to help national authorities to ground further investments in prevention⁷³. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement on the extent to which UCPM prevention activities effectively raise awareness of disaster prevention at civilian and, to a lesser extent, institutional level⁷⁴. One DG ECHO Desk Officer noted that this could be better addressed by empowering national and regional authorities to raise awareness and understanding of disaster risk prevention⁷⁵.

There is some disagreement on the progress made by UCPM in achieving its prevention objectives. As a support competence, the UCPM's room for manoeuvre is more limited and there are diverging views on how to accurately assess progress, partly because prevention work spans multiple sectors and operates on a long-term basis. A minority of (mostly national) stakeholders disagreed that the UCPM has progressed in preventing or reducing the effects of disasters by fostering a culture of prevention⁷⁶. Stakeholders observed that the outcomes of prevention efforts take place over a long period, making them less visible and challenging to quantify, affecting their measurability⁷⁷. Two national authorities actively engaged with the UCPM emphasised that the work of prevention is fragmented across various areas of expertise, such as agriculture, the environment and civil protection. They pointed out that the UCPM alone cannot make substantial contributions in supporting Member and Participating States on their preventive measures, given the dispersed nature of responsibilities⁷⁸. The complex stakeholder landscape and long feedback loops limit the ability to measure the direct influence of prevention measures on disaster risk reduction. The literature highlights that the accuracy of measurement can be improved by tailored, long-term monitoring frameworks, with data collection responsibilities shared across sectors⁷⁹.

The following activities largely contributed to the achievement of specific prevention objectives:

1. **The UCPM's risk mapping** (national risk processes and compilation in DRM Summary Reports, analysis of DRM Summary Reports, together with EU policy analysis and EU-level risk assessments in the overview document of disaster risks in the EU) **and tools for risk assessments** (guidelines and standards for DRM Summary Reports);
2. Prevention projects funded under the PPP;
3. Advisory missions in the field of prevention;
4. DRMKC.

The **UCPM's risk mapping and contribution to establishing a disaster prevention framework by creating tools for risk assessment** had the biggest impact on fostering a culture of prevention. The majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM's risk mapping, achieved through supporting national risk assessment processes and the collection and consolidation of DRM Summary Reports from Member and Participating States (submitted every three years) contributed significantly to fostering a culture of disaster prevention⁸⁰. Only a small number of national authorities disagreed, instead

⁷³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1). DG ECHO and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021.

⁷⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (2); DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (9); international stakeholders (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/5); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (2/21). European Commission, *Science for Disaster Risk Management 2020. Acting today, protecting tomorrow*, 2020.

⁷⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁷⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (4); DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (9); international stakeholders (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/27); national authorities (1/49).

⁷⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (8); DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (8); international stakeholders (1).

⁷⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (2).

⁷⁹ Sarabia, M., Kagi, A., Davison, A., Banwell, N., Montes, C., Aebischer, C. and Hostettler, S., *The challenges of impact evaluation: Attempting to measure the effectiveness of community-based disaster risk management*, 2020; Marczak, J., Wistow, G. and Fernandez, J-L., *The development of a local framework for evaluating prevention effects in England*, 2019.

⁸⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (11); DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (8); international stakeholders (3). Surveys of DG ECHO Desk Officers (9/10); national authorities (34/46). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

pointing to the resource demands of these reporting obligations⁸¹. However, data from 2019 to 2022 suggest that most Member and Participating States submitted DRM Summary Reports to DG ECHO. Between 2020 and 2022, DG ECHO received 32 DRM Summary Reports from all Member States and all but one Participating States.

Although DG ECHO has taken effective measures to enhance the quality and harmonisation of DRM Summary Reports, there are still opportunities to improve this. The following changes implemented had a positive impact, helping to increase the **harmonisation** and **quality** of DRM Summary Reports:

- Updated reporting guidelines on disaster risk management to support Member States' reporting, introduced in 2019⁸²;
- Amendments to Article 6 of the Decision, introduced in 2021 (Regulation (EU) 2021/836) introducing cross-boundary disaster risk mapping in DRM Summary Reports. These were highlighted as an area of improvement in a previous evaluation⁸³.

Some improvements were noted in the **harmonisation of DRM Summary Reports**. Across 2020-2022, the majority of DRM Summary Reports submitted fully or partially aligned with the updated guidelines introduced in 2019: 59% (19 reports) followed the Article 6 Reporting Guidelines, 9% (3 reports) partly followed the Article 6 Reporting Guidelines, 31% (10 reports) did not follow the Article 6 Reporting Guidelines.

The heterogeneity of DRM Summary Reports continues to limit their potential effectiveness in fostering pan-European situational awareness and a culture of prevention. DRM Summary Reports continue to differ significantly in their methodologies (including typology of data) and degree of cooperation with other sectors in their compilation. Stakeholders observed that the diversity of methodologies and sectors involved in DRM Summary Reports limits their potential impact⁸⁴. This diversity of approaches poses a challenge and limits their comparability, especially with a view to generating DG ECHO's overview document of disaster risks in the EU. Several differences in DRM Summary Reports were highlighted by stakeholders:

- The **methodologies** employed and the level of detail on the methodological approach differ significantly across the DRM Summary Reports of Member and Participating States. Approximately 50% relied primarily on quantitative data (two used risk mapping models), while approximately 40% relied on qualitative data⁸⁵. Difference in approach and robustness of the DRM Summary Report methodologies is also reflected in the complexity and comprehensiveness of reports submitted and the accompanying documentation. The length varied significantly, ranging from 4 to 292 pages. Only four Member States provided additional files containing detailed risk matrices. Similarly, only four Member States detailed the process used to develop the DRM Summary Report⁸⁶;
- **Cross-sectoral contribution to DRM Summary Report preparation:** Approximately half of Member States and one-third of Participating States noted that their DRM Summary Reports were prepared in collaboration with other stakeholders and institutions (see Figure 22).

⁸¹ Interviews with: national authorities (1). Surveys of: national authorities (3/46).

⁸² Interviews with: national authorities (2); DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (2). European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU*, JRC, 2021.

⁸³ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (2); DG ECHO (2); international stakeholders (1). Surveys of: national authorities (28/49). Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services, *Evaluation study of definitions, gaps and costs of response capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2019.

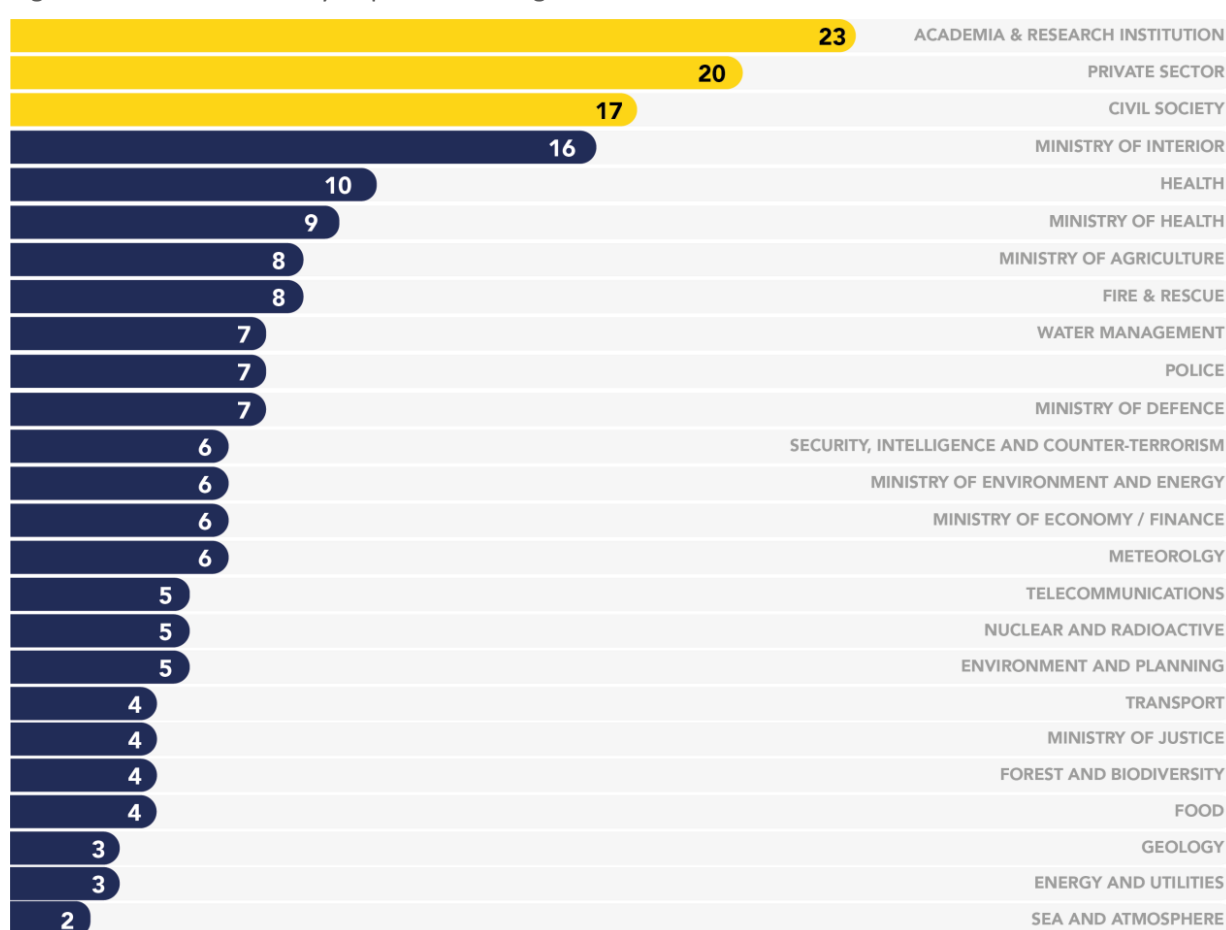
⁸⁴ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (3); EU stakeholders (4); international stakeholders (1). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁸⁵ Not all DRM Summary Reports report on this particular element, thus the figures do not add up to 100%.

⁸⁶ Findings are from an analysis of the DRM Summary Reports provided by DG ECHO.

Nevertheless, taking a holistic approach to the development of national risk assessments and compiling DRM Summary Reports is noted as a key challenge for national authorities⁸⁷. The feasibility of involving other sectors was found to be highly contingent on the institutional set up of civil protection authorities, and a function of the links and hierarchical organisation of civil protection institutions vis-à-vis other ministries and agencies). Such cooperation can be cumbersome. For example, different institutions may have diverging perspectives on what constitutes a risk, requiring significant mediation and harmonisation work. National civil protection authorities tasked with preparing DRM Summary Reports may need to invest significant resources in gathering inputs and actively engaging other stakeholders who may view the DRM Summary Report as outside their mandate or priorities⁸⁸. For one Member State, the DRM Summary Report preparation process added value in forging and formalising links between the civil protection department and other stakeholders and institutions⁸⁹.

Figure 22. DRM Summary Reports involving different sectors



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO analysis of DRM Summary Reports.

Notes: National sectors in **blue**; non-governmental actors in **yellow**.

The quality of DRM Summary Reports has improved somewhat, but there is scope to improve the underlying data and guidance. Stakeholders agreed that the quality of DRM Summary Reports

⁸⁷ European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face*, 2018; European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made risks the EU may face*, 2020; Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (4); EU stakeholders (3); international stakeholders (2). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁸⁸ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁸⁹ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (1).

improved during the evaluation period⁹⁰. DG ECHO's changes have improved the assessment of cross-border risks, the consideration of Hi-Lo risks, emerging risks, and the assessment of the combined impacts of climate change and its effects. These changes were accomplished by incorporating standalone questions in the DRM Summary Report template⁹¹. A large majority of DRM Summary Reports reported the key risks linked to climate change impacts (100% of reporting Member States/Participating States) and which could have a low probability and high impact (88% of Member States/Participating States)⁹².

Suggested improvements to enhance the quality of DRM Summary Reports included:

- Incorporating more data sources, in particular more quantitative data, as most DRM Summary Reports rely on qualitative data (primarily cost data to emphasise the benefits of preventive measures)⁹³;
- Introducing updated guidelines to simplify and facilitate national authorities' ability to compile DRM Summary Reports (e.g. including indicators)⁹⁴. Alternatively, the Technical Assistance for Disaster Risk Management (Track 1) (single country grants under the PPP) have an increased focus on supporting Member States to improve disaster risk management and could play a greater role here⁹⁵;
- There were diverging opinions on the possibility of incorporating foresight methodologies and on making DRM Summary Reports publicly available. In both cases, EU stakeholders were in favour of such adjustments, but national stakeholders viewed them as a potential additional burden⁹⁶.

Prevention projects funded under the PPP are an effective tool to enhance prevention activities.

The majority of stakeholders agreed that these UCPM-funded projects effectively raised the level of prevention in Member and Participating States and, to a lesser extent, in eligible third countries⁹⁷. This was achieved through the reinforcement of cooperation and awareness-raising activities⁹⁸. Prevention projects funded under single-country grants (Track 1) were helpful in leveraging further national work on prevention. Multi-country grants (Track 2) helped to strengthen understanding of how to prevent cross-border risk⁹⁹.

The effectiveness of prevention projects under the PPP could be enhanced by implementing more follow-up monitoring practices to track and evaluate results. A minority of DG ECHO and national stakeholders expressly disagreed that these projects effectively enhanced prevention¹⁰⁰. To enhance

⁹⁰ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1); EU stakeholders (3); national authorities (2).

⁹¹ Interviews with: national authorities (1); EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (2); international stakeholders (2).

⁹² Findings from an analysis of DRM Summary Reports provided by DG ECHO.

⁹³ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (1); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (1). European Commission, Fifth Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC) Annual Seminar, 2022.

⁹⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (4). European Commission, *Lessons from the First COVID-19 Wave in Europe*, 2023.

⁹⁵ European Commission, *Note to DG ECHO Management: Prevention and Preparedness Programme 1: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme*, 2022.

⁹⁶ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); DG ECHO (1). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁹⁷ EU Neighbourhood countries and IPA beneficiary countries that are not Participating States.

⁹⁸ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (6); EU stakeholders (1); international stakeholders (3); DG ECHO (3). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (19/19), Participating States (15/19) and third countries (8/19); national authorities (30/48); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities – Member States (17/18), Participating States (15/15) and third countries (6/9). DG ECHO and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling-up disaster risk management investments*, 2021; European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil protection prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021.

⁹⁹ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/10). DG ECHO and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling-up disaster risk management investments*, 2021.

¹⁰⁰ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (3/19); national authorities (3/48).

the effectiveness of projects, stakeholders highlighted the need for additional follow-up activities to ensure that the outputs consistently and sustainably reached intended end-users¹⁰¹. The inclusion of all UCPM-funded project outputs in the Knowledge Network online platform is expected to help¹⁰². Several stakeholders noted that prevention projects' outputs could be more applicable and accessible for use by targeted end users eventually¹⁰³.

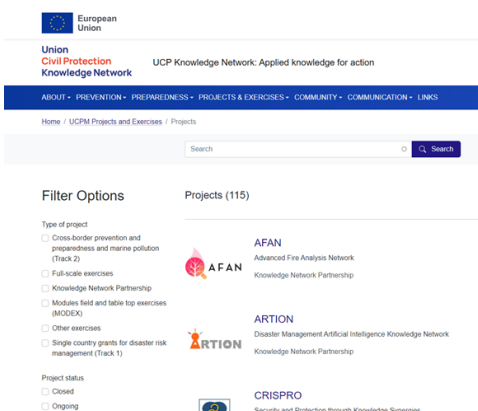
In view of the findings on the cross-sectoral cooperation challenges for national authorities, it is useful to note that, as cross-pillar tools, the PPP and Peer Review Programme were highlighted as effective tools to increase awareness, especially across sectors. The new PRAF is expected to raise awareness by introducing a standardised approach and sharing interdisciplinary best practices (see Section 5.1.1.4).

Figure 23. Lesson: Knowledge Network online platform project spaces

Lesson learnt

Introduction of the project spaced in the Knowledge Network online platform

The Knowledge Network online platform introduced a publicly accessible 'project spaces', which includes the outputs and information on the projects. This increases the impact of UCPM-funded projects by facilitating dissemination efforts to end users and ensuring the projects have an effect beyond their duration. In the evaluation of PPP in 2020, the establishment of a library was identified as a crucial recommendation. Stakeholders who were interviewed for the case study on the integration of preparedness activities highly appreciated this development as a valuable means to enhance effectiveness.



Source: ICF elaboration, based on case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities (see Annex 7).

The UCPM contributed (albeit to a lesser extent) to increasing awareness on disaster prevention through the **dissemination of scientific knowledge via the DRMKC**. A slight majority of stakeholders agreed that the DRMKC is a useful prevention initiative, especially in establishing links between the work of the scientific community and disaster risk reduction professionals¹⁰⁴, primarily through the Risk Data Hub. Nevertheless, stakeholders agreed that its impact has been limited and it is not used to its full potential¹⁰⁵. The Hub is characterised by limited applicability and accessibility of findings to the civil protection community¹⁰⁶. Almost half of the experts surveyed who were involved in DRMKC

¹⁰¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil protection prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021; see Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁰² See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁰³ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (2). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁰⁴ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (10/12); national authorities (25/47); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities – Member States (3/5), Participating States (4/5), and third countries (3/5); European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU*, JRC, 2021; European Commission, *Fifth Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC) Annual Seminar*, 2022. European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2019.

¹⁰⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (1). Surveys of: national authorities (3/47); DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/12).

¹⁰⁶ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (1). European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2019; European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU*, 2021; European Commission, *Fifth Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC) Annual Seminar*, 2022.

activities neither agreed or disagreed that the DRMKC was effective, suggesting a low level of engagement with the initiative¹⁰⁷.

Advisory missions in the field of prevention appear to have been effective, although only limited data is available and key stakeholders had only limited awareness. During the evaluation period, three advisory missions took place, in Portugal, Georgia and Cuba (see Section 2). A freeze on advisory missions was in place between 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Approximately half of the stakeholders who commented on advisory missions agreed that they enhance prevention, especially in third countries¹⁰⁸. Similarly, the advisory mission of 2018 in Portugal was found to have a significant impact on helping Portugal to learn more about forest fire prevention¹⁰⁹. Only a very small minority disagreed¹¹⁰ that these advisory missions contribute to enhancing prevention in target countries, but one-third of national authorities¹¹¹ expressed no opinion. This may suggest a potential lack of awareness or knowledge among those authorities on the impact of such missions¹¹².

Looking ahead, the **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** adopted in February 2023 and the 2022 **Wildfire Action Plan** are perceived as tools with the potential to foster a higher level of prevention. The Goals are seen as a **key instrument that will increase the visibility of disaster prevention and make disaster risk reduction outputs more accessible**¹¹³. The Wildfire Action Plan was implemented in response to requests from Member States following the 2022 wildfire season, which had an alarming increase in the intensity and frequency of wildfires¹¹⁴. The Action Plan seeks to build on other UCPM prevention initiatives, including the Union Disaster Resilience Goals, and to increase awareness of good prevention measures in combating wildfires, including developing good practice guides and funding prevention projects.

5.1.1.2 EQ1.2 To what extent did the UCPM achieve its specific objectives in the field of preparedness within the timeframes set by the Decision? To what extent are suitable mitigation measures in place in case objectives will not be met in the set time?

Key findings

- The UCPM has contributed significantly to enhancing preparedness by supporting the development of capacity and, to a lesser extent, by sharing and facilitating access/use of (scientific) knowledge and best practice;
- The main activities that enhanced preparedness through the sharing of information and best practices were UCPM training and exercises, EWS, preparedness guidelines on host nation support, and (to a lesser extent) advisory missions in the field of preparedness;
- UCPM training and exercises are high quality and are implemented effectively, with tangible impacts at EU and national level;
- UCPM training continues to train experts who are not then deployed on missions and operations, while simultaneously deploying experts with insufficient training;

¹⁰⁷ Surveys of: experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (2/5).

¹⁰⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); international stakeholders (1); experts in civil protection (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (4/7); Participating States, (3/7) and third countries (5/7); national authorities (25/47).

¹⁰⁹ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹¹⁰ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (1/7); Participating States (1/7); national authorities (6/47).

¹¹¹ Surveys of: national authorities (17/47).

¹¹² See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹¹³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (5); international stakeholders (2); national authorities (5). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (11/14); national authorities (31/48).

¹¹⁴ Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023; European Commission, *Overview of the Wildfire Prevention Action Plan*, 2022, [https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/system/files/2022-12/Wildfire Prevention Action Plan.pdf#:~:text=a%20new%20wildfire%20prevention%20action%20plan%20This%20plan,EU%20initiatives%2C%20such%20as%20the%20EU%20Forest%20Strategy](https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/system/files/2022-12/Wildfire%20Prevention%20Action%20Plan.pdf#:~:text=a%20new%20wildfire%20prevention%20action%20plan%20This%20plan,EU%20initiatives%2C%20such%20as%20the%20EU%20Forest%20Strategy)

Key findings

- The new Training and Exercises Programme (to be implemented in September 2023) is expected to have a positive impact on enhancing preparedness;
- EU EWS effectively complement Member and Participating State EWS, applying effective innovations and integrating scientific knowledge and approaches. There is potential to enhance this system by developing additional functionalities and fostering greater interoperability of systems;
- Preparedness projects implemented through the PPP had a positive impact but could benefit from more follow-up to track and evaluate impacts after project completion;
- The impact of advisory missions in the field of prevention were primarily noted in third countries. Awareness of their impact may be limited by a potential lack of knowledge about these activities;
- The guidelines on host nation support were increasingly useful for national authorities during the evaluation period, but their applicability could be improved;
- The introduction and development of rescEU was one of the key successes in preparedness across the evaluation period;
- The ECPP and rescEU had a significant impact in enhancing preparedness through the development of capacity. There is a need to better connect capability development with needs assessment. rescEU should remain a last resort tool;
- Member States made use of adaptation grants to upgrade and repair their national resource capacity.

Judgement criteria:

- JC1.5: UCPM preparedness activities contributed to an increased sharing, availability and use of (scientific) knowledge and best practices on disaster response (at EU/MS/PS/TC level);
- JC1.6: MS, PS and TC have achieved a higher level of preparedness;
- JC1.7: The (preparedness) mitigation measures in place were effective and suitable.

Judgement criteria (JC1.5 and JC1.6) will be answered jointly here. Similarly, due to the limited data on mitigation measures, these will be discussed when relevant activities are mentioned (JC1.7) in the coming subsections.

During the period evaluated, UCPM activities and funded projects have enhanced preparedness through the increased sharing, availability, and use of (scientific) knowledge¹¹⁵ and best practices, as well as by supporting the development of capabilities to respond to disasters.

The UCPM has contributed significantly to enhancing preparedness. This was achieved by supporting the development of capacity and, to a lesser extent, through the sharing, availability, and use of (scientific) knowledge and best practices. The great majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM made significant progress towards its specific objectives in the field of preparedness¹¹⁶. A slight majority believed that the UCPM was slightly more effective in enhancing preparedness by supporting capacity development, rather than through the sharing, availability and use of scientific

¹¹⁵ While the Decision refers to 'scientific knowledge on disasters', the report refers to the entire knowledge base relevant for the management of disasters and is accordingly noted as '(scientific) knowledge' for clarity.

¹¹⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (24); DG ECHO (11); EU stakeholders (13); international stakeholders (6); professional organisations (1); experts in civil protection (5). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (30/33); national authorities (45/50); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (17/19).

knowledge¹¹⁷. Based on the limited data available, stakeholders generally agreed that the UCPM is more effective in enhancing preparedness within than outside the EU. This observation is linked to discussions and considerations about the present and future role of the UCPM in third countries (see Section 4.3)¹¹⁸.

UCPM activities played a significant role in enhancing preparedness through 1) increased sharing, availability and use of (scientific) knowledge and best practices on disasters, and 2) by complementing and supporting the development of response capacity.

Several UCPM activities enhanced preparedness by contributing to the increased sharing, availability and use of (scientific) knowledge and best practices on disaster response. These include (in order of impact):

1. Training and Exercises Programme;
2. EWS;
3. Preparedness projects funded under the PPP;
4. Guidelines on host nation support;
5. Advisory missions in the field of preparedness.

The Training and Exercises Programme enhanced preparedness by increasing the knowledge base and preparedness of key stakeholders participating in civil protection activities at both EU and national level (see Section 1.1.4). The great majority of stakeholders highlighted the role of the Training and Exercises Programme in enhancing preparedness through the sharing of knowledge and best practices¹¹⁹. The main impacts achieved by UCPM training and exercises include:

- **EU level.** UCPM training and exercises have improved the effectiveness of EUCPT deployments. Deployed in response to a UCPM activation, the EUCPT typically plays a coordinating role. Experts and national authorities observed that EUCPT members who participated in training and exercises (particularly in-person training and EU MODEX) collaborated with one another more effectively¹²⁰, as their prior acquaintance and familiarity eased their communication. The exercises for civil protection modules (EU MODEX) are designed to test specific modules or other response capacities, components of the UCPM and their coordination procedures¹²¹. Limited data show that closer cooperation and enhanced preparedness were achieved in the UCPM response to the February 2023 earthquake near the Turkish-Syrian border¹²²;
- **National level.** UCPM training and exercises had an impact on the development of resources and dissemination of knowledge and best practices. The great majority of stakeholders involved in UCPM training and exercises helped to establish and develop national-level

¹¹⁷ **Developing capacity** – surveys of: national authorities (41/50); DG ECHO Desk Officers (30/33); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (17/19). **Sharing knowledge** – surveys of: national authorities (45/50); DG ECHO Desk Officers (28/33); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (17/20).

¹¹⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (2). Surveys of: experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities – 73% (14/19) agreed for third countries and 85% (17/20) agreed for Member States; DG ECHO Desk Officers – 59% (10/17) agreed for third countries and 85% (28/33) agreed for Member States.

¹¹⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (21); DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (1); international stakeholders (4); professional organisations (1); experts in civil protection (6). Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (training – 35/39; table-top exercises – 30/34; field exercises – 34/37). Annex 7 on case study on forest fires; Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023; European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019; EUROMODEX, *Final Consolidated Report Lot 2 / cycle 10 January 2019 – July 2020*, 2020.

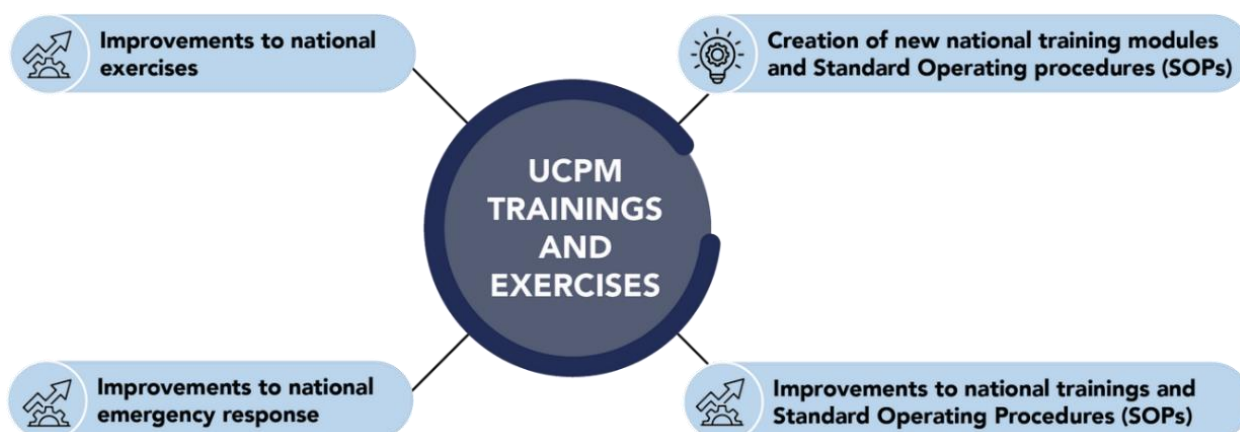
¹²⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (4); experts in civil protection (1); EU stakeholders (1); international stakeholders (1). Surveys of: training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (online training – 25/37, in-person training – 38/41, table-top exercises – 26/30, EU MODEX – 30/33). European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019.

¹²¹ Interviews with: national authorities (2); experts in civil protection (1). Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (online training – 25/37, in-person training – 38/41, table-top exercises – 26/30, EU MODEX – 30/33).

¹²² Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (1).

capacity-building initiatives¹²³. Figure 24 presents an overview of how UCPM training and exercises fostered the improvement and creation of national disaster management activities. While national experts disseminate the knowledge learned during UCPM training and exercises, this could be more systematic in future¹²⁴.

Figure 24. Examples of how UCPM trainings and exercises have influenced national level capacity building initiatives



Source: ICF elaboration, based on interim evaluation survey data¹²⁵.

UCPM training and exercises were delivered to a high quality level. However, the materials and methodological approach could be refined and improved, as could the content of online training. Figure 25 shows that stakeholders valued the quality of UCPM training and exercises. The content of training sessions, their delivery, and the expertise and experience of trainers received the highest ratings in both training and exercises. Nevertheless, stakeholders noted that the materials for in-person training and table-top exercises could be improved. Similarly, the methodology and (to a lesser extent) content of online training could be refined¹²⁶. Stakeholders made several suggestions for improvements to UCPM training and exercises:

- Materials provided to participants in training and exercises could be improved by **introducing an online ‘toolbox’**¹²⁷;
- Future training could consider taking a **multi-hazard approach** and explore potential innovations. A small majority agreed¹²⁸ that a multi-hazard approach would be beneficial, with a minority¹²⁹ arguing that it could be overly complex;
- Training and exercises could be **modernised** (e.g. current overreliance on PowerPoint)¹³⁰. The introduction of an online database and registration tool for training, along with the use of

¹²³ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (18/21). Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism’s Training Programme*, 2019.

¹²⁴ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (7/17). European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism’s Training Programme*, 2019.

¹²⁵ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders - improvements to national training (6/17), creation of new training modules – (2/17), improvements to SOPs (6/17), creation of new SOPs (2/17), improvements to national emergency response (2/17), improvements to national exercises (3/17).

¹²⁶ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders were somewhat/very dissatisfied with: material provided in online training (3/35), content of online training (2/36), method of online training (5/36).

¹²⁷ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders were somewhat/very dissatisfied with: material provided in in-person training (1/38), material provided in table-top exercises (1/24), material provided in online training (3/35).

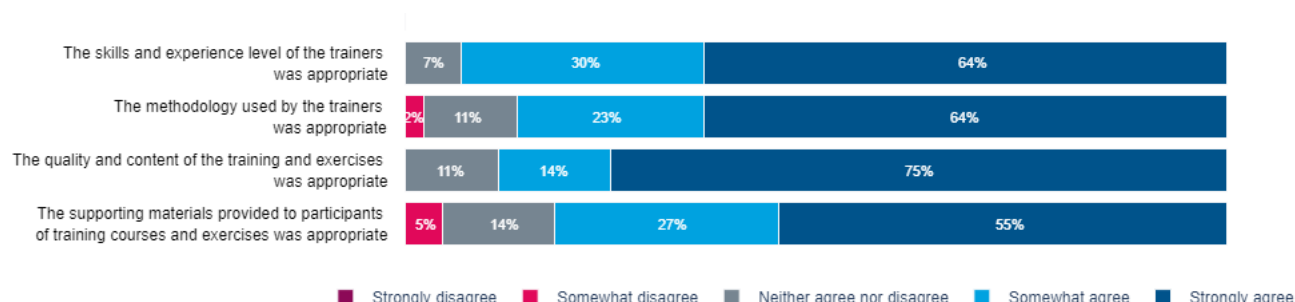
¹²⁸ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (4/9).

¹²⁹ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (3/9).

¹³⁰ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (4/44). Interviews with: expert in civil protection (1/10).

virtual reality during the recent discussion-based MODEX exercise on marine pollution, were highly valued by stakeholders¹³¹.

Figure 25. Training stakeholders: quality of UCPM training and exercises



Source: ICF elaboration, based on survey results for Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders.

UCPM training and exercises were carried out successfully and were well-attended during the evaluation period. Appropriate mitigation measures were implemented to address challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

While there was a slight decrease in the volume of **UCPM exercises** implemented, the effectiveness of each exercise has increased. Figure 26 shows that the number of exercises decreased compared to the 2014-2016 period, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health measures. Nevertheless, key stakeholders agreed that the exercises during the evaluation period were effectively implemented¹³². Only a very small minority of stakeholders disagreed¹³³. Most agreed that the UCPM was especially effective in implementing module (EU MODEX) exercises, which helped to foster interoperability between teams and test the capacity of the ECPP¹³⁴. Stakeholders also noted that the implementation of exercises improved significantly since 2017, incorporating more interaction with different sectors¹³⁵. There is room for improvement, however, including a more prominent focus on risk analysis in exercises¹³⁶, ensuring greater interoperability between modules,¹³⁷ and ensuring more targeted content and approach¹³⁸. A minority of stakeholders pointed out that there could be a more balanced representation of countries, particularly in EU MODEX¹³⁹.

¹³¹ European Commission, *DBX EU MODEX on Marine Pollution Conference*, 2023, <https://www.marine-pollution.eu-modex.eu/>; See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹³² Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – EU MODEX (36/43), table-top exercises (31/41). Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (6).

¹³³ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – EU MODEX (3/43), table-top exercises (2/41).

¹³⁴ Surveys of Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – EU MODEX (36/43). Interviews with: international stakeholders (1); national authorities (2).

¹³⁵ Interviews with: professional organisations (1); EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (1).

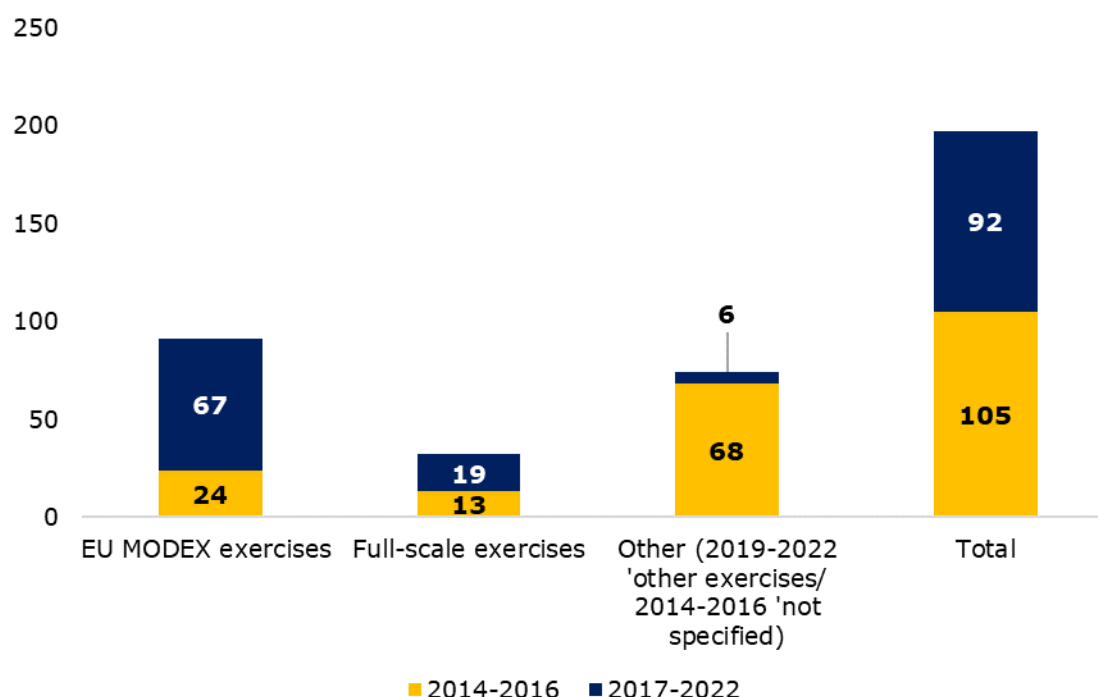
¹³⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

¹³⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (2).

¹³⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

¹³⁹ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – somewhat/strongly disagree that the representation of countries was appropriate: EU MODEX (4/28), table-top exercises (2/29).

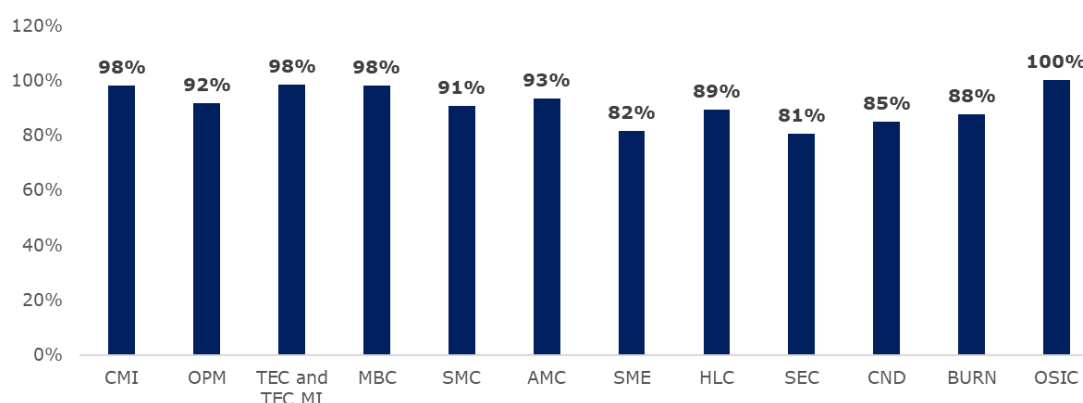
Figure 26. Overview of exercises implemented before/during the evaluation period



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Notwithstanding the challenges associated with COVID-19, approximately 3,800 experts have attended at least one **UCPM training** course since 2017. Training stakeholders argued that UCPM in-person and, to a lesser extent, online training were effectively implemented¹⁴⁰. However, key stakeholders expressed less appreciation for the online format, as it limited opportunities for networking and interaction with peers and trainers, affecting engagement¹⁴¹. Figure 27 shows that courses were well attended throughout the evaluation period and neared full capacity. Key stakeholders acknowledged that the number of participants was appropriate¹⁴², but a small minority identified a need for a more balanced representation of countries, especially in in-person training¹⁴³.

Figure 27. Average participants and training places available, 2017-2022



¹⁴⁰ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – in-person training (46/50); online (34/47).

¹⁴¹ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – in-person training (46/50); online (34/47). Interviews with: professional organisations (1); DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1).

¹⁴² Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – (38/43).

¹⁴³ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – online training (2/38); in-person training (5/39).

Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Notes: CMI: Union Civil Protection Mechanism Introduction Course; OPM: Operational Management Course; TEC: Technical Expert Course (including for TEC MI for Maritime Incidents); SMC: Staff Management Course; AMC: Assessment Mission Course; SME: Seminar for Mechanism Experts; HLC: High Level Coordination Course; SEC: Security Course; CND: Course on Negotiation and Decision-Making; BURN: Burns Assessment Team Training Course; OSIC: On-site Integration Course.

UCPM training still faces challenges in reaching the target audience. While the number of experts trained is sufficient, the UCPM continued to train experts who were not subsequently deployed, while simultaneously deploying experts who have not received all necessary training¹⁴⁴. This is consistent with findings of the previous UCPM interim evaluation. In addition, stakeholders raised concerns about participants' English proficiency¹⁴⁵ and prior knowledge/understanding of the Mechanism¹⁴⁶. Three national civil protection authorities suggested that training and exercises in general could be more targeted, with invites sent to members of more specialised communities¹⁴⁷.

The forthcoming merging of UCPM exercises and training under the new Training and Exercises Programme is expected to introduce changes that will increase the effectiveness of these activities. It will merge the previously separate UCPM training programme and civil protection exercises (see Section 2.2; case study on the integration of preparedness activities in Annex 7). Stakeholders agreed that the new Training and Exercises Programme, implemented from September 2023, will likely increase the effectiveness of UCPM training and exercises, enhancing preparedness¹⁴⁸. A small minority of respondents disagreed, citing concerns about the increasing role of online training compared to in-person training¹⁴⁹. The following elements of the new Programme will likely have the most impact on improving the effectiveness of UCPM training and exercises:

- A **'deployable training path'** with a limited number of places per Member State. It will require experts' participation in an EU MODEX exercise. Upon completion of the deployable training path, participants may be included in a 'pool of deployable experts' within the ECPP¹⁵⁰. This could have a significant impact on addressing the reported mismatch between participants receiving UCPM training and those deployed on missions and operations. the path will also include a layer of assessment, with feedback and recommendations on whether the participant has obtained the knowledge and skills to move to the next step in the Programme¹⁵¹;
- A **new framework contract for ad hoc training run by external contractors**. This will provide access to external expertise that is compatible with, and also different from, the current pool¹⁵². Stakeholders expect this to provide access to more practice-driven and hands-on courses (e.g. on cultural awareness)¹⁵³.

¹⁴⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); national authorities (1). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities. European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019.

¹⁴⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1); professional organisations (2). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁴⁶ Interviews with: professional organisations (2); international organisations (1); DG ECHO (2). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁴⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (3).

¹⁴⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (1); international organisations (1); national authorities (5). Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – agreed (17/39), did not agree/disagree (17/39), disagreed (5/39). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁴⁹ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – (2/5).

¹⁵⁰ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁵¹ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities. European Commission, *UCPM Training and Exercises – Participant performance Assessment and Evaluation in the UCPM Training Courses*, 2021.

¹⁵² See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁵³ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities. Assessment of the Framework Contract on the provision of ad hoc training that ICF recently signed (on behalf of the Civitas Soteria consortium) with DG ECHO has been conducted by an external expert to avoid a conflict of interest.

EU-level EWS effectively complement national systems to enhance preparedness, especially in Member and Participating States. Stakeholders agreed that EWS effectively contributed to enhancing preparedness by providing the ERCC with situational awareness and understanding, and complementing national systems¹⁵⁴. National stakeholders from Member and Participating States underlined that while EU-level EWS are not their primary tool, they effectively complement the existing national tools¹⁵⁵. Stakeholders predominantly rely on the Copernicus Emergency Management Service¹⁵⁶, chiefly EFFIS¹⁵⁷ and EFAS¹⁵⁸. They also use GDACS, the Aristotle (All Risk Integrated System towards Trans-boundary holistic Early-warning) system and GNSS, based on the EU Space Programme Galileo¹⁵⁹.

Since 2017, EWS have introduced improvements to strengthen their contribution to enhancing preparedness. They built on recommendations in the 2016 interim evaluation of the UCPM to incorporate more scientific expertise, build closer synergies between systems, and improve functionality¹⁶⁰, including:

- Building on the longstanding relationship with the JRC to incorporate science into its EWS (such as Aristotle). EWS included **scientific expertise** through the establishment of a European Anthropogenic Hazard Scientific Partnership (EAHSP) in April 2022¹⁶¹. This trend is set to continue, with Member and Participating States allowed to ask the ERCC to receive expert judgement from the EAHSP¹⁶². In addition, the setting up of a Scientific and Technical Advisory Facility (STAF) to enhance capabilities for early warning to include strategic foresight will enhance the incorporation of scientific expertise into EWS¹⁶³;
- Efforts to **ensure closer synergies** between EWS, in particular between Copernicus and GDACS on multi-hazard mapping¹⁶⁴;
- Continuous efforts to **improve the accuracy of data and information**. Improvements include increasing systems' capacity, enhancing systems regularly, and adding new functionality, such as Copernicus' introduction of exposure mapping, with information on exposed population, housing and other assets from satellite and census data¹⁶⁵. Improvements underway include the introduction of multi-hazard monitoring in the Global Situation System Dashboard to give more comprehensive mapping of the interlinking effects of disasters.

¹⁵⁴ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers - Member States (6/7), Participating States (6/7), third countries (3/7); national authorities (38/38); DG ECHO (3/24). Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (16). See Annex 7 for case study on floods.

¹⁵⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (16). European Commission, *Early Warning System e-Meeting Minutes (online)*, 2020; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

¹⁵⁶ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (8).

¹⁵⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (3). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹⁵⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (1). See Annex 7 for case study on floods.

¹⁵⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (8).

¹⁶⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2018; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2019; European Commission, *Early Warning System e-Meeting Minutes (online)*, 2020; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2021.

¹⁶¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM) Strategic crisis management in the EU*, 2022.

¹⁶² European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

¹⁶³ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

¹⁶⁴ European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2021.

¹⁶⁵ European Commission, *Early Warning System e-Meeting Minutes*, 2020; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2021; European Commission, *Early Warning Systems (EWS) Expert Group Meeting*, 2022; European Commission, *Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM) Strategic crisis management in the EU*, 2022.

There is room for improvement to make EWS more effective in enhancing preparedness.

Stakeholders agreed that EWS should be improved to ensure they more effectively support national and EU-level preparedness¹⁶⁶. In particular, they could be revised to:

1. **Ensure that information is less fragmented across EU and domestic EWS.** Several stakeholders highlighted the challenge of managing a vast amount of information from various systems, making it difficult to conduct expert assessments promptly during major events¹⁶⁷. In addition, EU-level EWS could influence national EWS more systematically¹⁶⁸. For example, one national authority pointed out that certain countries have better alignment between their national systems and the EU EWS. It highlighted a significant example during the 2021 flash floods in Germany, where early warning information was available at European level, but local and regional authorities were unaware of the system and the extent of the anticipated floods¹⁶⁹;
2. **Cover more hazards.** The hazard most effectively covered by early warning and monitoring systems is forest fires, thanks to near real-time monitoring. However, the monitoring of floods, health emergencies and other human-induced or anthropogenic disasters could be improved and made more effective¹⁷⁰;
3. **Include more innovative data sources.** Discussions on how to improve EWS assessments centred on the importance of including more innovative data sources, such as social media and data from mobile operators, as well as incorporating artificial intelligence (AI)¹⁷¹. The following H2020-funded projects represent current progress:
 - a) CLINT – Climate Intelligence project, which seeks to develop an AI framework to process big climate datasets to improve climate science in the detection, causation and attribution of extreme events¹⁷²;
 - b) XAIDA – eXtreme events: Artificial Intelligence for Detection and Attribution, which brings together research institutes and climate risk practitioners to better assess and predict the influence of climate change on extreme weather using AI¹⁷³;
4. **Ensure more quality control.** More quality control systems could be put in place to check the forecasts and report results from EWS¹⁷⁴.

Similar to prevention projects (see EQ1.1), preparedness projects funded under the PPP were an effective tool to share (scientific) knowledge and best practices on disasters and raise preparedness at national and Union level. The majority of stakeholders agreed that these UCPM-funded projects effectively enhanced preparedness in Member and Participating States and, to a lesser extent, in eligible third countries. This was achieved through the reinforcement of cooperation

¹⁶⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (3).

¹⁶⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (1); experts in civil protection (1).

¹⁶⁸ See Annex 7 for case study on floods. Interviews with: national authorities (1).

¹⁶⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

¹⁷⁰ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 Forest Fire Season*, 2019; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021, 2022*; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022.

¹⁷¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2019; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2021.

¹⁷² CLINT, *Our Mission*, 2023, <https://climateintelligence.eu/>

¹⁷³ XAIDA, *XAIDA – eXtreme events: Artificial Intelligence for Detection and Attribution*, 2023, <https://xaida.eu/>

¹⁷⁴ European Commission, *Early Warning System e-Meeting Minutes*, 2020; Casajus Valles, A., Marin Ferrer, M., Poljanšek, K. and Clark, I., *Science for Disaster Risk Management 2020: acting today, protecting tomorrow*, 2020.

and sharing of best practices¹⁷⁵. As for prevention, the single country grants (Track 1) help to leverage further work on preparedness at national level.

As with EQ1.1, the applicability and lack of follow-up monitoring of the results of preparedness projects funded under the PPP could be tackled to improve their effectiveness. A small minority of stakeholders disagreed that the preparedness projects funded under the PPP contributed to enhancing preparedness, primarily highlighting a lack of effectiveness for third countries¹⁷⁶. The sustainability of the impact of preparedness projects is limited, due to a lack of follow-up on project results (e.g. checking whether a network created by a project is still running), undermining overall effectiveness¹⁷⁷. In some cases, for example, project website domains expired on the conclusion of a project¹⁷⁸. The Knowledge Network online platform, which now includes all project outputs (and the ability to filter the project spaces by set criteria), will likely significantly extend their impact (see Figure 23)¹⁷⁹. Some preparedness project outputs could be made more accessible and applicable to civil protection authorities¹⁸⁰. For example, involving end users in the project proposal and design, or creating simulation tools, databases and platforms that can be easily used after the project finishes¹⁸¹.

The guidelines on host nation support were an increasingly useful tool for national authorities, with further scope to improve their applicability. The guidelines provide a framework to facilitate and coordinate the reception, deployment, and provision of assistance to teams and assets during UCPM activations. Stakeholders recognised the guidelines as a beneficial tool that has significantly improved since 2017¹⁸². Four national authorities reported using the guidelines to develop their own national guidelines for response efforts delivered under UCPM activations and/or bilateral schemes¹⁸³. Stakeholders prefer guidelines that remain flexible and non-binding, as an adaptable reference for the development of national practices and tools¹⁸⁴. There are areas that could be improved, however, such as updating the guidelines (to include good practice examples, e.g. on waving custom fees, or exemptions for the equipment brought to a country) and raising awareness of their existence¹⁸⁵. The guidelines are due to be updated in 2023¹⁸⁶.

As discussed under EQ1.1, **advisory missions in the field of preparedness** appear to have been effective, primarily in third countries, despite a lack of awareness and limited data. Several stakeholders agreed that advisory missions are increasingly effective in enhancing preparedness¹⁸⁷.

¹⁷⁵ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (1/19), Participating States – (1/19) and third countries (8/19); national authorities (38/50); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities – third countries (1/15). Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (1); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (3); national authorities (9).

¹⁷⁶ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (18/19), Participating States – (14/19) and third countries (4/19); national authorities (3/50); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities – Member States (12/17), Participating States (16/16), third countries (7/9).

¹⁷⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil protection prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021. See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁷⁸ European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil protection prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021.

¹⁷⁹ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁸⁰ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (2). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁸¹ European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil protection prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021.

¹⁸² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (2); national authorities (17). European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

¹⁸³ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1); national authorities (4).

¹⁸⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (3).

¹⁸⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (5).

¹⁸⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). Where relevant, the evaluation team mentions activities taking place beyond the evaluation period where they (will/may) have an impact on evaluation findings.

¹⁸⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); experts (1); international stakeholders (1); professional organisations (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (3/7), Participating States (3/7), third countries (6/7); national authorities (17/48).

In fact, DG ECHO stakeholders argued that this is the most effective UCPM activity in terms of enhancing preparedness in third countries¹⁸⁸. One professional organisation supporting the implementation of UCPM activities (training, exercises, EoE Programme) similarly claimed that holding more advisory missions in third countries would improve preparedness for UCPM deployment to third countries¹⁸⁹. A DG ECHO officer also suggested that advisory missions could include elements of training citizens as first responders¹⁹⁰. An overall lack of opinions collected on advisory missions might be an indicator of a lack of awareness of their implementation.

The **pre-positioning of firefighters** in 2021 had a positive impact on knowledge sharing between firefighters in regions dealing with forest fires and were well received as a tool to make responses more effective¹⁹¹. In 2021, firefighters were positioned in Greece to help with the summer forest fire season. After positive Member and Participating State feedback, this effort has been renewed, with 11 Member States to send almost 450 firefighters to France, Greece and Portugal ahead of the forest fire season¹⁹². There are limited data on how this activity should be continued and reinforced¹⁹³.

Looking ahead, the following **UCPM activities adopted towards the end/after the evaluation period** are expected to have a positive impact on enhancing preparedness. They will likely do so by increasing the sharing, availability and use of (scientific knowledge) and best practices on disaster response:

1. The **Knowledge Network** is expected to have an impact on enhancing preparedness¹⁹⁴, notably by bringing science further into the fabric of UCPM preparedness activities¹⁹⁵. The Knowledge Network's Science Pillar aims to 'identify, promote and feed the needs of the civil protection community into the national and international scientific agendas (e.g. research programmes) and to enhance the use and dissemination of existing and developing scientific knowledge in all DRM phases'¹⁹⁶. Nevertheless, several national authorities noted a lack of clarity on how the Knowledge Network will operate and make an impact¹⁹⁷;
2. Stakeholders expressed their positive views on the **scenario building** exercises to date, highlighting their potential in enhancing preparedness¹⁹⁸. Areas for improvement include linking scenarios with capability requirements (e.g. how findings from scenarios can inform which capabilities are developed in the ECPP and/or rescEU)¹⁹⁹ and taking sufficient time to discuss the scenarios in-depth (one national authority found them rushed)²⁰⁰;

¹⁸⁸ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (6/7).

¹⁸⁹ Interviews with: professional organisations (1).

¹⁹⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

¹⁹¹ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*. Interviews with: national authorities (1). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹⁹² Interviews with: national authorities (2). European Commission, *Success is based on preparation – ERCC ready for the 2023 wildfire season, 2023*, <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/news/success-based-preparation-ercc-ready-2023-wildfire-season>; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

¹⁹³ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹⁹⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (6); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (2); national authorities (1). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁹⁵ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); experts in civil protection (1). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

¹⁹⁶ European Commission, *Concept paper: Building the Science Pillar of the Union Civil protection Knowledge Network*, 2021.

¹⁹⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (1). See Annex 7 for three case studies on integration of UCPM preparedness activities, forest fires and floods.

¹⁹⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (5). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (9/14), Participating States (9/14).

¹⁹⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (1).

²⁰⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

3. In addition to contributing to a culture of prevention (EQ1.1), DG ECHO and national stakeholders noted that the **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** could have an impact on enhancing preparedness, especially in Member and Participating States²⁰¹;
4. Two DG ECHO stakeholders mentioned that the **ERCC 2.0 initiative** is likely to enhance preparedness at EU and national level, given its focus on horizon scanning and foresight²⁰².

UCPM's preparedness activities enhance preparedness by supporting the development of national capacity. UCPM activities with this impact include:

1. rescEU;
2. ECPP, including its adaptation grants.

rescEU and the ECPP (formerly the EERC and Voluntary Pool) have been instrumental in supporting the development of national capacity. The large majority of stakeholders agreed that rescEU²⁰³ and the ECPP²⁰⁴ contributed to enhancing preparedness. National authorities noted that both the ECPP and rescEU helped to identify and address (potential) capacity shortcomings²⁰⁵. A small minority of stakeholders, mostly from national authorities, disagreed that the ECPP²⁰⁶ and rescEU²⁰⁷ contributed to enhancing preparedness, but did not justify that assessment.

The development of capacity in the ECPP and rescEU could be better linked to needs assessment. Stakeholders would like to see better use of strategic and analytical assessments to drive decision-making prior to the development of capacity in both the ECPP and rescEU²⁰⁸. They suggested that the development of capacity in the ECPP and rescEU could be informed by findings from risk mapping and scenario building (see Section 4.4). One DG ECHO Desk Officer suggested that this could be an opportunity for DG ECHO to drive technology development for improved and innovative capacities, as with some shelter capacity²⁰⁹.

Stakeholders perceive that greater efforts should be made to ensure that rescEU remains a last resort tool when ECPP capacity is insufficient. rescEU was established to fill capacity gaps in the ECPP as a last resort safety net.²¹⁰ In the case of a request for assistance, the ERCC always check for spontaneous offers from other countries, as well as the ECPP, before turning to rescEU. Nevertheless, the majority of stakeholders, primarily from national authorities, noted an excessive reliance on rescEU since 2019. While this is understandable as rescEU has been in the first years of its implementation in a context characterised by severe crises, in the future authorities noted that they would expect rescEU to remain a "last resort tool" to be triggered only when ECPP capacities are not sufficient²¹¹. While national authorities emphasised that the ECPP should remain the core tool for

²⁰¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (11/14), Participating States (11/14), third countries (4/14); national authorities (31/48).

²⁰² Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

²⁰³ Interviews with: national authorities (24); international stakeholders (6); EU stakeholders (11); DG ECHO (11); experts in civil protection (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (12/12); national authorities (36/46). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

²⁰⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (14); international stakeholders (3); EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (9/11), Participating States (8/11); national authorities (36/48). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

²⁰⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (7).

²⁰⁶ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (1/11), Participating States (1/11); national authorities (4/48).

²⁰⁷ Surveys of: national authorities (2/46).

²⁰⁸ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (5). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. European Committee of the Regions, *Preparing for and dealing with crises: strengthening the resilience of the Union, its regions and cities*, COM(2021) 576 final.

²⁰⁹ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

²¹⁰ European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2021, 2022*.

²¹¹ Interviews with: national authorities (8); DG ECHO (3). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

capacity development of the UCPM, a small minority of EU-level stakeholders argued that the current balance is already adequate²¹² or that rescEU could be grown further²¹³.

The establishment and development of rescEU had a significant impact on supporting Union and national preparedness during the evaluation period and is set to grow in the coming years. The large majority of stakeholders agreed that rescEU was an important innovation that contributed to enhancing UCPM, Member and Participating State preparedness²¹⁴. As discussed in Section 1.2.3.2, rescEU transition was first introduced to quickly build aerial forest fire fighting capacities for forest fire summer seasons in Europe. rescEU proper has then been building on this by expanding significantly across sectors covered and number of grants awarded (see Figure 28). A wide range of Member States made use of rescEU proper, with 15 Member States obtaining at least one rescEU proper grant across the evaluation period (see Figure 29). Stakeholders highlighted that, overall, rescEU had an impact on enhancing preparedness for health emergencies (especially medical stockpiling in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic)²¹⁵, forest fires²¹⁶ and energy security²¹⁷, particularly in light of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. As illustrated in Figure 28, the number of areas covered by rescEU proper already exceeded the target of six areas for rescEU to cover set for 2024.²¹⁸ In the evaluation period, rescEU proper awarded most grants for medical stockpiling, followed by aerial forest fire plane. However, grants are also increasingly covering a wider range of capacities, including for shelters, CBRN stockpiles, decontamination and detection, transport, and emergency energy supply.

²¹² Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (1).

²¹³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholder (1). European Committee of the Regions, *Preparing for and dealing with crises: strengthening the resilience of the Union, its regions and cities*, COM(2021) 576 final.

²¹⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (24); international stakeholders (6); EU stakeholders (11/27); DG ECHO (11); experts in civil protection (2). Surveys of DG ECHO Desk Officers (12/12); national authorities (36/46). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

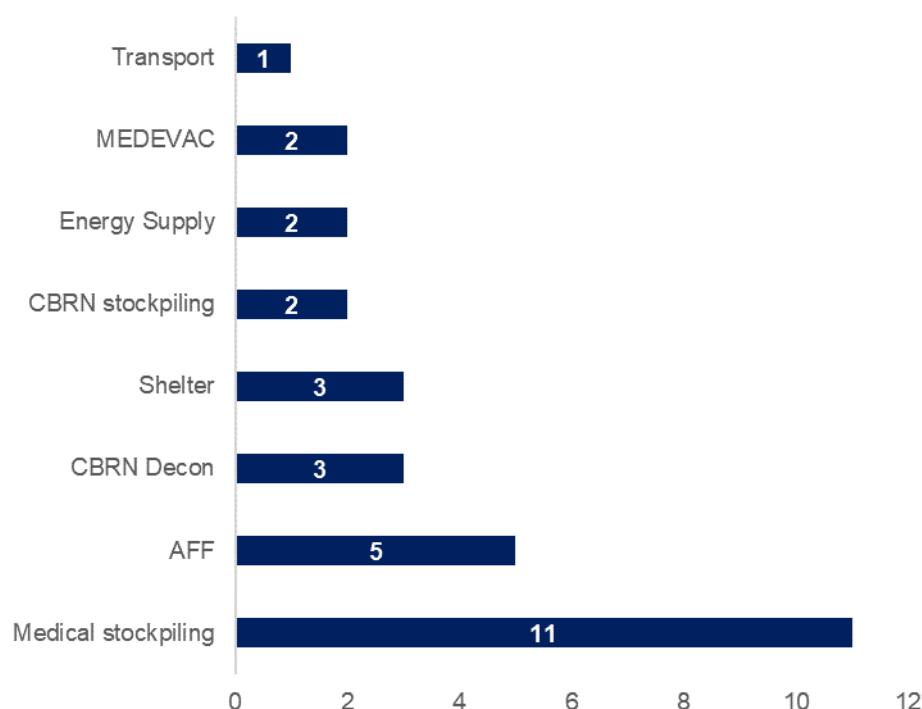
²¹⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (2); international stakeholders (1); experts in civil protection (1); DG ECHO (3).

²¹⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (3). European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2019, 2020*; European Commission, *Forest fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa*, 2021. See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

²¹⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3).

²¹⁸ European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2021, 2022*.

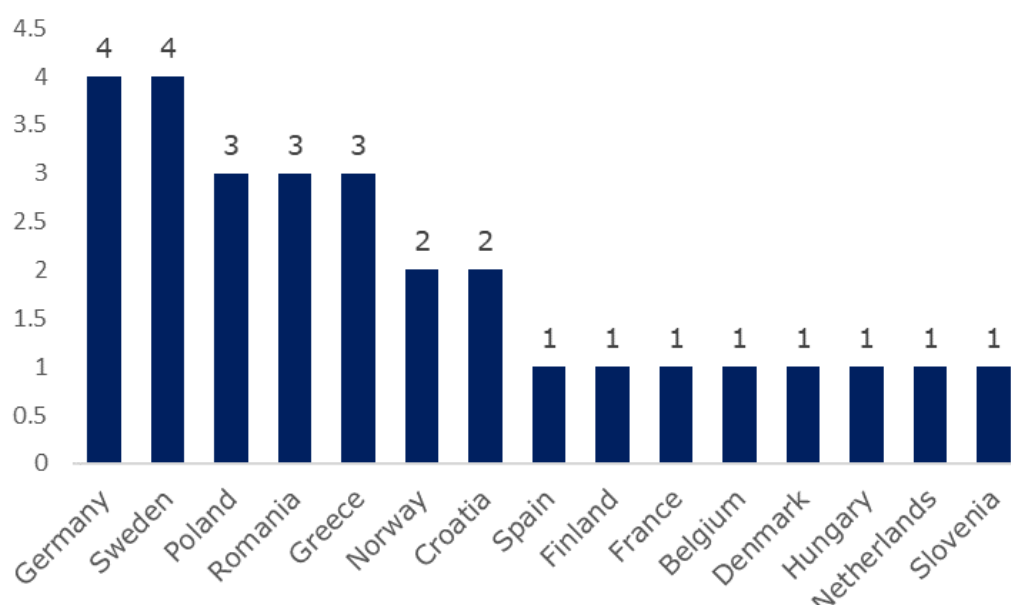
Figure 28. Number of grants awarded by rescEU proper, 2017-2022 proper



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Notes: As the interim evaluation covers 2017 to 2022, the grants discussed in 2022 but signed in January 2023 or later are not included; transport grants correspond to three planes, while stockpiling, energy supply, and shelter comprise a wide range of categories of items.

Figure 29. Overview of grants awarded by rescEU proper, by Member State



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

The redefinition of the ECPP and, to a lesser extent, the integration of the European Medical Corps (EMC) were considered developments that positively enhanced preparedness. In particular:

- **Redefinition of the ECPP.** In 2019, the European Emergency Response Capacity (EERC), also known as the voluntary pool, was strengthened and transformed into the ECPP. Stakeholders

agreed that this redefinition and reinforcement of the ECPP enhanced its preparedness, and by extension that of the Union, establishing it as a critical actor²¹⁹. For example, since 2021, the UCPM also covers operational costs in case of deployment within and outside the Union²²⁰;

- **Redefinition of the EMC in the ECPP.** The EMC consists of various medical and public health teams, including doctors, nurses, paramedics, epidemiologists, and other healthcare professionals. Personnel for the EMC are provided by Member and Participating States and are certified to ensure that they meet WHO quality standards²²¹. In 2018, the EMC was defined as part of the ECPP (then EERC) to be deployed as response capacity²²². Stakeholders agreed that this development, and the role of the EMC, had a positive impact on enhancing preparedness for health emergencies²²³. One international stakeholder highlighted the positive contribution of the EMC in medical evacuation processes in the context of the Türkiye -Syria earthquake²²⁴. Stakeholders noted, however, that the EMC is underutilised and could be more visible²²⁵.

Despite difficulties (such as COVID-19), the ECPP enhanced preparedness through a moderate increase in capacity across the evaluation period. As of February 2023, there were 123 committed or offered ECPP capacities, of which 85 are full pool capacities registered in CECIS (see Section 1)²²⁶. Member and Participating States committed 69 capacities, of which 54 were registered across the evaluation period (see Figure 30). This is compared to a total of 77 capacities committed between 2014 and 2016. In addition, the evaluation period saw the withdrawal of some capacities (i.e. commitment was not renewed by Member States), thus the ECPP did not show linear growth. A contraction in the volume of capacity committed for the first time was evident in 2018, 2019 and 2021. Conversely, a significant increase in capacity was reported in 2020, despite the difficulties in certifying capacity remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic and thus the slowing of registering capacity in CECIS²²⁷. DG ECHO applied suitable mitigation measures to ensure that more capacity was certified in 2021, such as introducing the possibility to conduct some certification steps online²²⁸. Some capacity was deployed before being certified and registered, in case where they were necessary for response efforts, showing the UCPM's flexibility²²⁹. Another mitigation measure was the April 2022 introduction of the possibility to certify 'twin capacities' (i.e. when Member States develop and commit ECPP response capacities of the same type and with identical features, procedures, equipment and management), thereby expediting the process²³⁰.

²¹⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (5).

²²⁰ Decision (EU) 2019/420 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

²²¹ European Commission, *European Medical Corps – factsheet*, 2023, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/european-medical-corps_en

²²² Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/142 amending implementing Decision 2014/762/EU laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU.

²²³ Interviews with: international stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (3).

²²⁴ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1).

²²⁵ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (1).

²²⁶ As of December 2022, the committed/offered capacities were 124. Germany withdrew its Standing Engineering Capacity (SEC) in January 2023.

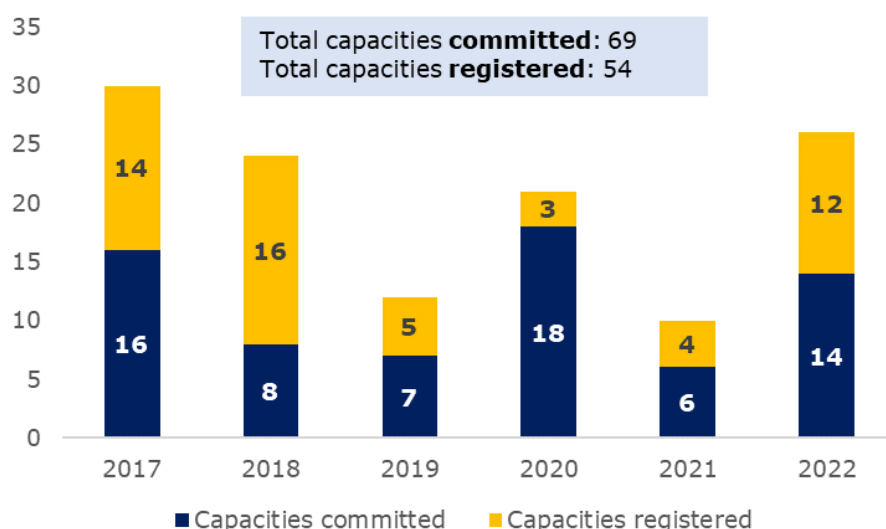
²²⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

²²⁸ European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2021, 2022*.

²²⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

²³⁰ European Commission, *Guidelines for a streamlined certification and re-certification process for 'twin' ECPP capacities*, 2022.

Figure 30. Overview of ECPP capacities, newly committed and registered annually, 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

The majority of ECPP capacity registered have not met set capacity goals, with four making no progress since 2014. Table 5 shows that approx. 60% of capacity goals were not met during the evaluation period, with no progress registered for nine goals. This was a recurring trend since 2014, at least for module capacities, with four capacities making no progress: CBRNUSAR (USAR in CBRN conditions); FFFH (aerial forest firefighting module using helicopters – which could be due to the capacities developed in rescEU), ETC (emergency temporary camp), FHOS (field hospital) (2017-2019, replaced by EMT3 in 2019) and MEVAC (medical aerial evacuation of disaster victims). Nevertheless, 14% (four) of capacity goals were met and 24% (seven) of capacity goals were exceeded. In one case of heavy urban search and rescue (HUSAR), the capacity goal was exceeded by 500%. Limited stakeholder feedback suggests that the ECPP capacity goals could be redrafted to reflect developments from climate change²³¹, have a stronger evidence based (e.g. involving the scientific community)²³², and be more closely linked to scenario building²³³.

Table 5. Progress of ECPP registered capacities towards set goals

		2014-2016 (baseline)	2017-2022 (evaluation period)		
Capacity		Progress	Registered	Goal	Progress
ORCs	CBRNDET (CBRN detection and sampling)	200%	4	2	200%
	CBRNUSAR (USAR in CBRN conditions)	0%	0	1	0%
	EMT type 1 (emergency medical team type 1: outpatient emergency care)	100%			
	AMP (advanced medical post) was replaced by EMT1 in December 2019.		3	7	43%
	EMT type 2 (emergency medical team type 2: inpatient surgical emergency care)	200%			
	AMP-S (advanced medical post with surgery) was replaced by EMT2 in December 2019.		6	3	200%

²³¹ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

²³² Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

²³³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

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		2014-2016 (baseline)	2017-2022 (evaluation period)		
Capacity		Progress	Registered	Goal	Progress
EMT type 3 (emergency medical team type 3: inpatient referral care)	0%				
<i>FHOS (field hospital) was replaced by EMT3 in December 2019.</i>		0	1	0%	
ETC (emergency temporary camp)	0%	1	2	50%	
FC (flood containment)	200%	1	2	50%	
FFFH (aerial forest firefighting module using helicopters)	0%	0	2	0%	
FFFP (aerial forest fire fighting module using planes)	50%	2	2	100%	
FRB (flood rescue using boats)	150%	3	2	150%	
GFFF (ground forest fire fighting)	200%	5	2	250%	
GFFF-V (ground forest fire fighting using vehicles)	150%	7	2	350%	
HCP (high-capacity pumping)	233%	14	6	233%	
HUSAR (heavy urban search and rescue)	350%	10	2	500%	
MEVAC (medical aerial evacuation of disaster victims)	0%	0	1	0%	
MUSAR (medium urban search and rescue - one for cold conditions)	83%	5	6	83%	
WP (water purification)	200%	2	2	100%	
WSAR (water search and rescue)	-	1	2	50%	
Additional capacity shelter-kit:	-	0	6	0%	
Additional shelter capacity: units for 250 persons (50 tents) incl. self-sufficiency unit for the handling staff	-	10	100	10%	
CBRN decontamination teams	-	0	2	0%	
Communication teams or platforms to quickly re-establish communications in remote areas	-	1	2	50%	
Emergency medical teams for specialised care	-	0	8	0%	
Evacuation support: including teams for information management and logistics	-	0	2	0%	
Firefighting: advisory/assessment teams	-	2	2	100%	
Marine pollution capacities	-	1	As necessary	100%	
Medical evacuation jets air ambulance and medical evacuation helicopter separately for inside Europe or worldwide	-	0	2	0%	
Mobile biosafety laboratories	-	1	4	25%	
Mobile laboratories for environmental emergencies	-	1	2	50%	
Other response capacities necessary to address identified risks	-	0	As necessary	100%	
Power generators above 150 kW	-	0	10	0%	
Power generators of 5-150 kW	-	0	100	0%	
Standing engineering capacity	-	0	1	0%	
Structural engineering teams	-	1	2	50%	
Teams for cave search and rescue	-	2	2	100%	

		2014-2016 (baseline)	2017-2022 (evaluation period)		
Capacity		Progress	Registered	Goal	Progress
	Teams for maritime incident response	-	1	2	50%
	Teams for mountain search and rescue	-	1	2	100%
	Teams with specialised search and rescue equipment, e.g. search robots	-	0	2	0%
	Teams with unmanned aerial vehicles/Remoted Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS)	-	3	2	150%
	Water pumps with minimum capacity to pump 800 l/min	-	1	100	1%
	TAST	-	4	2	200%

Source: ICF elaboration, based on European Commission, European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) Snapshot report 2022, 2023 and European Commission, Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017.

Notes: Cells marked with ‘-’ do not mean that no capacity was in the ECPP between 2014-2016, but, rather, that the evaluation team did not have access to these data.

Adaptation grants are a resourceful tool to help national authorities to upgrade and repair the response capacities formally committed to the ECPP. National stakeholders agreed that adaptation grants had an impact on enhancing Union and national preparedness²³⁴. Figure 31 and Figure 32 show that DG ECHO signed an increasing number of adaptation grants with a variety of Member States for the upgrade and repair of response capacity. During the evaluation period, the UCPM awarded 46 adaptation grants to 16 Member States, totalling EUR 23 million. Adaptation grants were typically given to a single Member State, except for one high-capacity pumping module, where the grant was given to multiple Member States (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia). Some Member State authorities relying on the grants viewed them as a significant advantage of the UCPM, enabling them to improve their emergency response capacity²³⁵. Nevertheless, a minority authorities claimed that the process to apply and claim grants was unclear²³⁶ or too burdensome²³⁷.

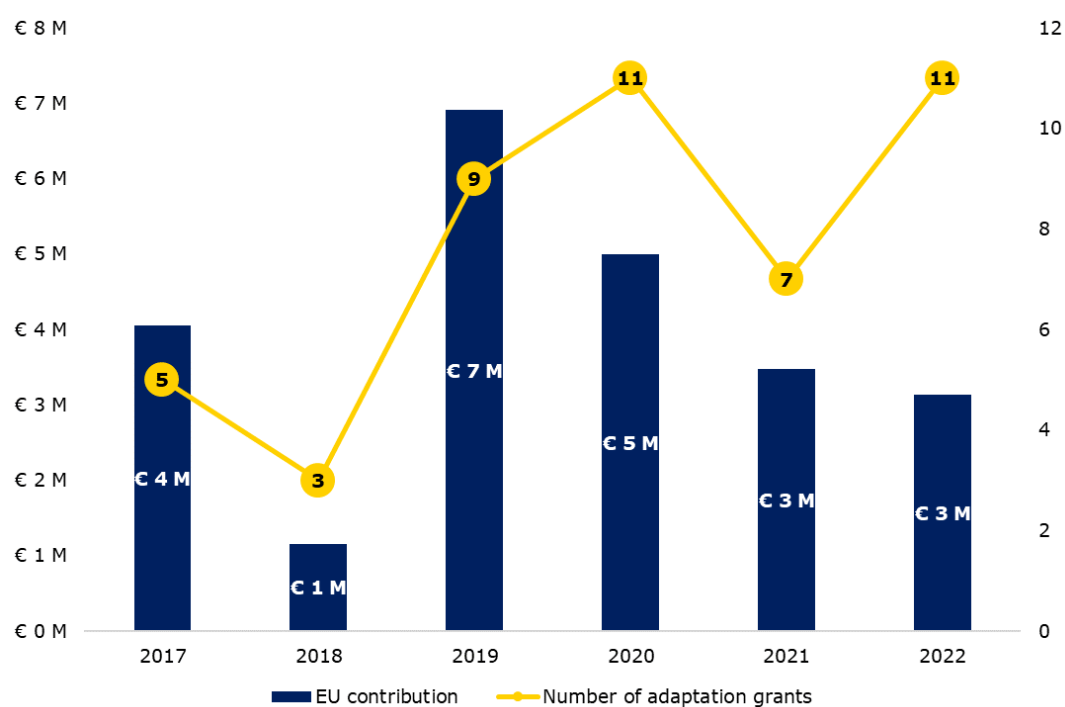
²³⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (9).

²³⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (5).

²³⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (2).

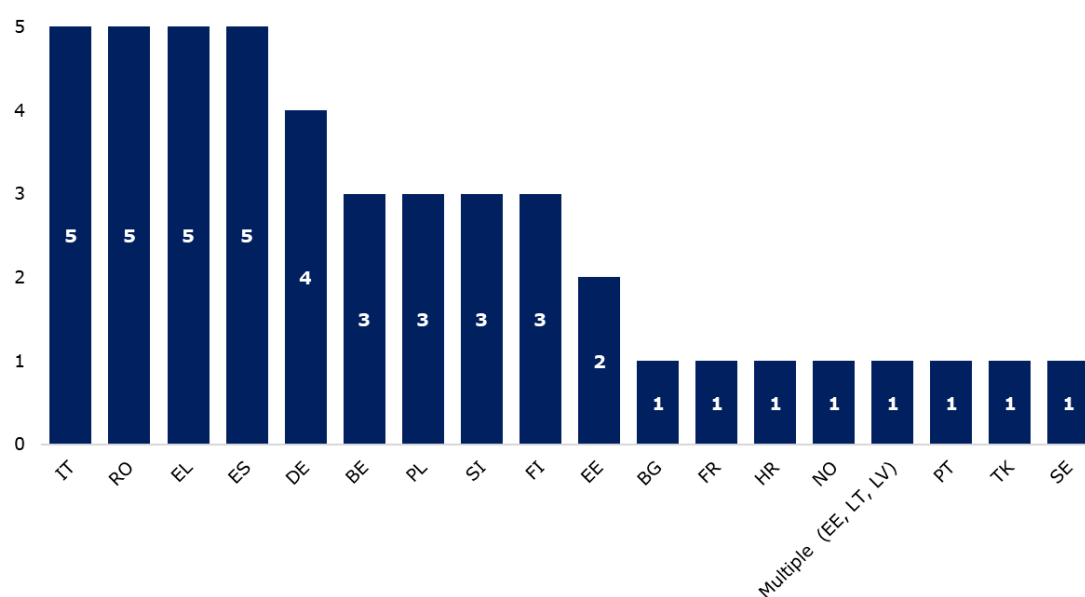
²³⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

Figure 31. Adaptation grants and EU contribution, 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data²³⁸.

Figure 32. Adaptation grants received, by Member State, 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

²³⁸ European Commission, *ECPP: Snapshot report 2022*; state-of-play on 1 January 2023, major developments in 2022, planned certification and re-certification activities in 2023.

5.1.13 EQ1.3 To what extent did the UCPM achieve its specific objectives in the field of response within the timeframes set by the Decision? To what extent are suitable mitigation measures in place in the case objectives will not be met in the set time?

Key findings

- The UCPM's contributions in the field of response stand out as its primary strength and the most visible aspect of its work;
- The significant increase in UCPM activations for increasingly complex and large-scale emergencies had a negative impact on the speed of response, especially outside the Union;
- Despite an evolving and challenging disaster risk landscape, the UCPM continued to provide a high response rate in adequate response times. That response rate was most difficult to achieve in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The UCPM introduced effective mitigation measures to maintain the effectiveness of response, e.g. logistical hubs;
- The ERCC's role, especially ERCC Liaison Officers (LOs), in coordinating response was crucial to achieving rapid and efficient responses to disasters. However, this role appears to be increasingly unsustainable in a context of growing frequency, complexity, and scope of disasters;
- The UCPM's financial assistance for transport and logistics had an increasingly positive impact during the evaluation period, especially outside the Union.

Judgement criteria:

- JC1.8: MS and PS were able to respond rapidly and efficiently to disasters and to mitigate their immediate consequences (incl. removing bureaucratic obstacles) thanks to the pooling and mobilisation of resources and support through the activation of the UCPM, and/or through the timely mobilisation of rescEU capacities;
- JC1.9: The (response) mitigation measures in place were effective and appropriate.

Due to the limited data on mitigation measures, judgement criteria JC1.9 will be discussed when relevant activities are mentioned, rather than as a standalone subsection.

During the evaluation period, the UCPM supported Member and Participating States and, where applicable, third countries to respond rapidly and efficiently to disasters and mitigate their immediate consequences.

The UCPM's specific objective here is to facilitate rapid and efficient response in the face of (impending) disasters and mitigate their immediate consequences. To assess the extent to which the UCPM achieved this objective, a **rapid and efficient** response is considered that defined by KPIs set between 2017-2020 and 2020-2024, namely: a "rapid response" referring to KPIs on the speed of response (2017-2024) and "efficient response" refers to the KPI on adequacy of response (2020-2024). Between 2017-2020, speed of response was measured from the acceptance of the offer to its deployment, with the target ranging from ≤ 12 hours (2017 and 2018) to ≤ 18 hours (2019). From 2020, response time was the time between request for assistance and first offer placed in CECIS, with targets set at 3 hours in the EU and within 10 hours outside the EU²³⁹. The KPI on adequacy of response measures the proportion of RfA to which the UCPM fully/partially responded. The assessment also considered key stakeholders' opinions, given the specific context and circumstance

²³⁹ European Commission, *Civil Protection – Performance*, 2023, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/programme-performance-overview/civil-protection-performance_en

of each response effort. This is especially relevant in light of the unprecedented and extraordinary circumstances within which the Mechanism operated during the evaluation period (see Section 1 and Section 5.3). This question explores the effectiveness of the response time (rapid response) and the extent to which RfA were effectively answered (efficient response). The efficiency of the UCPM's response in achieving desired outcomes with the optimal use of resources is discussed in Section 5.2.

The development of further UCPM KPIs has helped to measure progress in UCPM's delivery of assistance to support rapid and efficient efforts. However, KPIs could be better aligned with the evolving disaster risk landscape. In 2020, DG ECHO introduced developments to its monitoring processes and targets to measure the actual speed and efficiency of response more accurately²⁴⁰. Since 2020, targets set for response time are split between within/outside Europe, reflecting the reality of additional time needed to respond outside the Union. An additional KPI was introduced in 2020 on the adequacy of response, enabling more accurate measurement of the extent to which the UCPM contributes to this specific objective²⁴¹. However, the KPIs could consider challenges and requirements stemming from an evolving disaster risk landscape, given that sudden onset emergencies have a more immediate impact and window for response (e.g. earthquakes, forest fires) and the response rate is far shorter than for slow onset emergencies (floods, tropical cyclones), where the impact accumulates over time (see Section 5.2)²⁴².

The UCPM has made significant contributions in the field of response, which stands out as its primary strength and most visible aspect of its work. The great majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM contributed to a rapid and efficient response and to mitigating the immediate consequences of disasters²⁴³. Most national authorities and experts in civil protection agreed that the UCPM made a significant and positive contribution to the field of disaster response²⁴⁴, particularly in responding to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine²⁴⁵, the COVID-19 pandemic²⁴⁶, and forest fires²⁴⁷. Only one DG ECHO officer and one national authority disagreed that the UCPM was effective in this respect²⁴⁸. The DG ECHO stakeholder questioned the UCPM's effectiveness in supporting disaster response in third countries, while the national civil protection authority believed that individual Member and Participating States are more effective when acting alone (see Section 5.5).

²⁴⁰ European Commission, *Annual Activity Report, 2017-2022*.

²⁴¹ European Commission, *Civil Protection – Performance, 2023*, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/programme-performance-overview/civil-protection-performance_en

²⁴² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

²⁴³ Interviews with: national authorities (30); EU stakeholders (14); international stakeholders (5); experts in civil protection (3); DG ECHO (7). Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022. Surveys of: national authorities – UCPM supported mitigating immediate consequences of disasters (38/50), UCPM contributed to rapid and efficient response (38/50); DG ECHO Desk Officers – UCPM supported mitigating immediate consequences of disasters: Member/Participating States (17/17), third countries (8/17); UCPM contributed to rapid and efficient response: Member/Participating States (16/17), third countries (15/34); experts in civil protection – UCPM supported mitigating immediate consequences of disasters: Member/Participating States (14/18), third countries (8/17); UCPM contributed to rapid and efficient response: Member/Participating States (16/17), third countries (15/34).

²⁴⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (30); experts in civil protection (3); DG ECHO (7). Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022. Surveys of: national authorities – UCPM supported mitigating immediate consequences of disasters (38/50), UCPM contributed to rapid and efficient response (333/50); experts in civil protection – UCPM supported mitigating immediate consequences of disasters: Member/Participating States (14/18), third countries (8/17); UCPM contributed to rapid and efficient response: Member/Participating States (16/17), third countries (15/34).

²⁴⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (7); international stakeholders (3); national authorities (4). Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023*.

²⁴⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (6); international stakeholders (3); national authorities (2). Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023*.

²⁴⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (3); experts in civil protection (2). Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022. See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires. Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023*.

²⁴⁸ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/17); national authorities (1/50).

Throughout the evaluation period, the UCPM provided effective support to response efforts, despite an evolving and increasingly complex and dynamic disaster risk landscape. Notwithstanding the changing nature of disasters and their increasing frequency, complexity and scope, stakeholders stated that the UCPM maintained a high level of quality of response to disasters and their immediate consequences (see Section 5.1.1.4 and Section 5.3)²⁴⁹. UCPM response activities entailed²⁵⁰:

- Responding to disasters not previously confronted (e.g. forest fires and flash floods in countries that did not traditionally activate the UCPM nor experience such disasters, such as Sweden (forest fires) and Belgium (flash floods));
- Responding to multiple disasters at once (e.g. earthquake in Croatia at the same time as wider COVID-19 response efforts).

Mitigation measures and innovations implemented had a positive impact on the UCPM's ability to effectively support response efforts. Stakeholders underlined that DG ECHO showed innovation and resourcefulness in responding to the changing nature of disasters throughout the period²⁵¹. They also highlighted several key mitigation measures and innovations in the response pillar:

- Introduction of logistical hubs in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (see Figure 33)²⁵²;
- Greater involvement of stakeholders, including the private sector²⁵³ and civil society organisations (CSOs)²⁵⁴, and closer involvement of EU delegations²⁵⁵ (see Section 5.1.2);
- Introduction and deployment of resources from rescEU (e.g. emergency energy supply for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine)²⁵⁶.

The following were also recognised as examples of innovation and adaptability, albeit to a more limited extent:

- Integration of new technologies in response efforts, such as the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)²⁵⁷;

²⁴⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (9); national authorities (3); international organisations (3). European Commission, *UCPM lessons learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; Kantar, *'Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023. See Annex 7 for two case studies on forest fires and on Ukrainian response.*

²⁵⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (2). Kantar, *'Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires in Sweden.*

²⁵¹ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (4); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (1); DG ECHO (3). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022. See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

²⁵² Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (4). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War against Ukraine*, 2022; Kantar, *'Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023. See Annex 7 for two case studies on Ukrainian response and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.*

²⁵³ Throughout the report, the term 'private sector' refers to individuals and organisations not under direct state control seeking to generate profit through the provisions of goods and services in the field of civil protection. Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *UCPM lessons learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023.*

²⁵⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*. 2022. See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.


²⁵⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (1). Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022. EESC, *Consolidating the EU-Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

²⁵⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (24); international stakeholders (6); EU stakeholders (11); DG ECHO (11); experts in civil protection (2). Surveys of DG ECHO Desk Officers (12/12); national authorities (36/46). See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

²⁵⁷ European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021*, 2021; EU Chem React and European Union Civil Protection, *EU-CHEM-REACT-2, Full scale field exercise (FSX) final conduct report, grant agreement ECHO/SUB/2018/828788*, Warsaw.

- Unification of request lists into a single CECIS file²⁵⁸.

Figure 33. Lesson: logistical hubs



Lesson learnt

Logistical hubs introduced to support the response to Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine

On 24 February 2022, Russia launched a major military offensive on Ukraine, which caused a major disturbance to logistics infrastructure and supply chains in Ukraine and the surrounding area. Since then, the UCPM has introduced several 'logistical hubs' to ensure that support reached Ukraine in a rapid and efficient manner.

- Romania, Slovakia and Poland, as countries bordering Ukraine, offered to establish logistical hubs where assistance will be pooled to be transferred to the Ukrainian border/ received by Ukrainian authorities. They enabled authorities to send a variety of assets (including non-civil protection items such as power transformers).
- An EU MedEvac Hub for medical evacuations of Ukrainian patients has been operational since 9 September 2022, offering proper treatment to patients arriving from Ukraine before they are flown out to a hospital in another European country.
- Belgium set up a rescEU hub, to streamline and channel donations from the private sector to Ukraine.

These hubs were perceived by key stakeholders (including representatives of the Ukrainian government, and authorities in the countries hosting the hubs) as an effective (and essential) measure to ensure the effectiveness of response. In terms of room for improvement, stakeholders suggested more guidance, with a clear definition of hubs' scope and operation

Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation²⁵⁹.

The UCPM activities that contributed most to achieving specific response objectives (in order of impact) were:

1. ERCC coordination of RfA;
2. Delivery of assistance;
3. Financial assistance to transport and logistics.

The ERCC's coordination of responses within and outside the Union continued to make a critical contribution to achieving a rapid and efficient response to disasters. It has been widely acknowledged as critical in coordinating response efforts, enabling the successful navigation of complex challenges and the delivery of effective responses²⁶⁰. National authorities highlighted that the ERCC's coordination of requests has significantly improved since 2017²⁶¹. Recently, the ERCC introduced scientific partnerships on natural hazards and on nuclear and radiological events, which provide 24/7 support, increasing the effectiveness and quality of its contributions²⁶². Only a small minority of DG ECHO stakeholders felt that the ERCC's coordination was not as effective as it could be, mostly due to resourcing issues (see Section 5.1.3)²⁶³. Some stakeholders highlighted that the coordination of assistance was occasionally less effective when dealing with third countries, reportedly due to the political decision-making associated with intervention and the frequently

²⁵⁸ European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War against Ukraine*, 2022.

²⁵⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (4). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022. See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023.

²⁶⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (5); EU stakeholders (3); experts in civil protection (3); international stakeholders (2); national authorities (19). Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022. Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (12/13), Participating States (12/13), third countries (10/13); national authorities (45/50). European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023; European Committee of the Regions, *Preparing for and dealing with crises: strengthening the resilience of the Union, its regions and cities*, COM(2021) 576 final. See Annex 7 for case studies on floods and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

²⁶¹ Surveys of: national authorities (37/49).

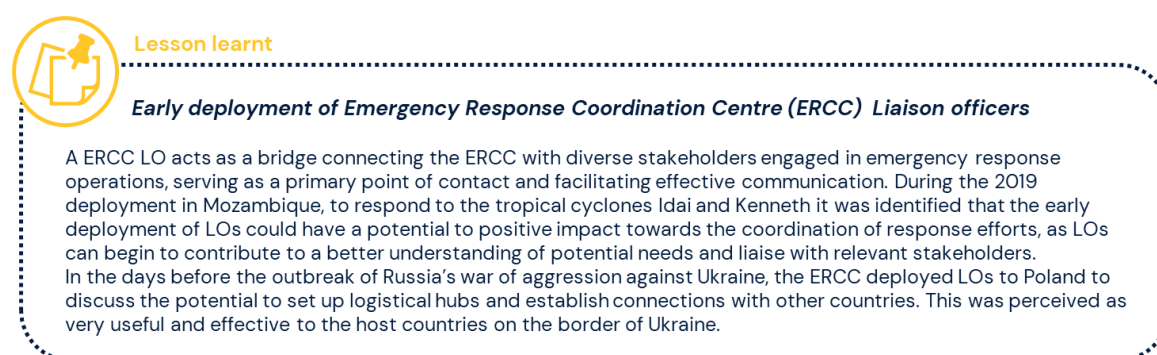
²⁶² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1s).

²⁶³ Survey of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (1/13), Participating States (1/13), third countries (2/13).

complex security situations²⁶⁴. For example, one expert deployed to Haiti explained that the security situation there posed a significant challenge to the coordination (and delivery) of response efforts²⁶⁵.

The **role of ERCC LOs** was singled out for its significant influence as a critical point of contact, facilitating communication between the ERCC and the various stakeholders engaged in emergency response efforts²⁶⁶. ERCC LOs offering access to a network of contacts in the country of focus or supporting with relevant language and cultural skills (e.g. Beirut activation case study) were particularly valuable, as were LOs with logistics expertise²⁶⁷. The suggestions to deploy ERCC LOs prior to a crisis unfolding appears to have been adopted, as evidenced by the deployment of LOs in Ukraine several days before the onset of the war. They were responsible for establishing communication channels with Polish institutions to explore potential courses of action (see Figure 34). There are opportunities to improve the functioning of ERCC LOs, particularly in defining their roles and responsibilities vis-a-vis those of the EUCPT Team Leader, who is tasked with providing overall leadership, coordination and management of a deployment²⁶⁸.

Figure 34. Lesson: early deployment of LOs



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation²⁶⁹.

The interim evaluation identified opportunities to improve the effectiveness of UCPM's response efforts in the sustainability of the ERCC's role in the current disaster risk landscape and the accessibility of the CECIS platform. On the effectiveness of the ERCC's coordination of response efforts:

- Concerns were raised about the **future sustainability of the ERCC's effectiveness** in light of the increasing scope, complexity, and frequency of disasters within and outside the Union²⁷⁰.

²⁶⁴ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – third countries (2/13). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (2); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (1).

²⁶⁵ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1).

²⁶⁶ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (2); national authorities (3); DG ECHO (2). European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021, 2022*; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations (2018-2022) and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023.

²⁶⁷ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on Beirut port explosion.

²⁶⁸ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1). Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023.

²⁶⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (1). European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on Ukrainian response.

²⁷⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (3); DG ECHO (7); EU stakeholders (1). Surveys of: national authorities (1/50). EESC, *Opinion, Consolidating the EU-Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including*

Some stakeholders emphasised that this calls for enhanced contingency planning for multi-sectoral, simultaneous, long-lasting crises²⁷¹. This could entail the development of prioritisation strategies for responding to multiple concurrent crises²⁷². Planning could also entail the identification of parameters for ERCC involvement²⁷³, as well as for the ERCC's role to be better defined to improve the quality of assistance (see Section 5.3)²⁷⁴;

- The **CECIS platform** is a web-based alert and notification application that facilitates real-time exchanges between competent national authorities and contact points designated by Member and Participating States and the ERCC. Suggested improvements include enhancing the ability of key stakeholders to access (classified) data, user friendliness ability to cope with and handle multiple RfA²⁷⁵, and access by non-EU Member States. CECIS currently relies on the TESTA network service, operated by the Commission and exclusively available to Member States²⁷⁶. In many Member States, access to CECIS was restricted to a single computer in a ministry building, significantly limiting its accessibility²⁷⁷. CECIS 2.0 is being designed to address these problems (see Section 5.1.3)²⁷⁸.

UCPM's delivery of assistance by deploying resources and experts supported progress towards rapid and efficient responses and mitigating the immediate consequences of disasters. However, while the UCPM fulfilled the majority of RfA relatively rapidly, the speed and efficiency of response in third countries could be improved. 'Efficiency' here refers to the response rate achieved by the UCPM (efficiency of UCPM activities in terms of desired outcomes achieved with optimal resources is assessed in Section 5.2).

The UCPM's deployment of response capacities contributed to supporting more rapid and efficient response efforts in Member and Participating States and in third countries. The majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM's delivery of response capacity and deployment of experts contributed to fulfilling the UCPM's response objective²⁷⁹. No national authority disagreed on the positive role of the UCPM in delivering assistance in response efforts²⁸⁰.

However, opportunities to improve the delivery of response efforts were identified for several elements:

those occurring outside its territory, 2022; European Commission, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe, 2023; Kantar, Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023. See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires and on COVID-19 repatriations/consular services. DG ECHO, Study on the Development of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre ERCC, 2023; European Commission, Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023.

²⁷¹ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023.

²⁷² Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID-19 repatriations/consular services.

²⁷³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires and on COVID-19 repatriations/consular services.

²⁷⁴ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

²⁷⁵ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/2). Interviews with: DG ECHO (6); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (3). European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM lessons learnt Programme meeting preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022. Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022. See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

²⁷⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); national authorities (2). Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022.

²⁷⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

²⁷⁸ Where relevant, the evaluation team mentions activities taking place beyond the evaluation period where they (will/may) have an impact on evaluation findings.

²⁷⁹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (12/13), Participating States (12/13), third countries (11/13, with one respondent disagreeing); national authorities (43/49); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (1/1).

²⁸⁰ Surveys of: national authorities (agreed – 43/49, neither agreed/disagreed – 6/49).

- **Tracking assistance:** As part of the delivery of assistance, the UCPM tracks that assistance. This includes identifying potential trends in disaster risks and response missions, where feasible. The majority of stakeholders acknowledged that this activity partially contributed to a quicker and more efficient response effort²⁸¹ and that it improved during the evaluation period²⁸². However, of the response pillar activities, this showed a higher number of stakeholders disagreeing that it was effective, particularly those outside the Union²⁸³;
- **Time to assess RfA and expert profiles:** Some stakeholders highlighted that too little time is taken to assess RfA and consider whether and where it makes sense for the UCPM to intervene²⁸⁴. Similarly, some experts in civil protection noted that this applies to the planning and selection of experts, who are sometimes selected and deployed too hastily, leading to mismatches between experts and the requirements of the response effort²⁸⁵;
- **Set up of EUCPT in longer crises:** In the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the long duration of the crisis and high rotation of the EUCPT meant that some members lacked experience and had limited UCPM training²⁸⁶.

The UCPM adapted to changing pressures and demands and consistently maintained a high response rate, thus contributing to effective support for response efforts. The majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM achieved an adequate response rate to the frequency of RfA and the provision of the requested items²⁸⁷. Since 2017, the ERCC has coordinated the deployment of resources for 87% of RfA (on average), meeting its 2021 and 2022 targets within and outside the Union (see Figure 35 and Table 6). Figure 35 shows that the response rate decreased from 95% during the 2014-2016 period to 87% in the 2017-2022 period. Nevertheless, given the substantial surge in activations during the evaluation period (520 during the 2017-2022 period, compared to 64 between 2014 and 2016), the UCPM has consistently maintained a high response rate. This demonstrates that the UCPM has successfully delivered the requested assistance in the majority of cases despite a substantial increase in activations.

The largest impact on the UCPM response rate was in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, the Mechanism has continued to meet its targets for request responses. The lower response rate in 2020 (73%) was due to the unprecedented surge (+440%) in requests received and to a global shortage in personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g. masks)²⁸⁸. Table 6 shows that this mainly impacted the response rate for RfA in third countries, notably COVID-19 related requests. Indeed, the interim evaluation identified very few cases where the Mechanism could not provide a response (namely some RfA from third countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, when it was overwhelmed)²⁸⁹. Since 2020, the UCPM's response rate met the targets within and outside the Union (see Table 6).

²⁸¹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (4/9), Participating States (3/9), third countries (2/9); national authorities (34/47).

²⁸² Surveys of: national authorities (30/49).

²⁸³ Surveys of DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (1/9), Participating States (2/9), third countries (3/9); national authorities (3/47). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

²⁸⁴ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (3); national authorities (1); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (1). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

²⁸⁵ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (2); national authorities (1). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

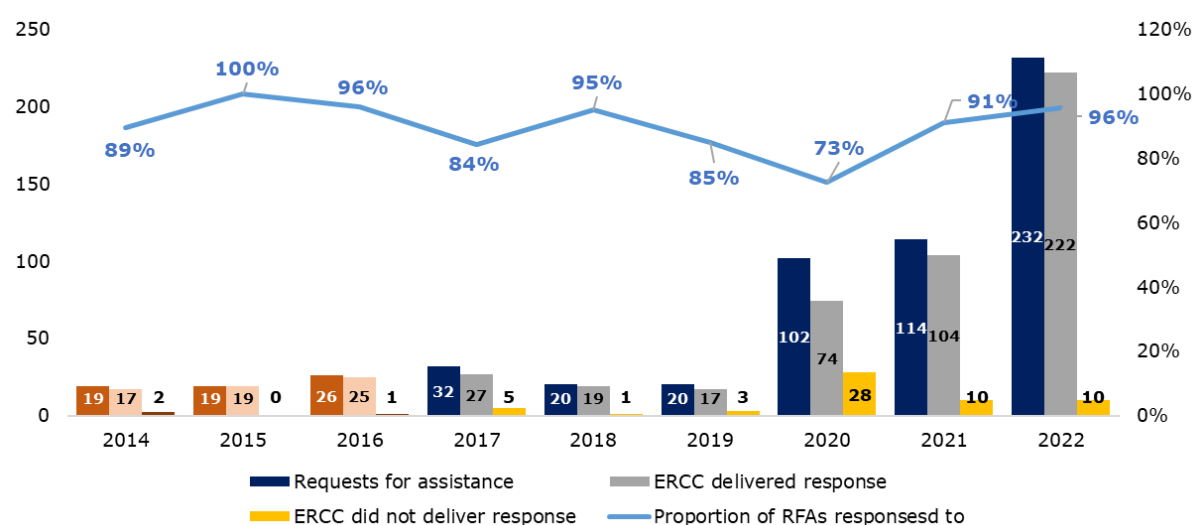
²⁸⁶ See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

²⁸⁷ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (4); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (9).

²⁸⁸ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

²⁸⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

Figure 35. UCPM response rates to RfA, 2014-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Notes: Data from 2014-2016 included in shades of orange for comparison.

Table 6. Adequacy of response of the UCPM (KPI), 2020-2022

	Percentage of RfA partially/completely fulfilled, with the voluntary offers for assistance made by Member States			
	2020	2021	2022	Target 2024
Within the EU	Total: 17% COVID-19: 16% Non-COVID-19: 82%	100%	90%	90%
Outside the EU	Total: 1% COVID-19: 1% Non-COVID-19: 9%	87%	96%	> 86%

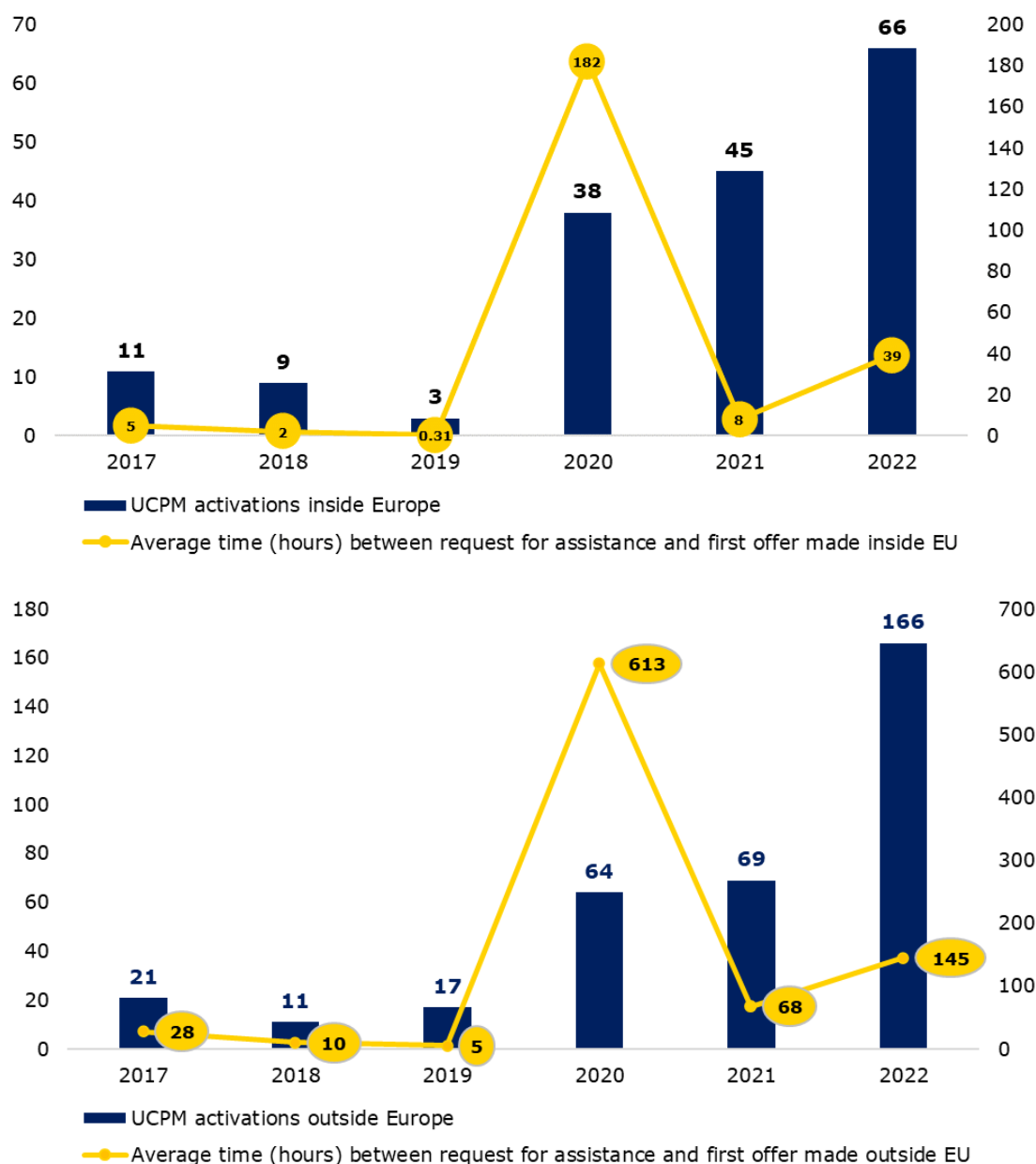
Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO Annual Reports 2020, 2021.

The significant increase in the number of activations of the UCPM to request support to respond to emergencies of growing complexity and scope negatively affected the speed of response, especially outside the Union. The average response time generally met the KPI targets across 2017-2019 (i.e. ≤ 12 hours in 2017 and 2018; ≤ 18 hours in 2019, except for response time outside the Union in 2017). Since 2020, the UCPM's response time has typically not met KPI targets (i.e. 3 hours within the EU; 10 hours outside the EU). The gap between the response time and the target KPIs suggests a need to consider whether targets and expectations are adequate and realistic in light of changing threat and disaster risk landscapes (see Section 5.2)²⁹⁰. Figure 36 shows a correlation between the significant increase in UCPM activations since 2020 (+440%) and the UCPM's inability to reach the envisioned target response times, especially outside the Union. Figure 37 shows that delays primarily occurred between the acceptance of an offer and its actual deployment. Both within and outside Europe, the response time experienced its highest delays during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, the response time has recovered but has yet to return to pre-2020 levels. The

²⁹⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

most notable increase in response time was in delivering assistance to third countries. This increase may have been influenced by the substantial number of requests related to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (126 requests in 2022)²⁹¹.

Figure 36. Evolution of UCPM activations and response times, within and outside the EU, 2017-2022

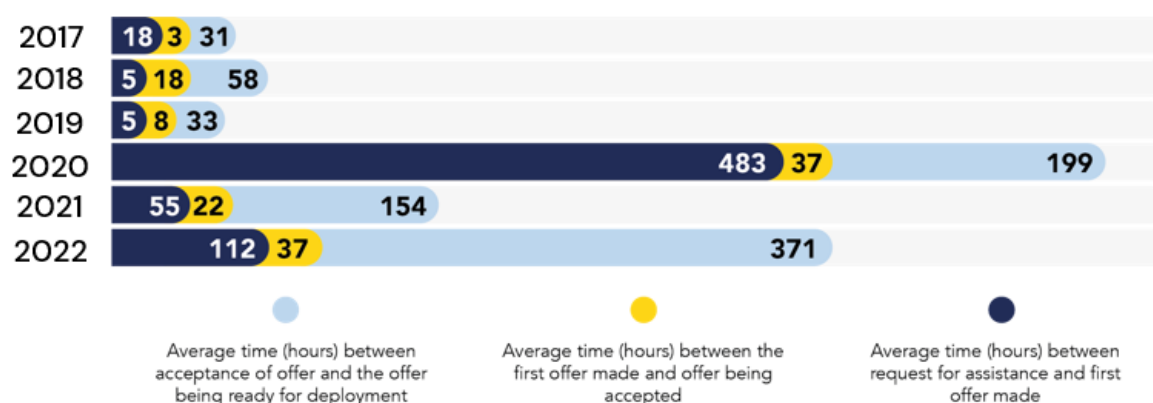


Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Notes: Average time between RfA submitted and first offer made is taken as indicative of total response time.

²⁹¹ Ukraine 108 became a UCPM Participating State in 2023, outside the evaluation scope.

Figure 37. Average time (hours) per step in the delivery of assistance



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Despite the shortcomings in adherence to target KPIs, the majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM response time is adequate across Member and Participating States, but could be improved for third countries. The majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM's response time is suitable and effectively contributed to expediting disaster response²⁹². National stakeholders agreed that the time required to deploy response capacities improved during the evaluation period²⁹³. DG ECHO stakeholders observed that the response time is heavily dependent on the capacity of Member and Participating States, encompassing both their ability to provide resources and the time they can dedicate to response efforts²⁹⁴. Stakeholders pointed out that longer response time in third countries should be attributed not solely to the challenges stemming from logistical and security considerations, but also to an implicit requirement for political decision-making on any UCPM intervention²⁹⁵.

The UCPM's financial assistance for transport and logistics has had an impact on supporting rapid and efficient response efforts, especially outside the EU.

Across the evaluation period, the role of the UCPM's financial support for transport and assistance grew, especially outside the EU. In the event of a disaster within or outside the EU, the UCPM co-financed transport and operational costs (e.g. mobilisation of equipment and personnel, aircraft to help to fight forest fires)²⁹⁶. The majority of stakeholders agreed that this financial support for transport and logistics contributed to more rapid and efficient responses, especially outside the Union²⁹⁷. The financial support provided by the UCPM for transport and logistics grew, particularly from 2021 onwards²⁹⁸. Figure 38 shows a growing tendency to rely on grant agreements, the vast majority of which were for activations outside the EU. This trend corresponds with several large-scale crises, with a large component outside the EU (e.g. COVID-19, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine). The UCPM's ability to provide both standard logistics operations and to adapt to new

²⁹² Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (9).

²⁹³ Surveys of: national authorities (33/49). Interviews with: national authorities (1).

²⁹⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3).

²⁹⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (4); EU stakeholders (1); international stakeholders (1).

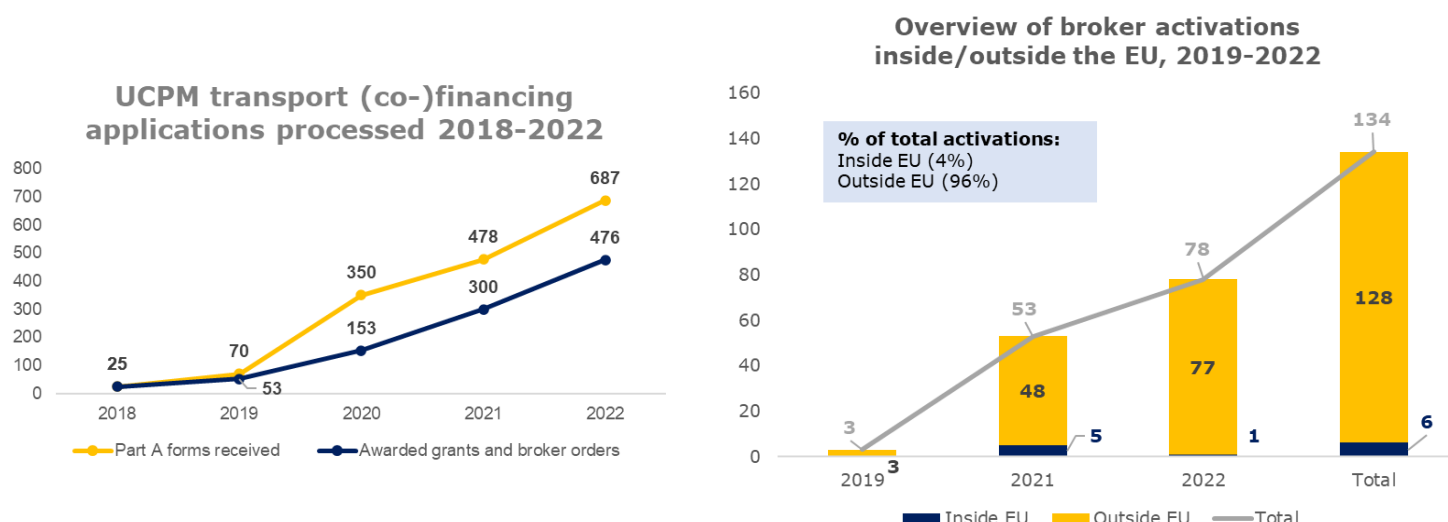
²⁹⁶ European Commission, *Transport and operations co-financing procedures under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2023, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection/transport-and-operations-co-financing-procedures-under-union-civil-protection-mechanism_en

²⁹⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (3); national authorities (7). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (4/9), Participating States (10/10), third countries (9/10); national authorities (41/47).

²⁹⁸ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (2). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations (2018-2022) and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023.

logistical demands during complex, large-scale crises (such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the repatriation of EU citizens worldwide) is a notable achievement²⁹⁹. This success demonstrates the UCPM's effectiveness in managing diverse and evolving logistical operations³⁰⁰.

Figure 38. Type and location of UCPM financial support for transport and assistance, 2018-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on: European Commission, *ERCC 2021 in perspective: Overview of UCPM activations and deployments, 2022*; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations (2018-2022) and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023*.

5.1.14 EQ1.4 To what extent did the UCPM achieve its objectives across pillars/horizontal activities within the timeframes set by the Decision? To what extent are suitable mitigation measures in place in case objectives will not be met in the set time?

Key findings

- The UCPM's efforts have led to increased awareness and preparedness for disasters, including across sectors at EU and national level;
- UCPM activities have effective tools for raising awareness, particularly the Training and Exercise and Peer Review Programmes. There is room for improvement in the accessibility and dissemination of outputs;
- The development of the PRAF and its customised versions, along with initiatives like the Knowledge Network and Union Disaster Resilience Goals, are expected to enhance cooperation and raise awareness in the field of civil protection.

Judgement criteria:

²⁹⁹ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations (2018-2022) and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023*.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

- JC1.10: UCPM-funded projects and other horizontal activities contributed to the achievement of cross-pillar objectives (e.g. increasing public awareness and preparedness for disasters);
- JC1.11: The (cross-pillar/horizontal) mitigation measures in place were effective and suitable.

Judgment criteria JC1.10 and JC1.11 will be addressed collectively, as activities contributed to progress on both. Similarly, due to the limited data on mitigation measures, these will be discussed where relevant activities are mentioned (JC1.11).

The UCPM progressed towards raising awareness and preparedness for disasters during the evaluation period. UCPM activities stimulated Member and Participating States to pay greater attention to priorities that otherwise may have been neglected, primarily in the prevention and preparedness phases. While there was some progress in raising awareness with non-traditional civil protection actors, there is room for improvement in supporting Member States to engage the public. The UCPM's involvement in the response to COVID-19 and the introduction of the rescEU reserve increased its visibility.

UCPM activities increasingly contributed to raising awareness and preparedness for disasters. The majority of stakeholders agreed that UCPM activities effectively contributed to raising awareness and preparedness for disasters among the general public and civil protection stakeholders³⁰¹. They noted that the involvement of the UCPM in increasingly high-profile disasters (COVID-19, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine) and the introduction of rescEU (with EU-branded response capacities) increased its visibility³⁰². There was stronger emphasis on raising awareness and preparedness among various sectors at national and EU level³⁰³. At national level, for example, there were increased efforts with health, forest and water management authorities, as well as the research, scientific and academic community, CSOs and the private sector. Stakeholders emphasised that this reflected the growing recognition of the interconnectedness of civil protection crises, which led to an increase in the involvement of various authorities and organisations in a range of UCPM initiatives³⁰⁴. At EU level, raising awareness across different institutions and agencies required meetings and workshops, sharing DG ECHO's outputs (such as the 'Overview document of disaster risks in the EU'), and identifying areas for enhanced cooperation and resilience with other DGs³⁰⁵. However, EU stakeholders highlighted that the accessibility of relevant UCPM outputs could be improved³⁰⁶.

The UCPM, through its activities and projects, could make more effort to support awareness-raising actions among the public and (to a lesser extent) with other sectors. While public awareness of disasters increased (from 55% in 2015 to approx. 64% in 2020), it is difficult to measure the extent to which UCPM activities contributed³⁰⁷.

³⁰¹ Surveys of: national authorities – UCPM activities across pillars contribute to increasing public awareness for disasters (27/50); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (17/19); national authorities – raising awareness and preparedness for disasters among civil protection authorities and experts (43/49); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (20/21); DG ECHO Desk Officers (38/38); Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (4). German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW), *Consortium*, 2018.

³⁰² Interviews with: experts in civil protection participating in UCPM (2); national authorities (3); EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (4); international stakeholders (2). Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022.

³⁰³ Surveys of: DG ECHO – other authorities and organisations outside of civil protection realm (23/38); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (16/21); national authorities (31/48); DG ECHO – among other stakeholders (12/32); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (5/15); national authorities (15/26). Interviews with: national authorities (1); DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (4); international stakeholders (1).

³⁰⁴ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (4); international stakeholders (1); DG ECHO (9); national authorities (6).

³⁰⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (4); international stakeholders (1).

³⁰⁶ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2).

³⁰⁷ European Commission, *Special Eurobarometer 511 b EU Civil Protection*, 2021.

The majority of stakeholders underlined the necessity for UCPM activities to better support Member and Participating States to improve awareness-raising with the public³⁰⁸. They emphasised that it is Member States' primary responsibility to increase awareness of disasters with the general public, and that the UCPM has only a support role³⁰⁹. One DG ECHO stakeholder reported that national public communication could be more effective than a general EU-level approach, given the highly localised nature of risk awareness and dependency, including cultural differences in preparedness³¹⁰. Stakeholders mentioned that DG ECHO could improve coordination and knowledge sharing on joint communication and outreach with national partners³¹¹. Suggestions included for the UCPM to create targeted, adaptable communication plans for national authorities, or more material for EUCPT to share during deployments. They highlighted that DG ECHO could raise awareness of the UCPM with non-civil protection actors (e.g. health authorities for pandemics)³¹². Stakeholders suggested that this could be achieved by including stakeholders from other sectors in UCPM activities, such as training and exercises (see Section 5.1.2)³¹³. The Knowledge Network was highlighted as a potential tool to facilitate this awareness-raising with other sectors. Finally, public communication on UCPM activities could be strengthened through modern means (e.g. social media), particularly in relation to EWS³¹⁴.

The interim evaluation identified some progress in raising awareness among the general public. For example, the Union Disaster Resilience Goals highlight the need to increase public risk awareness and preparedness. In addition, the flagship 'preparEU' awareness-raising programme is expected to step-up public communication efforts across Europe³¹⁵.

More attention could be paid to increasing awareness of the UCPM in Member and Participating States, as well as third countries. Stakeholders noted the need to better communicate the Mechanism's activities (especially the frequent changes during the evaluation period, see Figure 2) to increase their effectiveness³¹⁶. Stakeholders mentioned 'change fatigue'³¹⁷ throughout the evaluation period, particularly in relation to the rapid modifications to the Mechanism to adapt to new challenges and simultaneous crises (see Section 5.1.3). As a result, stakeholders (especially national authorities) struggled to keep up with activities³¹⁸. This suggests that while adaptability and flexibility

³⁰⁸ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021, 2022*; Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (3); national authorities (7); international stakeholders (1). See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires, on floods, on COVID-19. Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (comments). Focus group: cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023.

³⁰⁹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (1); national authorities (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (comments).

³¹⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

³¹¹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (4); DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (3). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*.

³¹² Interviews with: national authorities (3); EU stakeholders (3); experts in civil protection (1). See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires, on floods, on COVID-19. European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme: Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022.

³¹³ Interviews with: national authorities (2); experts in civil protection (1); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022. Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

³¹⁴ EESC, *Consolidating the EU-Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022; European Commission, *Early Warning Systems (EWS) Expert Group Meeting*, 2022.

³¹⁵ Where relevant, the evaluation team mentions activities taking place beyond the evaluation period where they (will/may) have an impact on evaluation findings. European Commission, *UCPM Knowledge Network: Applied knowledge for action*, n.d., <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/disaster-resilience-goals/goal-2-prepare>; European Commission, *European Union Disaster Resilience Goals*, 2023, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/factsheet_disaster_resilience_goals.pdf


³¹⁶ Surveys of: experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (17/19). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1).

³¹⁷ Change fatigue often occurs when individuals or teams feel overwhelmed by continuous transitions, resulting in reduced capacity to adapt or engage effectively with new initiatives or processes.

³¹⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (12); DG ECHO (6). See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

of the UCPM proved to be one of the main facilitating factors of its effectiveness (see EQ3), greater emphasis should be placed on communicating and facilitating interaction with new and changing procedures and activities. This would maximise stakeholders' gains from the changes and support their adaptation to the evolving risk landscape. Suggestions to improve awareness within Member States include streamlining all awareness information on UCPM activities into one website (see Figure 39). One EU stakeholder suggested increasing awareness in Participating States and third countries through the short-term deployment of focal points to DG ECHO field offices, and ensuring a civil protection representative in EU delegations through at least one local and one non-local focal point in case of staff turnover³¹⁹. The current pilot project of a civil protection representative for the Southern Neighbourhood DG ECHO field offices (see Section 5.1.2) and the plans to introduce civil protection contact points in EU delegations are positive steps in this direction³²⁰. Similarly, the new online training courses on the UCPM for Member and Participating States, as well as Neighbourhood countries, EU delegations and DG ECHO field offices (part of the new UCPM training programme to be implemented from September 2023) will help to raise awareness of the UCPM among key stakeholders³²¹.

Figure 39. Lesson: awareness-raising information is fragmented across DG ECHO websites

**Lesson learnt**

Information on the UCPM is fragmented across websites

Whilst online resources on the UCPM are considered a good source of knowledge on the Mechanism, stakeholders pointed out that information on the UCPM is splintered across different websites, such as the ERCC portal, the DG ECHO website and the Knowledge Network online portal. Streamlining information on the UCPM, thus creating a single-entry point for interested stakeholders could increase effectiveness of awareness-raising activities. This single-entry point could also include relevant links to different EWS (e.g. EFFIS). The Knowledge Network online tool presents a good opportunity in its role to bring together and raise awareness on UCPM activities.

Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation³²².

Horizontal and cross-pillar UCPM activities that contributed most to raising awareness and preparedness across Member and Participating States, and, in some cases, third countries (in order of impact), were:

1. Training and Exercises Programme;
2. EoE Programme;
3. Workshops (Civil Protection Forum, Workshops with the EU Presidency, Lessons Learnt Workshops);
4. Peer Review Programme;
5. PPP;
6. Advisory missions in the field of preparedness.

³¹⁹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1).

³²⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

³²¹ See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of preparedness activities.

³²² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

UCPM training³²³, exercises³²⁴ and the EoE Programme³²⁵ were key tools to increase awareness and preparedness of key target stakeholders. The knowledge produced by **UCPM training and exercises** is perceived as invaluable for participants to gain a better awareness of civil protection structures and disaster types (see Section 5.1.1.2)³²⁶. Nevertheless, suggestions to make training and exercises even more effective in raising awareness included extending targeted invitation to stakeholders across sectors and highlighting other UCPM elements (e.g. host nation guidelines) more explicitly and more frequently in training³²⁷. Stakeholders noted that training and exercises could also raise awareness of topics such as maritime affairs³²⁸. One sign of progress is the introduction of a discussion-based exercise on marine pollution in 2023³²⁹. Looking ahead, the aforementioned ‘non-deployable’ online training courses (available for a more extended audience, such as EU delegations and EU Neighbourhood countries’ authorities) are considered a useful additional resource³³⁰. Data show that the ability of UCPM training to increase the knowledge base on cross-border risks between Member States prone to the same types of disasters depend heavily on the national experts participating, notably their commitment to disseminate their knowledge at national level³³¹.

The **EoE Programme** is considered a valuable practical tool, fostering fruitful discussions on a variety of topics and producing outputs in several languages, increasing their accessibility³³². Experts demonstrated a keen interest in sharing the information and knowledge acquired through exchanges, for instance by means of field reports³³³.

Both the Training and Exercises and EoE Programmes adapted to ensure continuity in light of the challenges posed by COVID-19’s social distancing measures. For the EoE (see Figure 40), training (see Figure 5) and exercises (see Figure 6) sessions and attendance slowed during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic (due to social distancing measures), although some digital events mitigated the

³²³ Surveys of: DG ECHO – training across Member States (11/14); DG ECHO – training across Participating States (11/14); DG ECHO – training across third countries (4/12); national authorities – training across Member States/Participating States (35/49). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (4).

³²⁴ Surveys of: DG ECHO – exercises across Member States (10/11); DG ECHO – exercises across Member States (3/4); DG ECHO – exercises across third countries (6/11); national authorities (42/51). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (1).

³²⁵ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – EoE Programme across Member States (4/4); DG ECHO Desk Officers – EoE Programme across Participating States (3/4); DG ECHO Desk Officers – EoE Programme across third countries (1/4); national authorities – across Member States/Participating States (31/48); German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW), *Consortium*, 2018.

³²⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (4); EU stakeholders (1); experts in civil protection (1). European Commission, *Lessons and good practices identified from TAST deployments*, 2019; Training Consortium, *UCPM training programme 16th cycle 2018–2019*, UCPM Introduction Course (CMI); EU MODEX. Final Consolidated Report Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Programme Modex Cycle 2019–2021; Training Consortium, *UCPM training programme cycle 18th. Assessment Mission Course (AMC)*, 2022; EU Civil Protection Forum, *Europe in the World: the Union Civil Protection Mechanism as a regional cooperation model*, Fourth warm-up session, 2022; European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019; THW, *Consortium*, 2018.

³²⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (2); European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022.

³²⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (2).

³²⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (2). European Commission, *DBX EU MODEX on Marine Pollution Conference*, 2023, <https://www.marine-pollution.eu-modex.eu/>. See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

³³⁰ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

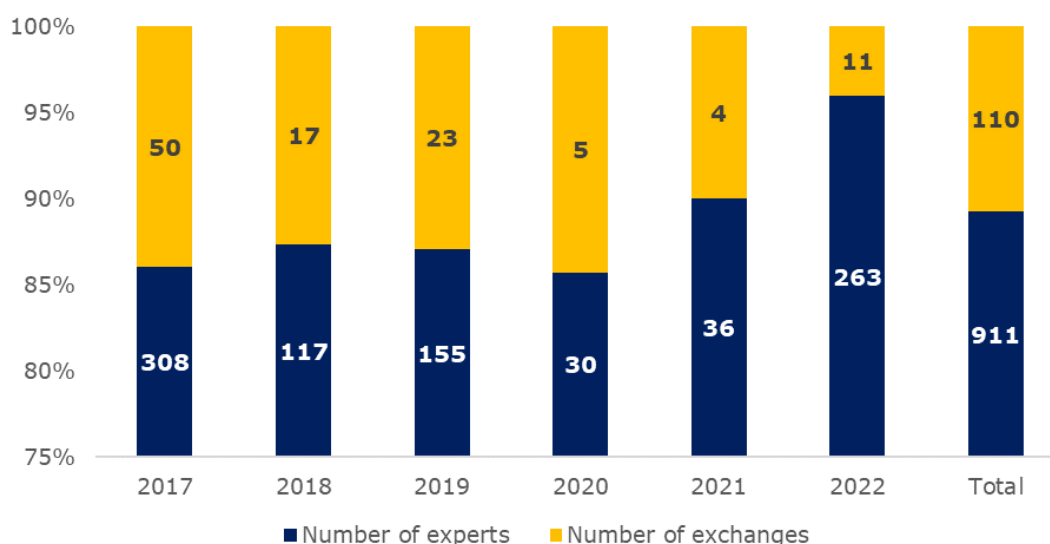
³³¹ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – national experts who participated in UCPM training courses and exercises disseminated their knowledge further at national level to a moderate/great extent (8/17), small/some extent (9/17). Interviews with: national authorities (2); THW, *Consortium*, 2018.

³³² Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – EoE Programme across Member States (4/4); DG ECHO Desk Officers – EoE Programme across Participating States (3/4); DG ECHO Desk Officers – EoE Programme across third countries (1/4); national authorities – across Member States/Participating States (31/48). THW, *Consortium*, *Exchange of Experts in Civil Protection Programme*, 2018; National Centre APELL for the Disaster Management – Romania (CN APELL–RO) and EUROMODEX, *EUROMODEX LOT2 2017–2018 FINAL CONSOLIDATED REPORT*, 2018; Training Consortium, *Santec Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and man-made disasters in the EaP countries. PPRD East 2*, 2019; CN APELL–RO and the Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (Consortium), *Programme of exchange of Civil Protection Experts*. Final Report, 2020.

³³³ CN APELL–RO and Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (Consortium), *Programme of exchange of Civil Protection Experts*, Final Report, 2020.

impact³³⁴ (e.g. a hybrid table-top exercise was held under PPRD East 3³³⁵). These digital mitigation measures, while not considered as beneficial as face-to-face events, enabled the programmes to continue in some capacity in the face of adverse situations³³⁶.

Figure 40. Exchange of Experts Programme, 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Notes: Data on exchange of experts from September 2022; 17 experts already approved for three exchanges in October and November 2022.

UCPM workshops with relevant actors were seen as a relevant tool to raise awareness:

- **Lessons Learnt Workshops** are effective exercises, but require more follow-up to implement the lessons (especially at national level) (see Section 5.3.3)³³⁷. The increase in thematic meetings (e.g. forest fire seasons, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, COVID-19) outside Brussels (a Lessons Learnt meeting in January 2023 in Lisbon on forest fires, see Figure 70) is a valued development³³⁸;
- **Workshops with the EU Presidency** are an effective tool to bring together stakeholders across sectors and raise awareness of the UCPM and potential upcoming disasters³³⁹. Such workshops need more follow-up at EU level³⁴⁰. The workshop under the Swedish Presidency

³³⁴ EUROMODEX, *Final Consolidated Report Lot 2 / cycle 10 January 2019 – July 2020, 2021*; CN APPEL-RO and Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency situations (IGSU), *Programme of Exchange of Civil Protection Experts. Final Report of the first 12 months renewal Contracting Phase/Stage 2, 2021*; CN APPEL-RO and the Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (Consortium), *Programme of exchange of Civil Protection Experts, Final Report, 2020*.

³³⁵ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations, 2022*.

³³⁶ Training Consortium, *UCPM training programme, 18th cycle. Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical Experts Courses (TEC), 2021*; CN APPEL-RO and the Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (Consortium), *Programme of exchange of Civil Protection Experts, Final Report, 2020*. Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (comments). Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1/10).

³³⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (8); DG ECHO (4). European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations, 2019*; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*. Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (9/18), Participating States (8/17), third countries (4/17); national authorities (28/49).

³³⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

³³⁹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (19/25), Participating States (16/24), third countries (8/24); national authorities (38/50). Interviews with national authorities (3); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (1); DG ECHO (1).

³⁴⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

in Stockholm on prevention and response to flooding was highlighted as a good example of raising awareness among policy makers and the public³⁴¹;

- **The Civil Protection Forum** is a good forum for raising awareness and preparedness among Member States across pillars and sectors³⁴². A comparison between the forums in 2018 and in 2022 suggests that it expanded in scope and introduced innovations³⁴³. The number of participants in 2022 increased by 18%, with the new hybrid format enabling 83% of participants to attend online and 17% in-person;
- **Thematic workshops and conferences** are effective in raising awareness at institutional and civilian level³⁴⁴. At institutional level, the 2022 introduction of the framework contract for ad hoc training was highlighted as a good practice. This framework contract is a flexible tool used by DG ECHO to organise workshops and training on additional themes not covered by the 'traditional' modules of the main training programme, providing an opportunity to raise awareness on a breadth of topics³⁴⁵.

The **PPP** and **Peer Review Programme** were highlighted as effective tools to increase awareness and preparedness, especially across sectors³⁴⁶. This is mostly attributed to the increasing breadth of hazards covered (see Figure 10) and sectors involved in projects funded under the PPP³⁴⁷, as well as the cross-sectoral cooperation fostered by the Peer Review Programme through interdisciplinary good practices and recommendations. A minority of stakeholders highlighted room for improvement in promoting both Programmes³⁴⁸. The PRAF is expected to have a positive impact on raising awareness and preparedness by introducing a standardised approach and sharing best practices, including in the context of wildfire assessment³⁴⁹.

Advisory missions in the field of preparedness raised awareness of how the Mechanism works and the system of civil protection, particularly in third countries³⁵⁰. National authorities stressed the positive impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of response³⁵¹. Nevertheless, there seems to be a lack of awareness of the impact of advisory missions among national authorities (see Sections 5.1.1.1 and 5.1.1.2).

Looking forward, stakeholders reported the potential for the **Knowledge Network** and **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** to raise awareness and increase preparedness³⁵². The Knowledge Network has the potential to bring together relevant UCPM outputs (e.g. from prevention and preparedness projects) and reach stakeholders beyond national civil protection authorities³⁵³. It also has the potential to enhance communication between policy makers and field actors³⁵⁴. This will involve

³⁴¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (3); experts in civil protection (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO (comments).

³⁴² Interviews with: national authorities (1); EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (1).

³⁴³ European Commission, *European Civil Protection Forum 2018*, 2018; European Commission, *7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022*, 2022.

³⁴⁴ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (8/14), Participating States (7/13), third countries (2/13); national authorities (32/48). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (1).

³⁴⁵ See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

³⁴⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (8); experts in civil protection (2); DG ECHO (1); international stakeholders (1). Surveys of: national authorities – PPP (32/48), Peer Review Programme (24/47); DG ECHO – Member States (6/6), Participating States (4/6), third countries (2/5). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

³⁴⁷ European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021.

³⁴⁸ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1); experts in civil protection (1).

³⁴⁹ European Commission, *Peer Review Assessment Framework (PRAF)*. 2021, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-01/peer_review_-_assessment_framework_sep_2021.pdf

³⁵⁰ Surveys of: national authorities (26/49). Interviews with: national authorities (1).

³⁵¹ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

³⁵² Interviews with: national authorities (8); EU stakeholders (3); DG ECHO (2); international stakeholders (1).

³⁵³ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (6); DG ECHO (1); international stakeholders (3).

³⁵⁴ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (3); international stakeholders (1).

facilitating bottom-up exchanges of knowledge and lessons, as well as promoting transparent communication on the integration of recommendations derived from project findings. The Knowledge Network online platform, especially its project spaces including the outputs of all UCPM-funded projects, are expected to play a significant role in enhancing awareness (see Figure 23)³⁵⁵. Similarly, stakeholders underlined that the **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** could help to raise awareness of the importance of the stages of the disaster management cycle before response³⁵⁶.

5.1.2 EQ2: To what extent did the UCPM achieve its general objective (Article 3(1) of the Decision) of contributing to strengthened cooperation and coordination between the Union and the Member States for civil protection in the areas of prevention, preparedness for and response to natural and man-made disasters?

Key findings

- The UCPM fostered closer cross-border cooperation and a sense of solidarity across Member States, Participating States and third countries, including incorporating lessons from major disasters;
- Efforts were made to streamline DG ECHO's coordination with Member States, Participating States and third countries on UCPM activities through organisational improvements and dedicated officers. There is scope to foster better synergies between DGs and to ensure adequate cross-border assessment and planning between Member States;
- The UCPM demonstrated operational cooperation with third countries, particularly during activations and financing of transport and logistics. Third countries' interest in diplomatic cooperation has increased, albeit more slowly;
- The UCPM made progress in cross-sectoral cooperation, mostly due to its involvement during COVID-19 and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and especially with non-conventional civil protection actors, such as health authorities, the private sector and EU delegations. Further coordination with other DGs was effective despite challenges in certain areas, such as the Cyber Task Force and hybrid threats;
- Training and exercises, the ERCC and rescEU were most frequently noted for their contributions to increased communication, coordination and cooperation.

Judgement criterion:

- JC2.1: UCPM led to improved communication, cooperation and coordination both cross-borders (i.e. between the Union, MS, PS and TC) and across sectors in relation to prevention, preparedness for and response to natural and man-made disasters

During the evaluation period, the UCPM progressed towards its general objective as set in Article 3(1) of the Decision, namely to improve communication, cooperation and coordination across borders and sectors on disaster prevention, preparedness and response. Cross-border and cross-sectoral cooperation was fostered with Member and Participating States, as well as third countries, with scope to strengthen the UCPM's diplomatic capacity. Progress on cross-sectoral cooperation was one of the key changes in this evaluation period, which could be built on in the coming years.

UCPM activities contributed to improving cross-border cooperation, especially with Member and Participating States. The large majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM fostered closer cross-

³⁵⁵ See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

³⁵⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (2). Focus group on: cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023.

border cooperation and, consequently, a sense of solidarity across Member States, Participating States and (to a lesser extent) third countries³⁵⁷.

Lessons from large-scale events (COVID-19, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine) played a key role in the UCPM's contribution to fostering cross-border cooperation. Lessons on cooperation from previous crises (from the migrant crisis in 2015 to COVID-19 in 2020 and, since 2022 Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine) are now incorporated to ensure continuous improvement in cooperation³⁵⁸. For example, since COVID-19, it is standard practice to have virtual calls with Member and Participating States' civil protection authorities very early in the deployment stage, as well as informal cooperation channels with third-country stakeholders during deployment³⁵⁹.

Member States', Participating States' and third countries' cooperation with DG ECHO has strengthened. DG ECHO made organisational improvements to the coordination of Member States, Participating States and third countries with the UCPM, with room for improvement to foster more cooperation between DGs. Efforts were made to streamline DG ECHO's coordination with Member States, Participating States and third countries on UCPM activities³⁶⁰. DG ECHO units on civil protection were reorganised to reflect the division of work on the UCPM's pillars, namely Directorate A on response, and Directorate B on preparedness and prevention. In addition, a DG ECHO Desk Officer was assigned per key legislative change to follow-up on progress³⁶¹. Nevertheless, some operational preparedness activities are split between Directorate A and Directorate B (e.g. the ECPP) and there could be stronger structural links between the units working on different activities under the Knowledge Network³⁶². The current restructuring of DG ECHO will likely address these issues³⁶³.

Significant efforts were made to enhance cross-border cooperation between Member and Participating States in the field of prevention, with room for improvement. Cross-border cooperation was identified as a key area for improvement in the overview document of disaster risks in the EU and highlighted in the Union Disaster Resilience Goals³⁶⁴. Amendments to Article 6 (Regulation (EU) 2021/836) in 2021 introduced cross-boundary disaster risk mapping, including in the DRM Summary Reports, in order to enhance concrete planning based on risk assessments (see Section 5.1.1.1)³⁶⁵. This points to a potential need to facilitate adequate cross-boundary cooperation arrangements at all governance levels for all DRM phases and relevant risks (see Section 5.5.1). The ongoing study on cross-border resilience and crisis management by DG REGIO and DG ECHO is

³⁵⁷ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – between civil protection authorities across Member and Participating States (35/37), in third countries (31/37); national authorities – across Member and Participating States (44/49), in third countries (37/47). Interviews with: national authorities (12); EU stakeholders (10); international stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (8); experts in civil protection (1). European Commission, *Europe in the World: the Union Civil Protection Mechanism as a regional cooperation model*, EU Civil Protection Forum, Fourth warm-up session, 2022.

³⁵⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (1); EU stakeholders (4); international stakeholders (1); DG ECHO (2). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022. Final Report*, 2022; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023.

³⁵⁹ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

³⁶⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (10).

³⁶¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

³⁶² See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

³⁶³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

³⁶⁴ European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disasters the European Union may face*, 2020; Commission Recommendation of 8 February 2023 on Union Disaster Resilience Goals, 2023/C 56/01; Commission Decision C(2022) 4916 on the financing of the pilot project Cross-Border Crisis Response Integrated Initiative (CB-CRII) and the adoption of the work programme for 2022.

³⁶⁵ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (2); DG ECHO (2); international stakeholders (1). Surveys of: national authorities (28/49). Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services, *Evaluation study of definitions, gaps and costs of response capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2019.

expected to provide further insights into cross-border risks, cooperation agreements, and lessons on good risk governance³⁶⁶.

Across the evaluation period, cooperation with third countries was more operational than diplomatic. Here 'operational cooperation' refers to ad hoc cooperation when the need arises, while 'diplomatic cooperation' is long-term strategic and formalised cooperation (such as through formal agreements). The majority of UCPM activations (see Figure 7), as well as financing of transport and logistics was outside of the Union (see Figure 38), showing strengthened operational cooperation between the UCPM and third countries. However, progress towards fostering new long-term cooperation with third countries was slower than previously, with two new Participating States joining the UCPM (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and one new Administrative Agreement signed (Georgia) (see Figure 42). Diplomatic cooperation with third countries was not a priority during the evaluation period and was impeded by DG ECHO's strained resources for the UCPM³⁶⁷.

Figure 41. Lesson: cooperation between the UCPM and EU delegations



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation³⁶⁸.

Cooperation between the UCPM and third countries is expected to increase in the coming years.

There is evidence of increasing interest from third countries to increase diplomatic relations with the UCPM from 2023 onwards (see Figure 42)³⁶⁹. In 2023, DG ECHO renewed its Administrative Agreement with the United States (US) and is holding discussions with Canada on signing an agreement in 2023³⁷⁰. There have been significant developments in relation to Participating States beyond the evaluation period³⁷¹:

- Ukraine officially became a UCPM Participating State in April 2023;
- Moldova submitted an application to become a Participating State in 2023;
- Georgia submitted an application to join the UCPM in 2023;
- Discussions are ongoing about another country potentially becoming a Participating State.

³⁶⁶ Where relevant, the evaluation team mentions activities taking place beyond the evaluation period where they (will/may) have an impact on evaluation findings. European Commission, *Cross-border resilience and crisis management*, 2023, <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/news/cross-border-resilience-and-crisis-management>

³⁶⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); international stakeholders (1). EESC, *Consolidating the EU–Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

³⁶⁸ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019; EESC, *Consolidating the EU–Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

³⁶⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); international stakeholders (1). THW, *Consortium*, 2018.

³⁷⁰ Where relevant, the evaluation team mentions activities taking place beyond the evaluation period where they (will/may) have an impact on evaluation findings.

³⁷¹ Where relevant, the evaluation team mentions activities taking place beyond the evaluation period where they (will/may) have an impact on evaluation findings.

This increased interest in cooperation from third countries is evident through the revived interest in the PPRD East and new PPRD South (now PPRD Med). Three of the countries that have applied to become Participating States (Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia) are members of the PPRD East 3, with the goal of increasing disaster risk management capacity and proximity with the UCPM. Based on feedback from third-country participants, the PPRD South (now PPRD Med) evolved to be more participatory and take a more bottom-up approach³⁷². The meaningful involvement and integration of third countries in existing networks has played a vital role in facilitating the UCPM's progress on cooperation with these countries. In addition, closer cooperation with third countries is planned through a recent DG ECHO pilot project deploying senior technical experts from the Neighbourhood countries (i.e. having thorough knowledge of their language and culture), IPA countries (Western Balkans and Türkiye), and Southern Neighbourhood. These experts are tasked solely with fostering cooperation on civil protection matters with DG ECHO, the implementing consortia and EU delegations³⁷³. In addition, DG ECHO plans to introduce civil protection contact points in EU delegations, in response to recommendations by several external evaluations³⁷⁴. There is uncertainty as to whether DG ECHO will be able to meet the increasing demand for advice on disaster management in third countries, given time and resource constraints³⁷⁵. During the evaluation period, this affected an invitation by the Gulf countries and Asia, as well as Japan.

Figure 42. Overview of third countries cooperating with the UCPM

	UCPM Participating States	Administrative Agreements between the UCPM and third countries	Formalised cooperation (to be confirmed beyond the evaluation period)
2017-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bosnia and Herzegovina (2022) › Albania (2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Georgia (2018) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ukraine became a Participating State of the UCPM in April 2023; ▪ Moldova submitted a request to become a UCPM Participating State in 2023; ▪ Georgia submitted an application to become a UCPM Participating State in 2023; ▪ There are ongoing discussions about Switzerland becoming a Participating States; ▪ Canada to sign an Administrative Agreement in 2023; ▪ United States renewed administrative agreement in 2023
Before 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Türkiye (2015) › Serbia (2015) › North Macedonia (2014) › Montenegro (2014) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Algeria (2016) › Australia (2008) › Tunisia (2013) › Russia (2013, not renewed) › Ukraine (2008) › United States (2011) › Letter of Intent with Chile (2011) 	

Source: ICF elaboration, based on European Commission, *List of Participating Countries in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2023*; European Commission, *Civil protection partners 2023*; European Commission, *Ukraine joins the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, 2023*.

The UCPM has made significant progress towards building cross-sectoral cooperation at national and EU level, primarily due to the nature of the key emergencies in the evaluation period. The key change was in fostering cross-sectoral cooperation, especially with non-conventional civil protection actors³⁷⁶. This was primarily triggered by the two main crises in 2017-2022 – the COVID-19 pandemic

³⁷² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Note for the Attention of Head of Cabinet ALEŠKA SIMKIĆ*, 2021.

³⁷³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

³⁷⁴ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014–2016*, 2017; EESC, *Consolidating the EU–Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

³⁷⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

³⁷⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (12); DG ECHO (8); EU stakeholders (4); international stakeholders (2); experts in civil protection (3). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – increased cross-sectoral cooperation in Member/Participating States (33/38); experts in civil protection (14/19); DG ECHO Desk Officers – cross-sectoral cooperation in third countries (19/38); experts (8/19). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID–19.

(health actors) and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (energy, agriculture, IT, humanitarian aid, private sector (see Figure 43) and civil society organisations)³⁷⁷. For example, the UCPM's involvement in the COVID-19 response, particularly through vaccine sharing efforts, significantly increased collaboration with health authorities³⁷⁸. Cooperation with EU delegations also improved through regular cooperation meetings during response efforts and training in 2019 with approximately 80 EU delegations³⁷⁹. Cooperation is set to significantly improve through the introduction of civil protection contact points³⁸⁰. Stakeholders agreed that the UCPM contributed to increased cross-sectoral cooperation in prevention and preparedness, working with actors across the disaster management cycle³⁸¹ to prevent and reduce the potential effects of disasters³⁸².

Figure 43. Lesson: the UCPM fostered increased cooperation with the private sector to increase capacity when national authorities were strained



Lesson learnt

DG ECHO fostering cooperation with the private sector in Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine helped when national authorities were overwhelmed

From the beginning of the crisis, private sector entities got in touch with DG ECHO expressing their interest to donate goods. Traditionally, Member and Participating States, as well as Ukraine (at the time not a UCPM Participating State) would have dealt with the private donations bilaterally, but they were overwhelmed, leading to the involvement of the UCPM to channel private donations and fill assistance gaps, as well as broaden available capacity. In collaboration with Belgium and Polish authorities, DG ECHO established two rescEU hubs to manage those donations: i) a rescEU medical, shelters and CBRN hub in Belgium (managed by the Federal Public Service Health), and ii) a rescEU energy hub in Poland (managed by the Governmental Strategic Reserves Agency, RARS). This cooperation with the private sector was seen as a very positive development as it increased the capacity of the UCPM when Member and Participating States and the market were strained. Nevertheless, the lack of a legal framework highlighted a need for a more robust framework to streamline this cooperation and make the process simpler and faster.

Source: ICF elaboration, based on the case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (see Annex 7) and European Commission, Minutes from Lessons Learnt Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023.

The UCPM increased cross-sectoral cooperation with other EU-level services. Stakeholders underlined that the UCPM generally demonstrated effective cross-sectoral cooperation with other European Commission authorities³⁸³. Notable examples were identified in the areas of CBRN³⁸⁴, health emergencies³⁸⁵, and marine pollution³⁸⁶. Cross-sectoral cooperation with other EU level services occurred through three channels:

- **Formalised relationships increased structured cooperation with other sectors, especially on concrete tasks.** For example, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

³⁷⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (15); EU stakeholders (7); DG ECHO (14); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (2). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Towards faster, greener and smarter emergency management*, 7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022, Final Report, 2022; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020. Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

³⁷⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (9); national authorities (4); EU stakeholders (1). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020.

³⁷⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

³⁸⁰ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

³⁸¹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (27/38); national authorities (32/46). Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (2); international stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*.

³⁸² Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (23/27); experts in civil protection (19/21); national authorities (44/49).

³⁸³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (7). European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020; European Commission, *Prepared by Landell Mills*, 2022; Surveys of: national authorities – the UCPM strengthened cooperation between the EU with Member and Participating States (43);

³⁸⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (2).

³⁸⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (1).

³⁸⁶ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1).

sent liaison officers to the ERCC to follow up on COVID-19 and Ebola outbreaks³⁸⁷. Similarly, DG ECHO and the ECDC now have arrangements in place for the ECDC to deploy experts as part of UCPM operations³⁸⁸. Another success was the increased cooperation between DG ECHO and the EEAS, particularly under the Consular Taskforce, which held almost daily meetings on the repatriation of EU citizens^{389 390};

- **Inter-service procedures allowed for cooperation with other EU-level services, particularly on cross-cutting topics.** Such arrangements are in place between DG ECHO and the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INPTA), Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST), Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), and the Directorate General for Energy (DG ENER)³⁹¹. For example, DG ECHO consulted an interservice group of 26 DGs during the development of the Union Disaster Resilience Goals³⁹²;
- **Operational cooperation outside of formal arrangements.** Stakeholders noted beneficial informal networks and frequent exchanges, including on calls for proposals and relevant developments³⁹³. For instance, DG ECHO closely follows projects under the European Cross-Border Cooperation, Interreg A, funded by DG REGIO³⁹⁴. The two DGs also operationally cooperated on scoping and launching a study providing necessary insights for the Union Disaster Resilience Goals.

Looking forward, DG ECHO is making increasing efforts to foster cross-sectoral cooperation. This is evident in the recent discussion-based EU MODEX on marine pollution, which was the first to include a broad range of actors (including private insurers, legal advisors, coastguard, marine pollution and civil protection authorities)³⁹⁵. It is also in the process of drafting guidance documents for non-conventional civil protection actors (for EU delegations and permanent representations, and for humanitarian aid actors)³⁹⁶.

There is room for more cooperation with different sectors, outside the field of civil protection. Stakeholders agreed that while progress has been made³⁹⁷, the UCPM could improve cross-sectoral cooperation with certain stakeholders and institutions³⁹⁸. Deepening cross-sectoral cooperation may

³⁸⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

³⁸⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

³⁸⁹ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020.

³⁹⁰ This success was recognized by the EU Ombudsman with the attribution to DG ECHO and the EEAS of the 2021 Award for Good Administration honouring the “EU’s extraordinary efforts last year to help repatriate over a half million EU citizens stranded around the world due to the pandemic.” (see at <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/press-release/en/143409> (see at <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/press-release/en/143409>)

³⁹¹ DG ECHO internal data.

³⁹² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

³⁹³ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); DG ECHO (1).

³⁹⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Interreg A – Cross-border cooperation*, 2023, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/cross-border_en

³⁹⁵ European Commission, *DBX EU MODEX on Marine Pollution Conference*, 2023, <https://www.marine-pollution.eu-modex.eu/>. Interviews with: national authority (1).

³⁹⁶ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Note for the attention of Mr Matjaz Malgaj, head of cabinet of commissioner Lenarcic: DG ECHO Communication Strategy 2021*, 2020.

³⁹⁷ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation and promoted coordination between authorities and organisations in areas outside the realm of civil protection (22/36), other relevant stakeholders (11/21); national authorities – between authorities/organisations in areas outside the realm of civil protection (22/46), other relevant stakeholders (6/18). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (1); international stakeholders (1).

³⁹⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); national authorities (3); EU stakeholders (7). See Annex 7 for case studies on floods and on COVID-19. Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

require strengthening the role of civil protection at EU and/or national level. At **EU level**, stakeholders suggested structural changes to streamline cooperation across sectors (see Section 5.3)³⁹⁹. They highlighted that some cross-sectoral cooperation between DG ECHO and other EU services were more challenging⁴⁰⁰, such as difficulties in creating synergies with other EU work on cyber security and hybrid threats⁴⁰¹, as well as stakeholders' lack of clarity on the operational delineation of responsibilities between DG ECHO and the newly established entity HERA (see Section 5.1.3)⁴⁰². Stakeholders mentioned several challenges in fostering cross-sectoral cooperation at **national level**, including national civil protection authorities' lack of (political) ability to effectively cooperate with other sectors and ministries⁴⁰³. This suggests room for improvement in raising awareness about the UCPM with non-conventional actors⁴⁰⁴. For particular sectors where the UCPM could foster more cooperation:

- There is scope for the UCPM to promote further cooperation, particularly in the pillar of **prevention**, given the growing complexity of disasters⁴⁰⁵. EU stakeholders noted that they expect advantages from further collaboration with relevant DGs and agencies to enhance prevention and **preparedness**, as well as generally increasing the accessibility of outputs⁴⁰⁶;
- The UCPM could improve and build on its cooperation with **health** and **chemical accident** stakeholders, the **private sector** (see Figure 43) and **EU delegations**⁴⁰⁷. Challenges remain in engaging national health ministries in UCPM activities and raising awareness of the Mechanism⁴⁰⁸. There have been calls to involve the private sector in UCPM activities, including to provide additional capacity to Member States in exceptional circumstances⁴⁰⁹, and for the protection of cultural heritage (e.g. cooperation with private insurance companies)⁴¹⁰. During the response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the private

European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020*, 2021; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020.

³⁹⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (1).

⁴⁰⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (2).

⁴⁰¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁴⁰² Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (3); national authorities (6). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁴⁰³ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. Interviews with: national authorities (5); EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (6). European Commission and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

⁴⁰⁴ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (3); national authorities (2). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020*, 2021; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

⁴⁰⁵ Focus group on: cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023. European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022.

⁴⁰⁶ Focus group on: cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023.

⁴⁰⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Towards faster, greener and smarter emergency management*, 7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022, 2022; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2019; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Combined Evaluation of DG ECHO's humanitarian response to epidemics, and DG ECHO's partnership with the World Health Organisation, 2017-2021*, 2022. Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁴⁰⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (1); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Combined Evaluation of DG ECHO's humanitarian response to epidemics, and DG ECHO's partnership with the World Health Organisation, 2017-2021*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020.

⁴⁰⁹ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁴¹⁰ European Commission, *Safeguarding Cultural Heritage from Natural and Man-Made Disasters. A comparative analysis of risk management in the EU*.

sector played a role in the Mechanism for the first time by channelling donations to Ukraine through a logistical hub (see Figure 33)⁴¹¹. There are calls for this new role to be replicated in certain similar crises⁴¹². Beyond the evaluation period, DG ECHO has increased its efforts to cooperate with the private sector, but there is a need for criteria and parameters for involvement to be defined. For example, the fact that Member States did not agree to a different model for private sector involvement in the context of the Türkiye-Syria crisis, shows the expected benefit of reducing civil protection authorities' burden as a key decision-making parameter⁴¹³. Similarly, notwithstanding improvements to cooperate with EU delegations, their crucial role has led to calls for further cooperation efforts⁴¹⁴. Stakeholders suggested that involving Member State representations in the affected country could enhance response coordination⁴¹⁵. The fact that DG ECHO is working towards introducing civil protection contact points in EU delegations will likely have an impact⁴¹⁶.

During the evaluation period, UCPM activities across the pillars contributed to increased communication, coordination and cooperation, to varying degrees.

Stakeholders agreed that **response**⁴¹⁷ activities contributed most to increased communication, coordination and cooperation, in particular:

- The **ERCC's** role in coordinating and communicating throughout an emergency was underlined as crucial⁴¹⁸;
- The UCPM's **deployment efforts** helped to strengthen cooperation through regular meetings with all relevant actors and to **smooth cooperation with relevant international organisations operating in parallel**⁴¹⁹. Stakeholders highlighted significant improvements in cooperation between national, EU and international actors during response efforts outside the EU⁴²⁰, especially in the context of the Türkiye-Syria earthquake in 2023⁴²¹. They also noted good cooperation between the UCPM and NATO, the Red Cross, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the WHO. Complex coordination efforts in the context of floods, the Ebola outbreak, the Türkiye-Syrian earthquake, and COVID-19 (including

⁴¹¹ Interviews with: national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (1); DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021, 2022*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine, 2022*; European Commission, *Towards faster, greener and smarter emergency management, 7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022, 2022*; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes, 2019*.

⁴¹³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). DG ECHO internal data.

⁴¹⁴ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (1). European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique, 2019*; EESC, *Consolidating the EU–Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory, Opinion, 2022*; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations, 2019*.

⁴¹⁵ European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations, 2019*.

⁴¹⁶ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁴¹⁷ Interviews with: international authorities (8); DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (10); international stakeholders (1).

⁴¹⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (6); DG ECHO (1); international stakeholders (2); experts in civil protection (1); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique, 2019*; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations, 2020*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe, 2022*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine, 2022*. See Annex 7 for case studies on floods and on COVID-19.

⁴¹⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); Interviews with: international stakeholders (2); national authorities (3); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations, 2022*; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learned Meeting on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism operations in 2017, 2018*. Surveys of: DG ECHO – increased cooperation and coordination between Member States, Participating States, third countries and international partners (33/38); experts in civil protection (15/19); national authorities (47/52).

⁴²⁰ Surveys of: DG ECHO (33/38); experts in civil protection (15/19); national authorities (47/52). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholder (1); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (3).

⁴²¹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (1).

outside the Union) reinforced cooperation between relevant actors⁴²². Informal cooperation channels with third-country stakeholders during deployment and (virtual) calls with civil protection authorities very early in the deployment stage⁴²³ were highlighted. There is scope to improve information management with international partners and to engage actors outside of civil protection during response efforts⁴²⁴. In contrast, challenging cooperation efforts between the UCPM and international organisations were experienced during medical deployments of EMT to Armenia in 2020, where the WHO's absence highlighted the need for improved collaboration⁴²⁵. Revised SOPs have been implemented to address and mitigate these challenges⁴²⁶;

- **The deployment of EUCPT was seen to foster better cooperation and coordination efforts.** Stakeholders highlighted that EUCPT eased communication with local authorities and other relevant stakeholders⁴²⁷. They noted that in response to the 2019 earthquake in Albania, the EUCPT was particularly successful as a coordination hub for international actors⁴²⁸;
- **Financial assistance for transport and logistics** was an enabler to achieve the UCPM's general objective (more for third countries than Member and Participating States), as it is all coordinated and financed through a central EU system⁴²⁹. There is room to simplify procedures related to co-financing transport costs (see Section 5.1.3 and Section 5.2).

Cross-pillar/horizontal activities had an impact on increased communication, coordination and cooperation across borders and sectors. In particular:

- The **Training (and Exercises) Programme** brought people from different backgrounds together to learn how to cooperate across borders and sectors⁴³⁰. A good example is the joint training between the UN and European Commission, with 12 sessions taking place during the evaluation period. The benefits of this increased cooperation were especially visible in the earthquake response in Türkiye-Syria (see Section 5.1.1.2)⁴³¹;
- Evidence suggests that the **Knowledge Network** will play a significant role in strengthening cooperation, especially between civil protection and disaster management and scientific

⁴²² European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022; European Commission, *ERCC 2021 in perspective: Overview of UCPM activations and deployments*, 2022. European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learned Meeting on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism operations in 2017*, 2018. Interviews with: international stakeholders (2); national authorities (3); EU stakeholders (2).

⁴²³ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020*, 2021.

⁴²⁴ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learned Meeting on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism operations in 2017*, 2018; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020*, 2021.

⁴²⁵ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020*, 2021.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (3). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁴²⁸ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020.

⁴²⁹ Kantar, *Desk Report – Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations (2018–2022) and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation*, 2020, 2022. Interviews with: EU stakeholder (3); DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (2).

⁴³⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (1); international stakeholders (1). Training Consortium, *UCPM Training Programme 16th Cycle 2018–2019. UCPM Introduction Course (CMI)*, 2019; Training Consortium, *UCPM Training Programme 16th Cycle. Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical experts courses (TEC)*, 2019; Training Consortium, *UCPM Training Programme 17th Cycle. Operational Management Course (OPM)*, 2018; CN APELL-RO and EUROMODEX, *EUROMODEX LOT2 2017–2018 FINAL CONSOLIDATED REPORT*, 2018; Training Consortium, *UNDAC Induction course (IC) and team leader course (TL) 2018*, 2018; Training Consortium, *Training programme EU On-site Integration Course (OSIC) in the frame of the UCPM training programme: project progress report*, 2022. Surveys of: national authorities (40).

⁴³¹ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

experts (from academic, non-governmental and national organisations)⁴³². It will expand and build on the work of the DRMKC's Risk Data Hub, which is already facilitating links between practitioners, policy makers and academics on disaster risk management⁴³³;

- **Conferences and workshops** (particularly Civil Protection Forum and Lessons Learnt workshops) foster cooperation by bringing together relevant actors and facilitating a mutual understanding of good practices, improvements and lessons⁴³⁴.

The main activities contributing to strengthened cooperation in the field of **prevention** and **preparedness** were:

- The **PPP** successfully reinforced cooperation at international and national level, especially through good internal coordination between beneficiaries and with national and local stakeholders⁴³⁵. Regular meetings with prevention and preparedness actors with Sendai focal points also fostered further cooperation in prevention and preparedness⁴³⁶. Calls for proposals have highlighted the need for cooperation in certain areas and countries^{437,438};
- The **ECPP** and **rescEU** were seen as essential to cooperation by bringing together Member and Participating States to pool assets and identify capacity gaps⁴³⁹. The establishment of the 'rescEU private sector work strand' for CBRN, shelter and medical supplies hosted by Belgium was an important development that shows the potential for rescEU to expand its cooperation sectors⁴⁴⁰. The UCPM indirectly contributed to reinforcing bilateral and sub-regional cooperation by reinforcing national capacities to deal with forest fire management⁴⁴¹;
- There appears to be **scope for improvement** for **EWS** and risk mapping and **DRM Summary Reports**, both of which could foster more cross-sectoral cooperation. EWS could work to foster better synergies with military structures, while risk mapping and DRM Summary Reports could bring together more non-conventional civil protection actors⁴⁴². The Union Disaster Resilience Goals call for more comprehensive assessments building on sector-specific and multi-sector risks assessments⁴⁴³.

⁴³² Interviews with: national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (3); DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Fifth Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC) Annual Seminar*, 2022; European Commission, *Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM) Strategic crisis management in the EU*, 2022; THW, *Consortium*, 2018. Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Lessons Learnt Programme (15); national authorities – impact of significant changes: Knowledge Network (36).

⁴³³ European Commission, *Risk Data Hub – web platform to facilitate management of disaster risks*, 2019. Surveys of: experts in civil protection (5).

⁴³⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (1); EU stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022. Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (21).

⁴³⁵ European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil protection prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014–2020)*, 2021. Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (16/17); experts in civil protection – project lead for prevention projects (10/11), project lead for preparedness projects (10/11), project member of consortia (7/7).

⁴³⁶ European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2019, 2020*; European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2020, 2021*.

⁴³⁷ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1).

⁴³⁸ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1).

⁴³⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (7); DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (2). Surveys of: national authorities – in response to Participating States (44/45), coordination of deployment response capacities (41/42).

⁴⁴⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (4). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Towards faster, greener and smarter emergency management*, 7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022, 2022.

⁴⁴¹ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

⁴⁴² Interviews with: national authorities (1); EU stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2019; Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services, *Evaluation study of definitions, gaps and costs of response capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2019; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020.

⁴⁴³ Goal 1, Commission Recommendation of 8 February 2023 on Union Disaster Resilience Goals, 2023/C 56/01.

5.1.3 EQ3. What factors have driven/hindered the effectiveness towards achieving the UCPM's general and specific objectives?

Key findings



- The changing threat and risk landscape placed new pressures on the UCPM. Most notably, the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine resulted in challenges of new scope and complexity for the Mechanism;
- Intrinsic limits in current scientific knowledge and know-how limited the effectiveness of the UCPM;
- Some external barriers hampered cooperation and coordination activities of the UCPM. These included the complex and diverse national institutional landscapes navigated by DG ECHO and national civil protection authorities, a mismatch between expectations in third countries and what the UCPM could offer, and limited national resources to engage and support the activities of the UCPM;
- The effectiveness of the UCPM was enhanced by the legislative, organisational, and procedural adaptability of the Mechanism. Trust and mutual understanding between DG ECHO and Member and Participating States positively affected the Mechanism's effectiveness. However, changes in DG ECHO's organisation led to some inefficiencies in internal cooperation, with consequences for UCPM support to Member and Participating States, as well as third countries;
- UCPM activities had unintended positive effects, including on policy awareness, operationalising scientific tools, and regional cooperation on civil protection outside Europe.

Judgement criteria:

- JC3.1: There were some internal/ external factors that drove/hindered the effectiveness of the UCPM;
- JC3.2: Cooperation and coordination were sometimes hampered by factors internal and/or external to the UCPM
- JC3.3: Legislative amendments of the UCPM since 2017 (e.g. introduction of rescEU) as well as structural changes in the Commission and DG ECHO (e.g. new European Commission, DG ECHO Commissioner, etc.) have aided the achievement of general and specific objectives in the field of preparedness and response;
- JC3.4 UCPM activities across the pillars had some positive effects and limited negative repercussions beyond what was planned.

Several internal and external factors influenced the effectiveness of the UCPM (see Figure 44). This subsection outlines the internal and external barriers and enablers impacting the effectiveness of the UCPM. It examines the impact of legislative amendments and structural changes in DG ECHO on the attainment of general and specific objectives in preparedness and response, and describes the unintended consequences of UCPM's activities across its pillars.

Figure 44. Factor mapping and key judgement criteria

	Hindering factors 	Facilitating factors 
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ DG ECHO human and financial resources (JC3.1) ➤ Focus on response to the detriment of preparedness and prevention (JC3.1) ➤ Complexity of processes and amount of required documentation (JC3.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Legislative responsiveness and adaptability (legislative amendments) (JC3.3) ➤ Internal organisational changes to DG ECHO (JC3.3) ➤ Adaptability of / innovation in DG ECHO (JC3.1)
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Changing threat and risk landscape (JC3.1) ➤ COVID-19 (JC 3.1) ➤ Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (JC3.1) ➤ Limits to scientific know-how and evidence base (JC3.1) ➤ Complexity of administrative and governance landscape across MS/PC (JC3.2) ➤ Misalignment between beneficiaries' expectations and UCPM capacity (JC3.2) ➤ Resource constraints of Member States/Participating States stakeholders/counterparts (JC3.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cross-sectoral cooperation (JC3.1) ➤ Private sector contributions (JC3.1) ➤ Trust among DG ECHO and national counterparts (JC3.2) ➤ Understanding of UCPM among Member States/Participating States (JC3.2)

Source: ICF elaboration.

Judgement criterion:

- JC3.1: There were some internal/external factors that drove/hindered the effectiveness of the UCPM

Several external and internal factors negatively affected the UCPM during the evaluation period. Nevertheless, the ability of DG ECHO and Member States to adapt to crises' demands helped to mitigate the effects of external challenges and limitations. This included the adoption of innovative processes and enhanced cooperation with stakeholders outside the civil protection community.

Recent years have seen significant changes in the threat and risk landscape, leading to new pressures and challenges for the UCPM. The increased frequency, scale, complexity and concurrent nature of emergencies put a significant strain on the UCPM. The Mechanism was a key solution to unprecedented crises. However, it was designed on the assumption of being able to regroup and rebuild capacities in non-activation time⁴⁴⁴ and the demands of a threat and risk landscape characterised by increasing pressures are likely to overwhelm both national and European capacities to respond. From the ERCC's perspective, challenges with multiple simultaneous RfA include module shortages and prioritisation⁴⁴⁵. Stakeholders noted a need to align the UCPM's work and capabilities with the new risk landscape⁴⁴⁶, including climate change adaptation and slow onset disasters⁴⁴⁷.

⁴⁴⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (3).

⁴⁴⁵ European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021, 2022*.

⁴⁴⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (3).

⁴⁴⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU, 2021*. Slow onset disasters are defined by the UNDRR as 'one that emerges gradually over time [...] and] could be associated with,

Some of the crises during the evaluation period created exceptional challenges and pressure for the UCPM, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Nevertheless, DG ECHO's crisis management capitalised on opportunities for innovation and enhanced cooperation to mitigate the challenges and pressures encountered.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant obstacles to UCPM's operations due to delays and cessations of activities linked to public health measures⁴⁴⁸. For example, the deployment of ERCC Liaison Officers and EUCPTs to UCPM activations was not possible during the first half of 2020⁴⁴⁹.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the implementation of the **Training and Exercises Programme**, as well as the **EoE Programme**⁴⁵⁰. These activities were affected in several ways: 1) delays and cancellation of in-person training activities⁴⁵¹, 2) remote or hybrid implementation of activities originally envisioned for in-person delivery⁴⁵², and 3) fewer participants requesting or attending training activities due to health-related cancellations, limited flight availability, and reduced interest⁴⁵³.

Figure 45. Examples of UCPM training and exercises hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic

Examples of Training and Exercises hindered during the COVID-19 pandemic



Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical Experts courses (TEC), 2019–2020: 8 out of the 11 courses were successfully completed as planned. The remaining 3 out of 11 had to be cancelled despite being prepared for. The new courses in the 18th cycle prevented any postponements.

EU MODEX Lot 3, 2019–2020: Four modules withdrew their participation in a MODEX Exercise in Turkey due to pandemic-related issues in Romania, deployment to an emergency on La Palma islands, and logistical problems.

ModTTX Modules Table–Top Exercises 2019–2020: The two remaining exercises in Belgium (ModTTX) and Germany (Team Leader Exercise) in the training cycle had initially been postponed. The latter was re-designed as a Virtual reality role play centred around 'Inclusive Leadership', involving five Team Leaders who used virtual reality goggles with an app and avatars.

High Level Coordination Course (HLC) and Course on Negotiation and Decision-making (CND), 2022: The increased number of cancellations by participants or course staff due to health reasons and limited availability of flights had posed a challenge for all Lots. Yet, within Lot 6, all six courses were successfully delivered with a high average participant rating of 4.6 out of 5.

Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation⁴⁵⁴.

e.g. drought, desertification, sea-level rise, epidemic disease' (UNDRR, *Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2023, <https://www.undrr.org/quick/11964>).

⁴⁴⁸ European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021*, 2022.

⁴⁴⁹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (comment). European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID–19 wave in Europe*, 2020.

⁴⁵⁰ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – in-person training (44/49), EU MODEX (31/41), table-top exercise (21/41, with 13 indicating a moderate impact). Interviews with: national authorities (3/36). European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID–19 wave in Europe*, 2020.

⁴⁵¹ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders — the training activity was not implemented (28/45), the number of sessions per year decreased (19/45). Training Consortium, *17th cycle. Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical experts courses (TEC)*, 2020; Mod TTX, *ModTTX Modules Table–Top Exercises 2019–2020 N°ECHO/SER/2018/785702*, 2020; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID–19 wave in Europe*, 2020; EU MODEX, *Final Report MODEX 2019–2020 lot 5*, 2020.

⁴⁵² Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (30/45 and 15/45, respectively). Mod TTX, *ModTTX Modules Table–Top Exercises 2019–2020 N°ECHO/SER/2018/785702*, 2020; EU Chem React and European Union Civil Protection, *EU–CHEM–REACT–2, Full scale field exercise (FSX) final conduct report, grant agreement ECHO/SUB/2018/828788*, 2021.

⁴⁵³ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – the number of participants requesting to participate in the training activities decreased (14/45), the number of (maximum) participants was reduced (8/45) and comments. EU MODEX, *Final Progress Report. EU MODEX 2019–2020 Lot 3*, 2021; Training Consortium, *UCPM Training Programme 18th cycle. High Level Coordination Course (HLC) and Course on Negotiation and Decision-making (CND)*, 2022.

⁴⁵⁴ Training Consortium, *17th cycle. Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical experts courses (TEC)*, 2020; EU MODEX, *Final Progress Report. EU MODEX 2019–2020 lot 3*, 2021; Training Consortium, *UCPM Training Programme 18th cycle. High Level Coordination Course (HLC) and Course on Negotiation and Decision-making (CND)*, 2022; Mod TTX, *ModTTX Modules Table–Top Exercises 2019–2020 N°ECHO/SER/2018/785702*, 2020.

Large-scale crises increased the demands placed on the UCPM and on national capacity, to the point of threatening to overwhelm them. The rise in multiple simultaneous RfA and activations since 2017 (see Section 5.1.1.3) posed challenges in allocating the necessary capacity and resources⁴⁵⁵. This increased pressure specifically impacted the ERCC's work.

Heightened demands added to DG ECHO's already significant workload in implementing budget reinforcements and legislative amendments. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic had a widespread impact, affecting virtually all Member and Participating States and resulting in global supply chain shortages, restricting national response options and capacity to make offers⁴⁵⁶. Meanwhile, the ERCC provided major coordination and logistical support over sustained and intensive periods of time, for instance during the consular support and repatriation operations⁴⁵⁷. The changing role of ERCC duty officers from support staff to full-time staff helped to mitigate the increasing volume of activations⁴⁵⁸.

The growing number and diversity of actors involved in emergency responses necessitated new coordination structures and processes⁴⁵⁹. This encompassed engaging with new contact points at national, EU, and international level (see Section 5.1.2).

- At **national level**, coordination challenges were especially pressing when new actors had limited knowledge about the UCPM's procedures and capabilities⁴⁶⁰. Similarly, the ERCC encountered challenges in interacting with national bodies outside civil protection, such as health authorities, interior ministries and foreign ministries (see Section 5.1.2);
- At **EU level**, higher coordination demands were expected particularly when stakeholders had a limited understanding about the distribution of roles between the UCPM and new actors emerging in the field of crisis management. Stakeholders expressed a general apprehension of an increasingly complex EU crisis management landscape.⁴⁶¹ In particular, stakeholders perceived a lack of clarity as regard the distribution of roles between the UCPM and the newly established entity HERA⁴⁶² (Section 5.4.3) and to a lesser extent the upcoming Cyber Task Force⁴⁶³ (Section 5.1.2), and the private sector⁴⁶⁴ (Section 5.1.2). As regards cooperation with HERA, respective responsibilities of the single entities are clearly defined in the legislations (Section 5.4.3 for the description of responsibilities divided between HERA and UCPM).⁴⁶⁵

This suggests that while the **adaptability and flexibility** of the UCPM proved to be one of the main facilitating factors in its effectiveness, greater emphasis should be placed in future on communicating and facilitating interactions between the UCPM, new actors and stakeholders. This would maximise stakeholders' gains from the engagement of the UCPM with new actors and maintain their confidence in the effectiveness and efficiency of the UCPM.

⁴⁵⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (7); national authorities (1). European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2020*, 2021.

⁴⁵⁶ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020; European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2020*, 2021.

⁴⁵⁷ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020.

⁴⁵⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁴⁵⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (6); national authorities (4). European Commission, *Annual Activity Report 2020*, 2021; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020*, 2021.

⁴⁶⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (6); national authorities (4).

⁴⁶¹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (4 comments). Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); national authorities (2). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023; DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁴⁶² Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023 (4 national authorities, 1 expert). Interviews with: DG ECHO (3). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers - effectiveness (8), efficiency (3), coherence (5). Interviews with: national authorities (8); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholder (1); national authorities (1 comment). See Annex 7 for case study on COVID-19.

⁴⁶³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁴⁶⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). ERCC presentation notes CECIS.

⁴⁶⁵ Regulation 2022/2371; Commission decision C(2021) 6712 on the 16.09.2021. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID-19.

The effectiveness of the UCPM was influenced by limits of scientific knowledge and evidence. In the area of prevention and preparedness, several barriers hindered increased use of scientific know-how⁴⁶⁶. These included: 1) measuring the effectiveness of prevention actions, 2) assessing population risk behaviour and awareness, 3) accessing scientifically tested solutions, and 4) quantifying risks and obtaining reliable data. For example, data availability varied across hazards and elements⁴⁶⁷.

A recent report by the World Bank found that while coverage of risk information and economic indicators was good for hazards such as floods and earthquakes, there was little information for volcano eruptions, droughts, landslides, technological hazards, and certain elements of wildfires. These challenges impede the ability to anticipate, predict, and evaluate investments in prevention and preparedness⁴⁶⁸. Variations in data availability and knowledge across hazards add to the challenges of harmonising DRM Summary Reports (see Section 5.1.1.1)⁴⁶⁹. Climate change exacerbates the issue, as relying solely on historical data for forecasting may not capture future patterns and changes in event frequency and magnitude⁴⁷⁰.

The 2018 event in the Sulawesi Island exemplified the difficulty in anticipating complex and dynamic multi-hazard events⁴⁷¹. Models could not capture the complex dynamics of the event, where an earthquake triggered a tsunami within a short timeframe, resulting in significant damage. In the area of response, the limited ability to forecast and assess cascading effects presented challenging political decisions during the initial response phase⁴⁷². Rapid decision-making needs to be balanced with the inherent uncertainties in scientific advice. Overall, these limitations underscore the need for improved data harmonisation.

Some internal barriers also impacted the effectiveness of the UCPM. These included limits on the human and financial resources available, as well as the strong focus on response, to the detriment of non-operational preparedness and prevention.

The concurrent unfolding of complex crises strained DG ECHO's human resources (see Section 5.2.1). This strain was exacerbated by a loss of institutional knowledge due to a high turnover rate among staff⁴⁷³. Delays in filling new vacancies, together with the reorganisation of DG ECHO, required delivery of an increased scope of work⁴⁷⁴.

DG ECHO staff found that resources sometimes limited the Mechanism's ability to progress its general and specific objectives⁴⁷⁵. For example, stakeholders noted that time pressures meant it was impossible to systematically implement lessons identified to improve UCPM tools.

Resource allocation across UCPM activities was seen as sub-optimal from a long-term perspective, hindering the achievement of objectives (see Section 5.2.1)⁴⁷⁶. During the evaluation period, limited

⁴⁶⁶ European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2019; European Commission and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021; European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the EU may face*, 2021.

⁴⁶⁷ World Bank, *Economics of Disaster Prevention and Preparedness. Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense*, 2021; European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU*, JRC, 2021.

⁴⁶⁸ European Commission and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021; European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the EU may face*, 2020.

⁴⁶⁹ European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU*, JRC, 2021.

⁴⁷⁰ European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU*, JRC, 2021; ECA, *Floods Directive: progress in assessing risks, while planning and implementation need to improve*, 2018.

⁴⁷¹ European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2018.

⁴⁷² Focus group on: cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023. European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2019; European Commission, *Early Warning Systems (EWS) Expert Group Meeting*, 2022.

⁴⁷³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3).

⁴⁷⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁴⁷⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (6). Surveys of: DG ECHO – perceive a negative impact of the size and structure of the UCPM budget on the achievement of its objectives (11), flexibility of the budget (11), resources allocated to the implementation of UCPM activities (16).

⁴⁷⁶ Surveys of: DG ECHO – resources allocated to the implementation of UCPM activities (16/33).

resources were allocated to non-operational activities under prevention and preparedness, compared to the response pillar⁴⁷⁷. This affected planning by DG ECHO staff and national authorities working on these pillars. Limited resources also hindered cooperation on prevention topics beyond wildfires, as well as collaboration with third countries. Stakeholders reported a need to review and adjust resource distribution across UCPM pillars⁴⁷⁸.

However, different enablers helped to mitigate the effects of these barriers. In particular, innovation and adaptability in activities and processes enhanced the effectiveness of the UCPM⁴⁷⁹. Enabling factors included:

- DG ECHO staff's **strong commitment and good internal working relationships** were seen as effective measures to mitigate limited resources and enhance UCPM activities⁴⁸⁰;
- The **use of innovative methodologies and technologies** ensured the continuity of UCPM activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Notably, the Training and Exercise Programme and the EoE Programme successfully transitioned to virtual and remote formats⁴⁸¹. Online training did not have a negative impact on outcomes overall, and, in some cases, facilitated easier access⁴⁸². Nevertheless, key stakeholders highlighted certain disadvantages of online training, including the need for shorter course durations to prevent screen fatigue, reduced networking opportunities for participants, and the challenge for trainers to maintain an engaging pace⁴⁸³;
- **Close cross-sector cooperation and targeted private sector involvement** mitigated the exceptional strain on civil protection resources in addressing complex emergencies (see Section 5.1 and Section 5.4.2)⁴⁸⁴. Member States acknowledged the private sector's support role in reinforcing logistics, transport, warehousing, in-kind assistance and donations⁴⁸⁵. However, both Member States and DG ECHO agreed that private sector contributions should be assessed on a case-by-case basis and carefully framed within this existing set-up of responsibilities⁴⁸⁶. This includes obtaining agreement from Member States, which maintain overall emergency management responsibility, and ensuring clear added value in complementing national activities and aligning with EU priorities. Setting clear rules, standards and principles for private sector involvement is crucial to effective collaboration and accountability⁴⁸⁷.

Judgement criterion:

⁴⁷⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (5). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – negative impact of the scope and nature of UCPM prevention activities (6/33), scope and nature of UCPM prevention activities (2/33), response activities (1/33), cross-pillar activities (2/33).

⁴⁷⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (4 comments).

⁴⁷⁹ Kantar, *CASE STUDY 8 – COVID-19 repatriations/consular services*, 2023.

⁴⁸⁰ Focus group on: cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (1).

⁴⁸¹ CN APPEL_ RO and IGSU, *Programme of Exchange of Civil Protection Experts. Final report of the first 12 months renewal Contracting Phase/stage 2*, 2021. Interviews with: national authorities (3); experts in civil protection (1).

⁴⁸² Interviews with: DG ECHO (7); national authorities (12). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – positive impact of external factors on the progress towards the achievement of UCPM objectives: the frequency, size and /or complexity of disasters (29/34); national authorities (28/44); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (12/18); DG ECHO Desk Officers - Hi-Lo disasters (29/34); national authorities (28/44); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (9/19); DG ECHO Desk Officers - climate change (24/34); national authorities (22/44); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (11/19); DG ECHO Desk Officers - migration flows (23/34); national authorities (22/44); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (12/16).

⁴⁸³ Training Consortium, *UCPM Training Programme. 18th cycle. Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical experts courses (TEC)*, 2021; Training Consortium, *UCPM Training Programme. 18th cycle. Operational Management Course (OPM)*, 2021. Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (comments). Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1).

⁴⁸⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (8); national authorities (12); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022.

⁴⁸⁵ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁴⁸⁶ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁴⁸⁷ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

- JC3.2: Cooperation and coordination were sometimes hampered by factors internal and/or external to the UCPM


While there was good cooperation and coordination (see EQ.2), evidence shows that external factors and states of affairs at national level occasionally had a hampering effect. Nonetheless, good relations in terms of mutual understanding and networks helped to mitigate challenges.

Cooperation and coordination were sometimes impeded by the complexity of the process and documentation required by DG ECHO, affecting communication and information exchange between DG ECHO and national authorities⁴⁸⁸. Both national authorities and DG ECHO recognised the need to simplify procedures on **co-financing transport costs** (see Sections 5.2.1, 5.3.1, and 5.3.2)⁴⁸⁹.

Stakeholders raised concerns about the multiple ratios for funding, the requirement to submit forms for every transport movement, and limitations on spontaneous offers. Simplification could be expected to enhance the speed and effectiveness of response efforts. Another key challenge was the lack of a centralised data collection tool to exchange information and monitor activities (see Section 5.2.1)⁴⁹⁰. In particular, **CECIS** was seen as outdated, as its manual processing makes it difficult to manage, share and extract data⁴⁹¹. These challenges resulted in time-consuming procedures and information overload for offering and receiving countries, with a negative impact on the emergency response⁴⁹². Specific challenges included:

- Complex Excel sheets used for requesting capacities are inefficient when dealing with a large number of capacities and a range of fields;
- Inability to track assistance offered and delivered;
- Systematically capturing information on the financial value of assistance provided;
- Integrating CECIS with other platforms used by national authorities;
- Automatically transferring information entered by national authorities to DG ECHO outputs.

Figure 46. Lesson: centralised data collection tool



Lesson learnt

Suggestions for a centralised data collection tool for emergency communication and monitoring

National authorities considered CECIS 2.0 to have improved operational coordination by allowing data access for actors beyond civil protection. However, three key success factors to enable overall improvements to the communication and information exchange between DG ECHO and national authorities are:

- 1) Encouraging Member States to move to CECIS 2.0 as an integrated system for emergency communication and monitoring capabilities.
- 2) Transitioning from using Excel sheets to CECIS 2.0 to improve user-friendliness and data robustness.
- 3) Consistently using digital tracking devices from Request for Assistance (RfA) to delivery to enhance tracking capabilities throughout the response.

Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation⁴⁹³.

⁴⁸⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (4).

⁴⁸⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); national authorities (1). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁴⁹⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (5); DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (1). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020*, 2021.

⁴⁹¹ Interviews with: national authorities (3); DG ECHO (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO (comments). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁴⁹² Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1).

⁴⁹³ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (5). ERCC presentation notes CECIS; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021*, 2022.

Cooperation and coordination were occasionally hampered by the complexity and diversity of national institutional landscapes, resource limitations, and a mismatch between what the UCPM could offer and third countries' expectations.

The complexity and variety of national institutional landscapes affected communication between DG ECHO and Member States. Civil protection authorities in Member States have different legislative set-ups and mandates⁴⁹⁴, including the national actors involved in emergency responses. At EU level, stakeholders several challenges for DG ECHO in establishing effective communication and coordination channels with relevant authorities:

- DG ECHO may lack access to clear and singular points of contact in decentralised national institutional systems⁴⁹⁵;
- Complex national administrative structures and procedures may entail time-consuming and complex decision-making processes for prevention, preparedness, and response efforts⁴⁹⁶. This can limit DG ECHO's planning certainty and available information on Member States⁴⁹⁷.

Overall, the majority of national authorities, experts on civil protection, and a minority of DG ECHO Desk Officers had a positive view of the impact of national-level cooperation on the UCPM's overall effectiveness⁴⁹⁸. However, the distribution of roles and decision-making powers across different national and local authorities, including some with limited familiarity of the UCPM and DG ECHO, may hamper national level cross-sectoral cooperation and effective use of the Mechanism⁴⁹⁹.

For example, during the 2021 flooding in Germany⁵⁰⁰, the EU provided early warnings, but local and regional authorities were unaware of the system or the extent of the floods and did not take appropriate action. In countries with distributed responsibility for civil protection, it is crucial to bridge the gap between the EU and responsible authorities to ensure effective communication (see Section 5.1.1).

Resource constraints among national authorities presented a barrier to deepening cooperation and coordination with the UCPM. National authorities believe the lack of human resources to be a greater challenge than financial resources⁵⁰¹. Resource constraints are exacerbated by increased cross-sectoral coordination at national level and their associated labour demands⁵⁰². National authorities viewed their resources as limiting their engagement with and full use of UCPM tools⁵⁰³. In

⁴⁹⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2). Surveys of DG ECHO Desk Officers (comment).

⁴⁹⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

⁴⁹⁶ Survey of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – positive/negative impact of complex national administrative structures and procedures (6/30 and 9/30, respectively); national authorities (10/44 and 15/44, respectively); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (5/16 and 6/16, respectively). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (2). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

⁴⁹⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3).

⁴⁹⁸ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (15/32); national authorities (27/44); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (12/17). European Commission and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021*, 2022.

⁴⁹⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (2).

⁵⁰⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

⁵⁰¹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – financial resources (12/32), human resources (10/33); national authorities – financial resources (22/44), human resources (15/43); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities – financial resources (9/18), human resources (8/18). European Commission and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021; Protezione Civile Nazionale, *Technical odder for multi-country study, tender ECHO/2022/OP/0002 application*, 2022.

⁵⁰² Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. European Commission and World Bank, *Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021. Interviews with: national authorities (5); DG ECHO (6).

⁵⁰³ Interviews with: national authorities (6).

particular, national resources reportedly could not match the increasing complexity and demands of legislative amendments.

Misalignment between beneficiaries' expectations and UCPM capacity can hinder cooperation with third countries. Challenges arise from the inability to guarantee the provision and delivery of assistance following activation of the Mechanism, as well as the conditional nature of assistance⁵⁰⁴. Additionally, there is a potential danger of local organisations or institutions attempting to exploit the UCPM's reputation or to use their involvement with the EUCPT to justify their own actions⁵⁰⁵. Effective expectation management and consideration of local dynamics are vital to safeguard the UCPM's reputation and to ensure effective, sustainable support.

Mutual understanding and trust between DG ECHO and its national counterparts contributed to stimulating and supporting cooperation and coordination under the UCPM. Established cooperation patterns between Member and Participating States and DG ECHO had a positive impact and encouraged greater engagement with the UCPM⁵⁰⁶. Sweden's activation of the UCPM after the 2018 forest fires is an example of increased willingness to strengthen preparedness within the EU and offer assistance to other countries⁵⁰⁷.

- Commitment and expertise of DG ECHO staff were noted as positively contributing to collaboration with national counterparts, particularly in response activities⁵⁰⁸. Similarly, a good understanding of the UCPM among Member and Participating States was noted as an enabling factor⁵⁰⁹. In third countries, pre-existing knowledge and understanding of the UCPM and its specifics was seen as an enabler for achieving a rapid emergency response, facilitating the smooth arrival and integration of UCPM teams⁵¹⁰.

Judgement criterion:

- JC3.3: Legislative amendments of the UCPM since 2017 (e.g. introduction of rescEU), as well as structural changes in the Commission and DG ECHO (e.g. new European Commission, DG ECHO Commissioner) have aided the achievement of general and specific objectives in the field of preparedness and response

Legislative amendments and the associated organisational changes in DG ECHO enhanced cooperation and coordination in the fields of preparedness and response. The revised UCPM legislative and organisational frameworks demonstrate responsiveness and adaptability, but there is scope to substantiate and finetune recent UCPM activities or changes to activities, such as the DRM Summary Reports and Knowledge Network.

⁵⁰⁴ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learned Meeting on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism operations in 2017, 2018*; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019. Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁵⁰⁵ European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*.

⁵⁰⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – positive impact of the degree of Member States/Participating States to cooperate with DG ECHO on the achievement of the UCPM's objectives (16); national authorities (33); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (12).

⁵⁰⁷ Kantar, *CASE STUDY 4 – Forest fires in Sweden 2018*, 2023. Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1).

⁵⁰⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (1); with DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1). European Commission, *Lessons and good practices identified from TAST deployments*, 2019.

⁵⁰⁹ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of preparedness activities.

⁵¹⁰ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on UCPM activations 2020, 2021*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022. Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1).

Legislative changes enabled the UCPM to evolve and meet its objectives despite an increasingly complex threat and risk landscape. However, stakeholders expressed concerns about the lack of strategic long-term planning and low transparency of legislative revisions.

Legislative amendments strengthened cooperation and coordination between the Union, Member and Participating States, and third countries⁵¹¹. Stakeholders noted several particularly positive developments: 1) the establishment and reinforcement of the rescEU reserve pool⁵¹², 2) the reinforced mandate of the ERCC and integration of the EMC⁵¹³, 3) the establishment and organisation of the Knowledge Network⁵¹⁴, 4) DRM Summary Reports⁵¹⁵, 5) disaster scenario building,⁵¹⁶ 6) Union Disaster Resilience Goals⁵¹⁷.

In the field of preparedness and response, legislative adaptability and revisions facilitated the continued functioning of the UCPM. Some stakeholders viewed the Mechanism as exceeding initial expectations and delivering an impressive response beyond that originally planned or anticipated⁵¹⁸. This includes crises such as COVID-19, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and the Türkiye-Syria earthquake.

However, despite general support for the overall package of legislative revisions, stakeholders perceived risks in relation to the volume, complexity and speed of legislative amendments. Legislative amendments to the UCPM since 2017 were adopted swiftly in light of new challenges and parallel disasters⁵¹⁹. While the flexibility of the UCPM was one of the main factors facilitating its effectiveness, a minority of stakeholders expressed concerns about:

- **Change fatigue.** This expression was used to describe potential challenges with absorbing changes to tools and duties and being aware of developments at national level⁵²⁰. This includes concerns about the national capacity to mirror the expansion of resources and tools of the UCPM. Stakeholders cited the implementation of tools such as CECIS 2.0, rescEU financing, Union Disaster Resilience Goals, and the Knowledge Network⁵²¹;

⁵¹¹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (survey items); national authorities (across survey items).

⁵¹² Surveys of: national authorities (38/47); DG ECHO Desk Officers (average 26/34 across related survey items). Interviews with: national authorities (17); DG ECHO (7); EU stakeholders (9); international stakeholders (2); experts in civil protection (1). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022.

⁵¹³ Surveys of: national authorities (38/48); national authorities (29/47); DG ECHO Desk Officers (20/34 and 18/34, respectively). Interviews with: national authorities (6); international stakeholders (2). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine*, 2022.

⁵¹⁴ Surveys of: national authorities (36/47); DG ECHO Desk Officers (22/35). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Note to DG ECHO Management – Prevention and preparedness Programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme*, 2022; EESC, *Consolidating the EU–Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022. Interviews with: national authorities (9); experts in civil protection (3); EU stakeholders (4); DG ECHO (2); international stakeholders (3).

⁵¹⁵ Surveys of: national authorities (28/49); European Commission, *Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU*, JRC, 2021; European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the EU may face*, 2020. Interviews with: national authorities (4).

⁵¹⁶ Surveys of: national authorities (29/48). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022. Interviews with: national authorities (4); DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (2).

⁵¹⁷ Surveys of: national authorities (26/48); DG ECHO Desk Officers (comments). EESC committee, *Consolidating the EU–Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improv' the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022. Interviews with: national authorities (2); international stakeholders (2); EU stakeholders (1).

⁵¹⁸ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022. Interviews with: national authorities (2); DG ECHO (3); experts in civil protection (1).

⁵¹⁹ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

⁵²⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (12); DG ECHO (6).

⁵²¹ Interviews with: national authorities (3).

- **Rushed decision-making in response to the current crises and financial resource availability.** Amendments and adjustments often focused on responding to ongoing crises, with limited consideration for future potential challenges⁵²². Examples include the focus on developing capacity for medical emergencies. There is a need for more long-term strategic planning on resilience and capabilities, grounded in scientific evidence and strategic thinking;
- **Diverging views on the role of the UCPM, given the changing risk landscape and need for cross-sectoral cooperation**⁵²³. Interviews revealed somewhat diverging views. DG ECHO stakeholders perceived a need to add more flexibility to the legislation to mobilise assistance and adopt a creative solution-oriented approach to civil protection⁵²⁴. Conversely, national authorities are more reluctant to change⁵²⁵. This suggests a need for more exchanges and communications on legislative revisions to the Mechanism to build understanding and buy-in⁵²⁶.

Legislative developments since 2017 significantly affected the achievement of general and specific objectives in the field of preparedness and response by the UCPM, such as the introduction and development of rescEU. Capacity gaps remain, however, and more work is needed outside of medical emergencies.

rescEU was viewed as a positive development and game changer for preparedness and response efforts⁵²⁷. Initially focused on Hi-Lo disasters, it proved vital during the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine⁵²⁸. Stakeholders recognised rescEU as a powerful tool that provides a strong narrative for EU solidarity. It addresses capacity gaps for future preparedness and provides strong operational support to Member States, proactively mobilising strategic resources promptly during emergencies⁵²⁹. While the visibility and capability of rescEU marks its success, a small minority of stakeholders raised some concerns about the potential impact on perceived maintenance of the subsidiarity principle and role of the ECPP⁵³⁰ (e.g. reduced justification for national spending on civil protection⁵³¹). Others highlighted challenges in operational decision-making and resource allocation for rescEU capacities, particularly in the event of competing demands⁵³².

Organisational changes to DG ECHO were considered necessary to align with legislative amendments and their operational implications. However, the division of activities across different units within DG ECHO reportedly hindered collaboration and wider effectiveness. DG ECHO implemented a separation into Directorate A, focusing on response and preparedness, and

⁵²² Interviews with: national authorities (8). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁵²³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁵²⁴ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (comments). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁵²⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (3); DG ECHO (1).

⁵²⁶ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (3); DG ECHO (3).

⁵²⁷ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022. Interviews with: national authorities (17); DG ECHO (7); EU stakeholders (9); international stakeholders (2); experts in civil protection (1). European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020. Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (average 26 across related survey items); national authorities (38). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021*, 2022. Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁵²⁸ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; ECA, *Opinion No. 9/2020 accompanying the Co'mission's proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No. 1313/2013/EU on a UCPM*, COM(2020) 220 final; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2020; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM*, 2020. Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (comments). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (2); international stakeholders (1).

⁵²⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (17); DG ECHO (5); EU stakeholders (9); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (2).

⁵³⁰ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (4); national authorities (7); DG ECHO (2). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁵³¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁵³² Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1).

Directorate B, focusing on prevention and preparedness (see Section 5.4)⁵³³. Additionally, three teams in one unit were created within DG ECHO with responsibility for certifying Member States' capacity from the ECPP, for rescEU, and Humanitarian Response Capacity⁵³⁴. DG ECHO's organisational modifications aimed to operationalise the legislative revisions implemented since 2017⁵³⁵. Changes focused on enhancing the analytical and human capacities within DG ECHO to meet increased demand, such as implementing the Knowledge Network and administering rescEU⁵³⁶. Further changes to DG ECHO's organisation are underway.

DG ECHO Desk Officers' views on the impact of internal organisational changes varied⁵³⁷. Overall, the division in Directorates was seen as functioning well and facilitating implementation of the UCPM⁵³⁸. Combining response and operational preparedness was noted as an agile and solution-oriented approach. However, there are margins for improving coordination and integration between pillars, units, tasks, and priorities⁵³⁹. There is also a risk of duplicated efforts and less flexible decision-making⁵⁴⁰, stemming from overlapping posts and separate work programmes. Competition for visibility and resources further complicate coordination⁵⁴¹. Stakeholders provided two examples. The Knowledge Network had a limited impact on DG ECHO operations, largely due to a perceived lack of ownership of its activities by the DG ECHO units involved⁵⁴². One stakeholder recommended establishing a dedicated team to manage a tool of this size, with substantial contributions from other units⁵⁴³. Stakeholders also highlighted an incoherent approach between Directorates in liaising with third countries⁵⁴⁴. The majority of national authorities agreed that DG ECHO's organisational changes strengthened cooperation and coordination within the UCPM⁵⁴⁵, with the assignment of ERCC staff with a high technical focus on specific areas of civil protection seen as a particularly positive development in facilitating cooperation with national experts⁵⁴⁶.

Judgement criterion:

- JC3.4: UCPM activities across the pillars had some positive effects and limited negative repercussions beyond what was planned.

The interim evaluation found no negative unintended effects of UCPM activities. Instead, there were positive unintended effects stemming from UCPM activities. The UCPM contributed to increased political and public awareness of civil response issues, operationalisation of scientific tools and research, and cooperation on civil protection beyond the EU.

In relation to unintended consequences, the following emerged from the analysis:

⁵³³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3).

⁵³⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁵³⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (9).

⁵³⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4).

⁵³⁷ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – positive/negative effect of the reorganisation (11/34 and 7/34, respectively), positive/negative impact of the internal organisation and articulation of DG ECHO on the achievement of the UCPM's objectives (8/32 and 16/32, respectively).

⁵³⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (5).

⁵³⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (comments). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁵⁴⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (comments).

⁵⁴¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁵⁴² Interviews with: DG ECHO (2). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁵⁴³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁵⁴⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁵⁴⁵ Surveys of: national authorities (28/48 and 4/48, respectively).

⁵⁴⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (1); DG ECHO (1).

- The UCPM's activities played a positive role in raising awareness of civil response-related issues and challenges at policy and operational level (see Section 5.1.1.4)⁵⁴⁷. This included awareness of the evolving risk landscape and the importance of enhancing preparedness for more frequent and severe disasters in the future. It also helped to develop the understanding of connections between adaptation, disaster risk management, and the broader socioeconomic benefits of prevention⁵⁴⁸;
- The UCPM contributed to identifying use-cases and promoting the adoption of research, development, testing, and innovation products and outputs⁵⁴⁹. It actively collaborated with EU and international partners to adjust products and tools to the needs of the Mechanism and enable new activities (e.g. Copernicus project);
- The UCPM was perceived as a model for cooperation on civil protection by external stakeholders and by authorities in regions outside the EU⁵⁵⁰, as evidenced by the increased number of applications and approval of Participating States (see Figure 42). Similar regional cooperation mechanisms have been established in central Asia and are under discussion within the African Union⁵⁵¹.

5.2 Efficiency

This subsection assesses the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the activities implemented under the UCPM, the adequacy of the budget allocation⁵⁵² per pillar, and whether the measures in place for the Mechanism's internal monitoring and evaluation contributed to the efficient and effective implementation of interventions. It also assesses the extent to which the budgeting system was sufficiently flexible to account for unanticipated events.

5.2.1 EQ4: To what extent were the costs of the UCPM's activities across the three pillars justified compared to their benefits?

Key findings

- Overall, the evidence suggests that the expected benefits of the UCPM activities were achieved somewhat efficiently;
- Stakeholders generally considered the benefits of the UCPM to outweigh the costs for all pillars;
- There were various instances of cost-effectiveness being taken into consideration at planning, implementation, monitoring and revision/expansion stages of UCPM components/ elements, but insufficient data meant it was not possible to conclude whether the UCPM was the most cost-effective solution;
- There is a need for greater clarity on the costs of the various UCPM activities;
- Opportunities for improvement of efficiency/cost-effectiveness were related to high administrative burden, overlaps and unexplored synergies, lack of data and supporting systems not fit for purpose, and insufficient human resources;
- There was limited awareness and scrutiny of the cost effectiveness of UCPM activities by DG ECHO staff, a notable exception being the contract awarding. While some DG ECHO staff indicated that this is an area that should be improved, others considered it unnecessary

⁵⁴⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁵⁴⁸ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1). World Bank, *Economics of Disaster Prevention and Preparedness. Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense*, Background Paper, 2021.

⁵⁴⁹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1).

⁵⁵⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁵⁵¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁵⁵² For comparison purposes, the budget is often presented in 2022 prices, adjusted for inflation. Consequently, the amounts presented for 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 differ from those in the accounting system, which are in current/nominal prices.

Key findings

and of limited relevance, given the nature of UCPM activities and in light of the limited resources available;

- The allocation of the budget per pillar was generally considered balanced, given short-term needs and limited funding;
- Some stakeholders indicated that a stronger focus on prevention would have been desirable from a longer-term perspective.

Judgement criteria:

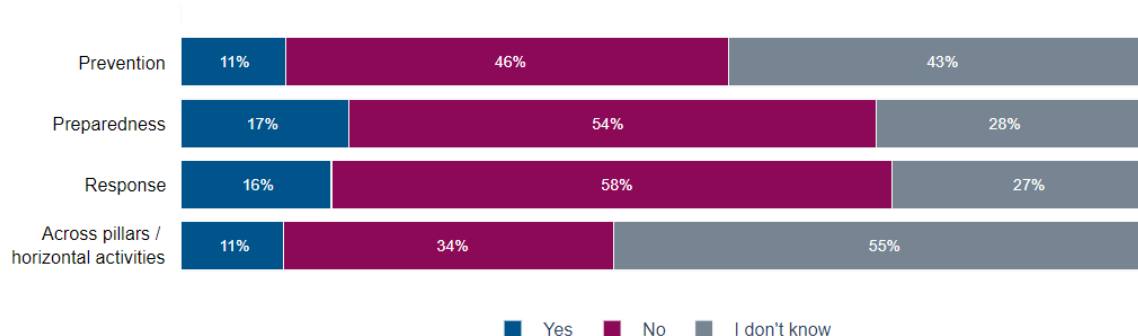
- JC4.1: The UCPM activities generated the expected benefits within the planned budget
- JC4.3: The main factors hindering the cost-efficiency of UCPM are known and being addressed

Judgment criteria JC4.1, JC4.2 and JC4.3 will be addressed collectively, as efficiency influences cost-effectiveness

Overall, the evidence suggests that the expected benefits of the UCPM activities were achieved somewhat efficiently. However, there is a need for greater clarity about the cost of the various UCPM activities. Opportunities for improvement were identified in relation to administrative burden, overlaps and unexplored synergies, lack of data and supporting systems not fit for purpose, and insufficient human resources.

The DG ECHO Desk Officers and national authorities surveyed considered the UCPM to contribute to a more rapid and efficient response to disasters⁵⁵³. No major differences across pillars were identified by the national authorities, with only a minority aware of inefficiencies in the prevention (11%)⁵⁵⁴, preparedness (17%)⁵⁵⁵, or response pillars (15%)⁵⁵⁶, and horizontal activities (11%)^{557,558}.

Figure 47. Survey of national authorities: 'Did you identify inefficiencies for any of the UCPM pillars?'



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation.

⁵⁵³ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (94% or 16/17 strongly or somewhat agreed that the UCPM allowed Member and Participating States to respond more efficiently to disasters; and 88% or 15/17 strongly or somewhat agreed that the UCPM allowed third countries to respond more rapidly and efficiently to disasters); national authorities. See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

⁵⁵⁴ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (5/46).

⁵⁵⁵ Surveys of DG ECHO Desk Officers (8/46).

⁵⁵⁶ Surveys of DG ECHO Desk Officers (7/46).

⁵⁵⁷ Surveys of DG ECHO Desk Officers (5/47).

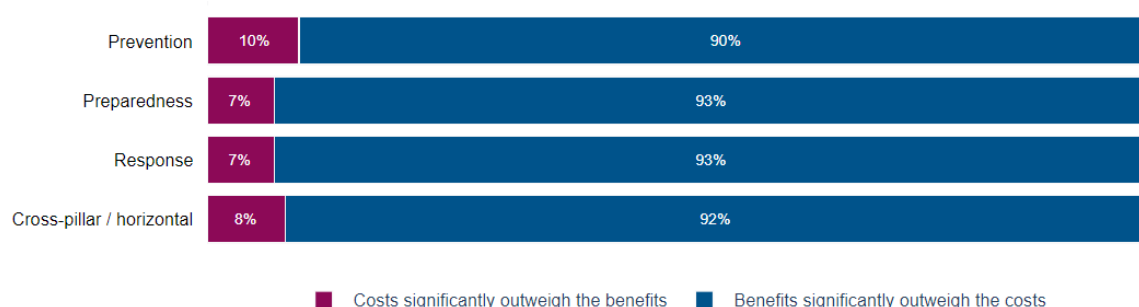
⁵⁵⁸ Surveys of national authorities.

While it is not possible to conclude if the UCPM was the most cost-effective solution, the interim evaluation identified various examples of cost-effectiveness taken into consideration at planning, implementation and monitoring and revision/expansion stages of UCPM components/elements. Stakeholders generally considered the benefits of the UCPM to outweigh the costs for all pillars. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests limited awareness and scrutiny of the cost-effectiveness of UCPM activities by DG ECHO staff, a notable exception being the contract awarding.. While some DG ECHO staff indicated that this is an area that should be improved, others considered it unnecessary and of limited relevance, given the nature of UCPM activities and the limited resources available⁵⁵⁹.

Of the DG ECHO Desk Officers surveyed, only a small share (18%)⁵⁶⁰ disagreed that the UCPM's results between 2017-2022 were achieved in the most cost-effective way.

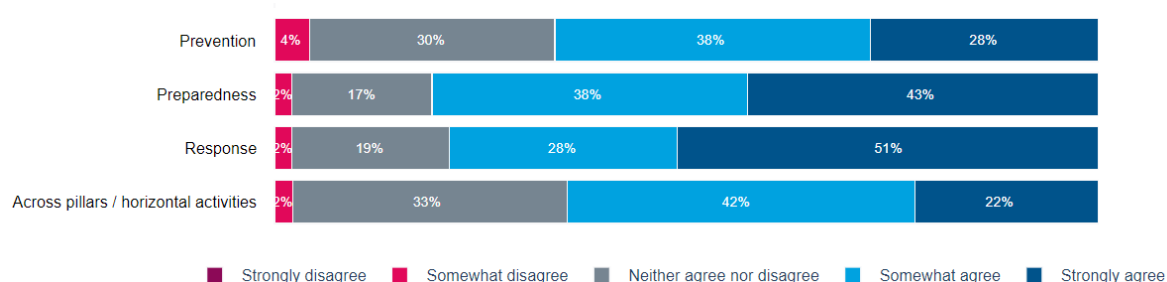
Respondents from national authorities were even more positive, with less than 10%⁵⁶¹ believing that the benefits did not significantly outweigh the costs, and less than 5%⁵⁶² stating that the results were not achieved in the most cost-effective way. National authorities' views did not vary significantly across pillars (see Figure 48 and Figure 49).....

Figure 48. Survey of national authorities: 'Considering the overall financial resources invested in the UCPM, please rate, for each of the UCPM pillars, the extent to which the benefits outweighed the costs during the evaluation period'



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation.

Figure 49. Survey of national authorities: 'Please indicate to what extent you agree that the results were achieved in the most cost-effective way across each of the pillars'



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation.

⁵⁵⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁵⁶⁰ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (6/34).

⁵⁶¹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (5/46).

⁵⁶² Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (2/46).

In light of the potential cost-effectiveness of prevention and preparedness⁵⁶³, the UCPM strengthened these pillars through a revision of the Decision. The revision started in 2017⁵⁶⁴ and was implemented in 2019, leading to increased financial support for capacities registered in the ECPP and to the allocation of additional financial support for rescEU.

The limitations of the UCPM highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis prompted various changes, including the expansion of the scope of rescEU capacities, the introduction of indirect management of some operations, and the possibility of direct procurement⁵⁶⁵. It also led to an increase in the budget for the UCPM (including for rescEU capacity) through the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2021/836. In addition, efficiency concerns led to the simplification of financing procedures, including the introduction of a single co-financing rate (75%) for the adaptation, repair, transport and operational costs for assets in the ECPP. No impact assessment of the adopted changes was carried out, given the extreme urgency in addressing the existing gaps in critical capacity at the time. Overall, the ECA was positive about these initiatives, but expressed some concerns:

- Indirect management may lead to some legality and regularity errors, for example related to the ineligibility of costs;
- Available information did not allow any assessment of whether the proposed budget was appropriate to achieve the intended objectives.

The documentation review did not find additional supporting evidence on how the adopted changes (in 2019 and 2021) compared to alternative approaches or measures in cost-effectiveness, nor on the adequacy of the budget⁵⁶⁶. Three stakeholders believed that these changes were cost-effective and made the UCPM more attractive for Member and Participating States, with two Member States activating the Mechanism for the first time after the revision⁵⁶⁷.

The evidence highlighted factors that may have hindered, in some instances, the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the UCPM, including:

- **Sub-optimal coordination, overlaps and unexplored synergies.** Between the UCPM and DG ECHO Humanitarian Aid, this was evident in the context of disaster risk management related to in-kind assistance and in response to specific crises. Similar challenges were noted for other EU entities, such as in the context of the pandemic response⁵⁶⁸ and consular support activities⁵⁶⁹. National entities experienced challenges in stocks, warehousing, and pre-positioning of critically needed items (see Section 5.4);

⁵⁶³ 'The legislator recognises that prevention actions are the best way to achieve the necessary protection of populations and economic assets at risk of disasters' (European Commission, *DG ECHO Annual Activity Report 2017, 2018*). Also, according to the 2021 DG ECHO Annual Activity Report: 'One of the highlights of the year was the release of a joint DG ECHO–World Bank study on "Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness", which provides new evidence to demonstrate the economic argument for investing in disaster resilience, calls for new instruments for financial preparedness to disasters and crises and for strengthening capacity of civil protection authorities'; European Commission, *DG ECHO Annual Activity Report 2021, 2022*; World Bank, *Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness*, 2021.

⁵⁶⁴ Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1313/2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (COM(2017)772 final of 23.11.2017) and Communication COM(2017)773 final – Strengthening EU Disaster Management: rescEU Solidarity with Responsibility.

⁵⁶⁵ Indirect management is the delegation of the implementation of operations under the UCPM by the Commission to specific bodies. This is already done by DG ECHO in the context of humanitarian aid.

⁵⁶⁶ The 2017 interim evaluation of the UCPM did not cover the introduction of rescEU, as it was not one of its strategic recommendations.

⁵⁶⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national civil protection authorities (1).

⁵⁶⁸ European Commission, *Combined evaluation of DG ECHO's humanitarian response to epidemics, and of DG ECHO's partnership with the World Health Organization, 2017–2021, 2022*.

⁵⁶⁹ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the UCPM operations in 2017–2021*. See Annex 2 for DG ECHO Lessons Learnt Programme. In 2017 and 2018, the need to enhance cooperation for consular support between the UCPM (mostly training on UCPM consular assistance), with action taken in 2018 and 2019. In 2021, in the context of the COVID–19 response, improved coordination and awareness of consular authorities by EEAS, and for DG ECHO to keep the training related to the consular support. Nevertheless, there is also a need for the EEAS to further increase awareness of the UCPM for consular authorities and together with Member States, to define clearer procedures and improve coordination during consular crises, as well as for DG ECHO to keep training EU Delegations' staff on the use of the UCPM and streamlined coordination with consular authorities and MS/PS' embassies.

- **Lack of/insufficient awareness among some authorities of the possibilities provided by the UCPM and how to access/request them** due to the changes and expansion of the Mechanism during the evaluation period;
- **High administrative burden.** Calls for proposals were often characterised by overlaps in procedures and procurement timelines. Combined with the administrative burden associated with each call, this prevented some Member States with limited human resources from submitting proposals within the deadlines⁵⁷⁰;
- **Lack of data and cost-effectiveness analysis to support decision-making**⁵⁷¹;
- **Lack of flexibility to use the additional NextGenerationEU budget in 2021 and 2022.** This stemmed from constraints on how NextGenerationEU funds could be spent, when they had to be committed (end of 2023), and spent (end of 2026). This made spending decisions more time-consuming⁵⁷²;
- **High turnover of staff within DG ECHO and insufficient human resources** resulted in a loss of institutional knowledge and memory.

The following sub-sections discuss the findings on the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of selected elements of the UCPM.

5.2.1.1 Horizontal/cross-cutting

Throughout the evaluation period, DG ECHO published annual calls for proposals under the **PPP**. These laid out the objectives, priorities and budget lines for prevention and preparedness activities allocated to Member and Participating States in the UCPM and to eligible third countries. The eligibility criteria for receiving funding for both prevention and preparedness projects have remained broadly similar throughout the evaluation period and include efficiency and cost-effectiveness considerations.

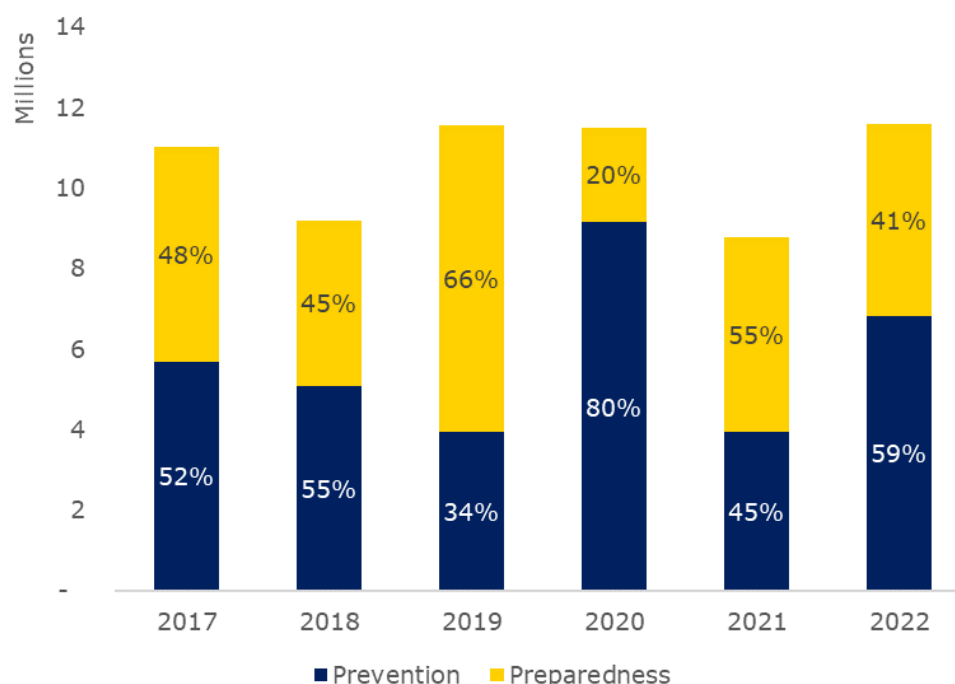
With the exception of 2018 and 2021 (which witnessed a decrease in funding of about 15% and 12%, respectively), funding to the PPP remained relatively constant, totalling EUR 63.5 million (at constant prices of 2022). There were some differences between prevention and preparedness projects (see Figure 50) across the years, but, on average, the funding allocated to each was relatively similar, with prevention receiving about 54% of the funds and preparedness the remaining 46%.

⁵⁷⁰ Interviews with: national civil protection authorities (3).

⁵⁷¹ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the UCPM operations in 2017–2021*. See Annex 2 for DG ECHO Lessons Learnt Programme.

⁵⁷² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

Figure 50. Funding to prevention and preparedness projects, 2017-2022 (EUR, 2022 prices)



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Available evidence suggests that the PPP was considered broadly efficient and cost-effective⁵⁷³, despite stakeholders' limited awareness and limited availability of monitoring data. Inefficiencies in the PPP primarily related to:

- **Administrative/bureaucratic burdens.** Complex procedures impose costs on DG ECHO and on national authorities and may limit the participation of some Member States/Participating States due to lack of resources to accommodate the various calls/projects, short process timelines and management requirements⁵⁷⁴;
- **Overlaps/lack of complementarity** between UCPM calls for proposals and between the PPP and other EU funding instruments (see Section 5.4) lead to inefficient use of resources⁵⁷⁵;
- **Lack of resources and high staff turnover at DG ECHO**⁵⁷⁶;
- **Limited capitalisation on project results**, including the limited understanding among national civil protection authorities, limited direct contact with the project officer during projects, and limited funding and support for follow-up activities⁵⁷⁷.

During the evaluation period, DG ECHO made efforts to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the PPP, such as dedicated lessons learnt exercises and taking actions to address recommendations. These included⁵⁷⁸:

⁵⁷³ Two national authorities questioned the effectiveness of providing funding to PPP projects. Surveys of: experts in civil protection (12/13 agreed that PPP prevention projects were carried out in the most cost-effective manner, all agreed that PPP preparedness projects were carried out in the most cost-effective manner). European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014–2020)*, 2021.

⁵⁷⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (5). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/14); experts in civil protection (2/10). European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014–2020)*, 2021.

⁵⁷⁵ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/14).

⁵⁷⁶ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁵⁷⁷ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (2/14); experts in civil protection (3/10). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁵⁷⁸ European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*; DG ECHO (2020) *'Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations'*, 2019.

- Developing a results-framework approach and introducing it on the 2019 call for the PPP;
- Having more focused calls from 2019, with fewer but more targeted priority areas per call;
- Introducing an additional call (Track 1) to focus on the needs and gaps of civil protection authorities.

In 2022, DG ECHO took further steps to address some of the inefficiencies in the PPP and the UCPM in general. This entailed merging previously separated calls for proposals, namely, prevention and preparedness projects (Track 2), Knowledge Network partnership projects, and the FSX in the KAPP calls. A more structured attribution of Desk Officers to the evaluation and overseeing of projects was also planned⁵⁷⁹, reversing the previous system of ‘volunteer’ staff acting as technical Desk Officers for projects on top of their other work duties in favour of identifying staff beforehand and ensuring that their responsibilities (managing projects/evaluating project proposals) are adequately reflected in their job description⁵⁸⁰.

Table 7. Identified inefficiencies in PPP and measures taken

Identified inefficiency source	Element identified in previous evaluation/concept notes	Measures taken during the evaluation period
Lack of cost-effectiveness monitoring data	Yes Recommendation: <i>- Establish an internal PMER policy to assess the performance and quality of the PPP</i>	Definition of specific award criteria for each topic covered by the KAPP call, including aspects of cost-effectiveness No action identified
Administrative/bureaucratic burdens	Yes Recommendation: <i>- Continue to further simplify the PPP reporting and monitoring mechanism</i> <i>- Increase financing to 100%, as the current 5% co-financing obligation triggers lengthier approval processes</i>	Decision to merge Track 2, the Knowledge Network Partnerships call and the FSX calls into the KAPP calls. This may simplify the administrative burden, but benefits will only materialise after the evaluation period. In addition, as of 2024, the KAPP call co-financing has been increased from 85% to 90%. TAFF introduces 100% EU co-financing Decision to make the wording of application procedures more user-friendly No further actions identified
Similar projects receiving funding from multiple UCPM calls for proposals, leading to double funding	No	Decision to merge Track 2, the Knowledge Network Partnerships call and the FSX calls into the KAPP calls. This is expected to reduce potential funding of similar projects within the UCPM, but benefits will only materialise after the evaluation period
Similar projects receiving funding from the UCPM and other EU funding sources,	Yes Recommendation:	Discussions between DG ECHO and DG HOME to improve the complementarity between the Community for European Research and Innovation for Security

⁵⁷⁹ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁵⁸⁰ European Commission, *Note to DG ECHO Management: Prevention and Preparedness programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme*, 2022.

Identified inefficiency source	Element identified in previous evaluation/concept notes	Measures taken during the evaluation period
potentially leading to double funding	- <i>Specific contact points could be set up within DG ECHO and other Commission services to establish areas of complementarity and potential overlap and to ensure more consistent EU-wide funding and activities</i>	(CERIS) and the Knowledge Network, as well as interconnected funding (e.g. Horizon Europe)
Limited capitalisation on project results	Yes Recommendation: - <i>Increase awareness, accessibility and engagement with ongoing and past EU-funded projects on civil protection prevention and preparedness and their results</i> - <i>Introduce the possibility to request project extension/expansion</i>	Development of an online platform to share project results in one place. This will contribute to increased sharing (and ultimately impact) of project results, but benefits will only materialise after the evaluation period The 2023 KAPP call introduced the obligation for the consortium to deliver a mapping of relevant initiatives within the UCPM, including an evaluation of potential synergies between ongoing initiatives or incorporation of existing results within the first six months
Lack of resources and high staff turnover at DG ECHO impacts the efficiency of the projects staff are overseeing	No	Decision to attribute Desk Officers to the evaluation and overseeing of projects in a more structured way No actions to address lack of resources

The **Lessons Learnt Programme** continued to identify lessons and good practices from UCPM deployments and cross-cutting activities, as well as recommendations to enhance the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the Mechanism as a whole. Between 2017 and 2022, the Lessons Learnt Programme organised between one to two workshops a year. In 2020 and 2021, meetings were organised remotely due to the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stakeholders consider the **Lessons Learnt Programme** to be efficient and cost-effective⁵⁸¹. Several indicated that having a platform to continuously collect and share lessons could increase its efficiency and effectiveness⁵⁸². Two national authorities highlighted the cost-effectiveness of the **Peer Review Programme**⁵⁸³.

The Lessons Learnt Programme identified challenges in implementing lessons and good practices, particularly where external actors were involved. This led to the appointment of focal points in DG ECHO under the Lessons Learnt Programme and to the incorporation of lessons and best practices in implementing acts, policy documents and discussions at expert group meetings, where possible⁵⁸⁴.

⁵⁸¹ Interviews with: national authorities (3); DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (1). Surveys of: experts in civil protection (1/1 strongly agreed that advisory missions on preparedness were cost-effective). European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014–2020)*, 2021.

⁵⁸² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1).

⁵⁸³ Interviews with: national authorities (2).

⁵⁸⁴ European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020.

In 2021, the **Knowledge Network** was launched to aggregate, process and disseminate knowledge and information relevant to the UCPM. It incorporated several elements of the UCPM from the prevention and preparedness pillars, including the Training Programme, civil protection exercises, Lessons Learnt Programme and the PPP. It brought together relevant civil protection and disaster management actors, centres of excellence, universities and researchers and was considered a step towards increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the UCPM. As yet, DG ECHO Desk Officers are unable to assess its impact on cost-effectiveness⁵⁸⁵, but 30% agreed that the impact was positive, while 7% considered it negative⁵⁸⁶.

5.2.1.2 Prevention

Decision No 1313/2013/EU requires Member States to develop **risk assessments** at national or appropriate sub-national level and to share a summary covering key risks with the Commission. Stakeholders views on the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of this obligation varied. While they generally considered the **National Risk Assessments** useful, they voiced concerns about the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of their current format. Concerns stemmed from:

- Limited availability of resources to deal with the significant workload required to produce the assessments;
- Use of different methodologies and the lack of a common dataset among Member States;
- Difficulty of ensuring the necessary involvement of authorities other than civil protection authorities (see Section 5.1)⁵⁸⁷.

When asked about **dissemination and development of research outputs and/or attending workshops on disaster risks**, the great majority of experts in civil protection strongly or somewhat agreed that they were cost-effective.

5.2.1.3 Preparedness

As part of the **UCPM Training Programme (Core UCPM courses)**, 248 training courses implemented through five training cycles during the evaluation period, with over 3,800 experts participating in at least one such course between 2017 and 2022 (cycles 14 to 18). Between 2017 and 2022, 12 European Commission-UN joint courses and eight ad hoc training courses (including workshops) were also carried out.

The contracted budget for the Training Programme remained similar in 2017 and 2018, at approximately EUR 4.7 million⁵⁸⁸. That budget almost doubled in 2019, before contracting significantly in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, however, the budget again grew to approx. EUR 10 million, more than twice the 2017 figure.

The average cost per course, per place offered and per participant varied (see Figure 51). 2020 and 2021 presented significantly lower costs than other years, due to the replacement of face-to-face training with online courses as a result of restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

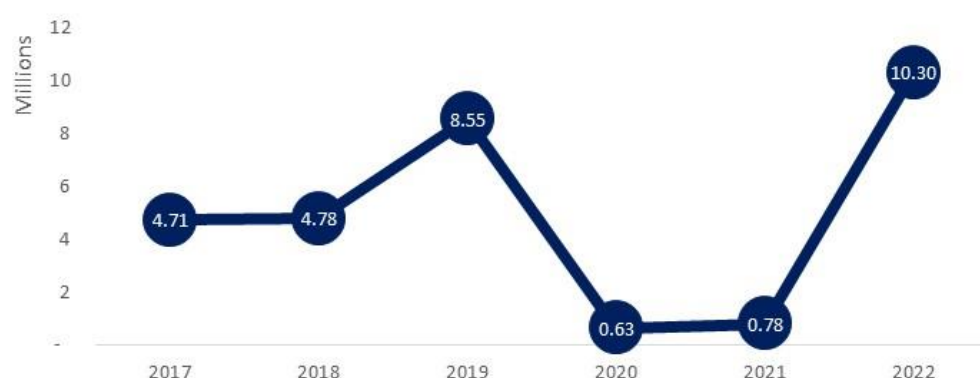
⁵⁸⁵ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – 63% neither agreed nor disagreed that the establishment and organisation of the Knowledge Network had a positive impact on the cost-effectiveness of the implementation of the UCPM.

⁵⁸⁶ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers.

⁵⁸⁷ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (2).

⁵⁸⁸ 2022 prices: EUR 4 million in 2017 and EUR 4.1 million in 2028.

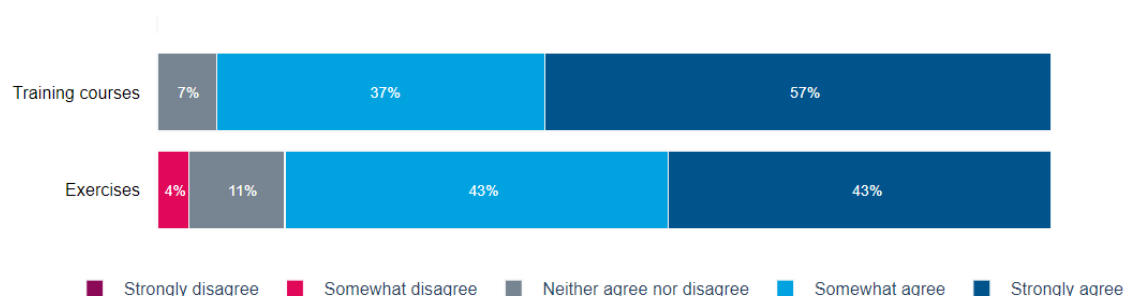
Figure 51. Training funding, 2017-2022 (EUR million, 2022 prices)



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

The level of participation was high, with about 91% of the available places taken up, showing efficient use of resources. The courses were assessed very positively by participants⁵⁸⁹. Stakeholders reported that the Training Programme was generally efficient and cost-effective. The great majority of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that **training courses** were delivered efficiently (73%)⁵⁹⁰ and in the most cost-effective way (94%)⁵⁹¹ (see Figure 52).

Figure 52. Survey of training stakeholders: 'Please indicate to what extent you agree that the UCPM Training and Exercises Programme's results were achieved in the most cost-effective way'



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation.

Analysis of the final training reports highlighted some good practices that contributed to efficiency and cost-effectiveness⁵⁹²:

- Using continuous evaluation, supported by an online tool available 24/7;
- Mixing participants from different backgrounds;
- Fostering synergies with other UCPM training activities;
- Providing opportunities for informal networking.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, training was delivered online, with participants giving broadly similar evaluation marks as for face-to-face courses. However, participants noted the lack of opportunities for informal networking during online training (see Section 1.1.2).

⁵⁸⁹ Progress reports and final reports on the training in the period. See Annex 2 for Training Programme. Interviews with: professional organisations (2).

⁵⁹⁰ Surveys of: training experts (19/26).

⁵⁹¹ Surveys of: training experts (28/30).

⁵⁹² Progress reports and final reports on the various training in the period. See Annex 2 for Training Programme. Interviews with: professional organisations (1).

One report indicated that some courses and content could be delivered online in preparation and/or combination with face-to-face training (when possible). This opinion was shared by some stakeholders, who indicated that a hybrid solution, with some or part of the training offered online and the remainder face-to-face, could lead to efficiency and cost-effectiveness gains⁵⁹³.

Aspects hindering the cost-effectiveness of some training included:

- **Inadequate profile of participants.** This could be due to insufficient information about the training content, language barriers (particularly for candidates from third countries), non-compliance with background requirements (e.g. graduate of OPM or PPRD courses), or inadequate requirements (e.g. insufficient English proficiency or UCPM familiarity, see Section 5.1.1.3)⁵⁹⁴;
- **Lack of a common tool for course management, delivery and evaluation**⁵⁹⁵;
- **Lack of access to the latest documentation on the UCPM**, such as mission reports for the TEC course and the DG ECHO Field Security Handbook⁵⁹⁶;
- **Insufficient follow-up and use of knowledge.** Many of the experts who were trained used their skills and abilities at national level, but were never deployed⁵⁹⁷.

The interim evaluation found that many of the key findings and recommendations of the 2019 evaluation of the Training Programme in relation to efficiency and inefficiencies were still valid, including:

- **Lack of common result indicators and guidelines** on how to assess and report training results. This should be improved by the monitoring and evaluation process required in the new Training and Exercises Programme (for both the deployable training path and the ad hoc training framework)⁵⁹⁸;
- **Limited analysis of the assessment data reported by contractors** prevents effective incorporation and sharing of lessons from individual courses at programme level;
- **Lack of common outcome indicators** to measure the short, medium and long-term impacts of the Training Programme.

During the evaluation period, DG ECHO made significant efforts to address the inefficiencies and implement recommendations by redesigning the Programme, resulting in the **new Training and Exercises Programme**⁵⁹⁹. Two adjustments are particularly relevant to cost-effectiveness:

- **Introduction of a 'deployable training path'**, with more stringent selection criteria and potential additional assessment of candidates for courses;
- **Provision of some content online**, reducing the time necessary for face-to-face training.

The changes are expected to be implemented from September 2023⁶⁰⁰.

In the context of the **Exercises programme**, during the evaluation period, 87 exercises were financed, including 67 EU MODEX, 14 FSX and six others (see Figure 6). With the exception of 2020, when only seven exercises took place, the annual number of exercises remained relatively stable throughout the period evaluated with an average of 16 exercises (ranging from 12 in 2022 to 20 in 2019).

⁵⁹³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (2); professional organisations (1).

⁵⁹⁴ Progress reports and final reports on the various training in the period. See Annex 2 for Training Programme.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid. Surveys of: training and exercise programme stakeholders (1/26).

⁵⁹⁶ Progress reports and final reports on the various training in the period. See Annex 2 for Training Programme.

⁵⁹⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

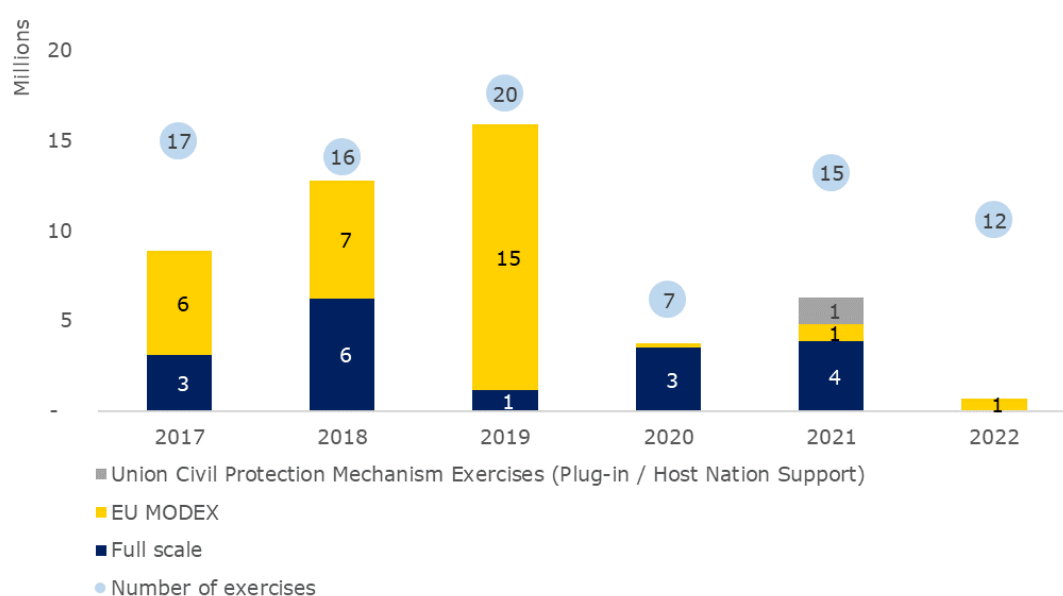
⁵⁹⁸ European Commission, Call for tenders ECHO/2021/OP/0010 – UCPM Training Programme for deployable experts, modules, response capacities, civil protection and disaster management stakeholders, 2021; European Commission, Call for tenders ECHO/2021/OP/0010 – UCPM Training Programme: Online Modules, Ad hoc Training Courses, Training of Trainers, Thematic Seminars – Workshops, 2021.

⁵⁹⁹ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.

The contracted budget for exercises increased significantly until 2020, when it declined sharply, due to the impossibility of organising exercises during COVID-19-related restrictions. Since then, the amounts allocated to exercises (in particular EU MODEX) remained lower than in the pre-pandemic period (see Figure 53).

Figure 53. Exercises financed and total cost, by exercise type, 2017-2022 (EUR million, 2022 prices)



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

The costs per FSX varied between EUR 0.9 million and EUR 2 million, while the cost per EU MODEX varied between EUR 58,000 and EUR 778,000 (see Table 8). This can be (partially) explained by variations in the characteristics of the specific exercises each year.

Table 8. Evolution of average cost per exercise, 2017-2022 (EUR, 2022 prices)

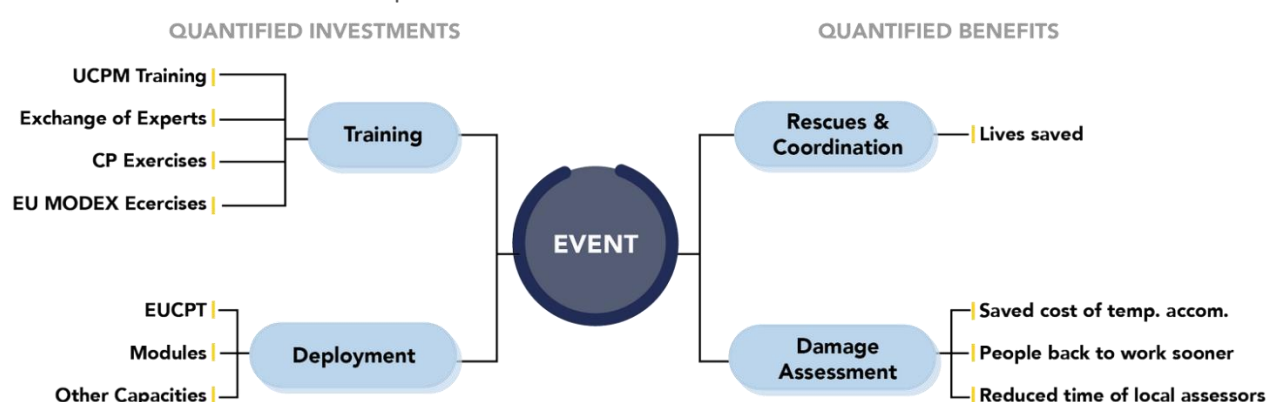
Exercise type	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
FSX	1,537,701	2,073,079	1,137,131	872,288	964,271	-
EU MODEX	386,842	502,546	777,928	93,803	85,588	58,583

Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

The review of the calls for proposals concluded that award decisions took into account the cost-effectiveness of offers, ranking them using a cost-benefit ratio. Despite some exceptions, the final reports of the exercises did not cover efficiency considerations, but stakeholders were generally very positive about the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the Exercises Programme (see Figure 52)⁶⁰¹.

The World Bank analysed the impacts of investments in UCPM training and exercises for emergency responders and in the UCPM response coordination. It focused on two interventions during disaster events, in Albania (November 2019) and in Croatia (March 2020)⁶⁰². It concluded that the benefits of these activities outweighed the costs in both cases, with positive net present value (NPVs) of EUR 5 million in Albania and EUR 0.3 million in Croatia.

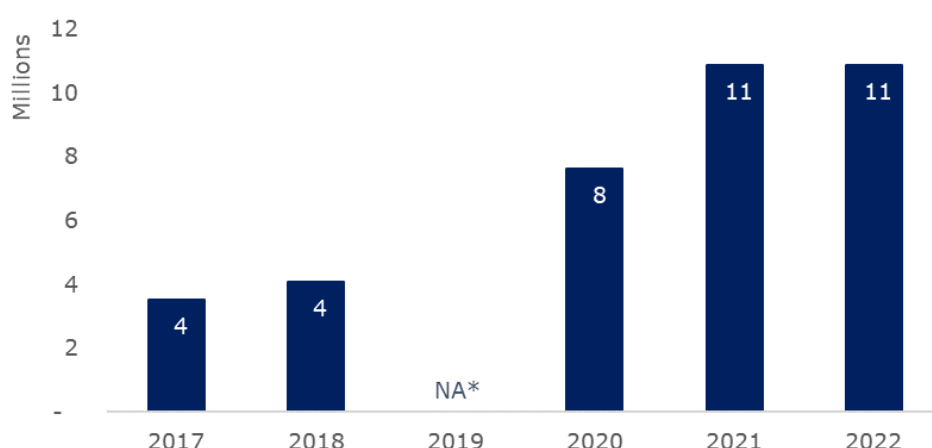
Figure 54. Costs and benefits considered by the World Bank study for the quantitative analysis of the impacts of investments in UCPM training and exercises for emergency responders and in the UCPM response coordination



Source: ICF elaboration, based on World Bank, *Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness*, 2021.

EWS were considered an important element in an efficient emergency decision-making process. During the evaluation period, the funding to EWS increased consistently, almost tripling between 2017 and 2022 (see Figure 55).

Figure 55. Contracted budget for Early Warning Systems, 2017-2022 (EUR million, 2022 prices)



⁶⁰¹ Surveys of: Training and Exercise Programme stakeholders. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2); experts in civil protection (2).

⁶⁰² "World Bank, *Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness*, 2021.

Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

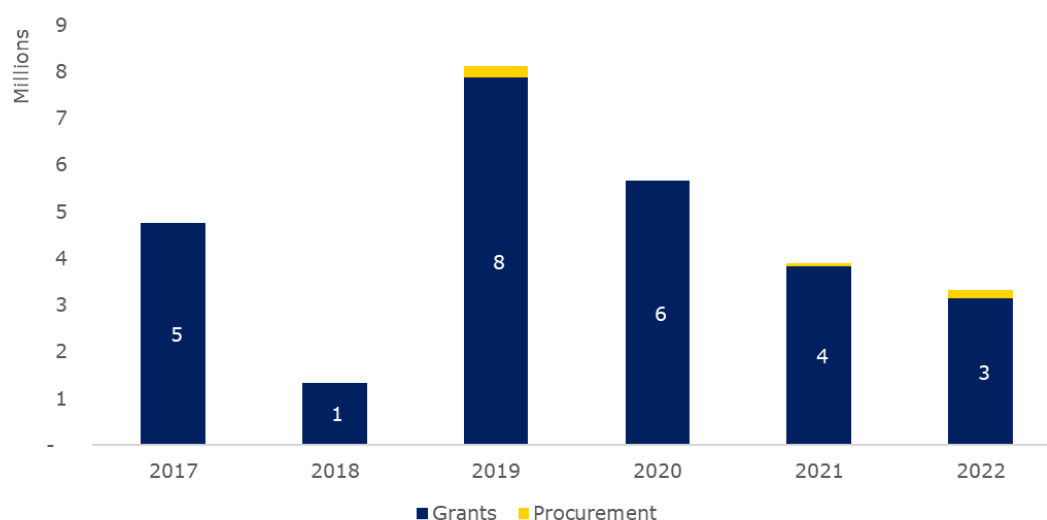
Note: *It was not possible to disaggregate the costs of EWS from other cost categories in 2019.

The review of the minutes of EWS meetings found evidence of cost-effectiveness concerns, but stakeholders did not highlight inefficiencies with this activity⁶⁰³. Some factors were identified as potentially leading to sub-optimal cost-effectiveness and efficiency:

- Insufficient synergies among the various European detection and alert systems (see Section 5.1.1);
- Lack of access to data and insufficient use of applied science (see Section 5.1.1);
- Lack of data and methodologies to support CBA, including methodologies;
- Some overlaps with national systems (see Section 5.4).

Funding to the **ECPP** during the evaluation period was around EUR 27 million, representing about 2% of the MMF budget and less than 1% of the total UCPM budget. The distribution of the funds varied. After peaking in 2020, the funds to ECPP steadily decreased until the end of the period (see Figure 56). Funding to the ECPP was disbursed primarily through grants, with adaptation grants, in particular, used to upgrade or repair Member/Participating States' response capacities to the state of readiness and availability required to be deployable as part of the ECPP⁶⁰⁴. The funding and number of adaptation grants across the period varied (see Figure 31). A review of DG ECHO's award criteria for grants shows that efficiency and cost-effectiveness were considered as part of review and award decisions.

Figure 56. Contracted funding to European Civil Protection Pool, 2017-2022 (EUR million, 2022 prices)



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

By February 2023, the ECPP contained 85 registered capacities. The most common were⁶⁰⁵:

- Ground forest firefighting using vehicles capacities (~18%);
- High-capacity pumping capacities (~16%);
- Heavy USAR capacities (~12%).

⁶⁰³ European Commission, EWS Meeting Minutes 2017–2022. See Annex 2 on Disaster risk mapping and assessment and EWS.

⁶⁰⁴ European Commission, *UCPM – European Civil Protection Pool Adaptation Grants*, (UCPM–2023–ECPP–URC–IBA) , 2023.

⁶⁰⁵ As of December 2022, the committed/offered capacities were 124. Germany withdrew its SEC in January 2023.

An assessment of the alignment of the number of registered capacities per type with the goal set for that type in Annex III of the implementing Decision of 16 October 2014 (see Section 5.1.1)⁶⁰⁶ shows that the goals were exceeded in nine cases (20% of the total capacities for which goals were set)⁶⁰⁷. For six of those types of capacities, there are ongoing registration processes. This may indicate some inefficiencies in the allocation of funds or processes, in particular when the majority of ECPP capacities registered have not met set capacity goals (see Section 5.1)⁶⁰⁸. However, as the decision on the type of response capacity to develop depended on Member States' willingness to commit, there were constraints to how cost-effectiveness could be taken into consideration.

Overall, the stakeholders did not highlight inefficiencies in the ECPP. Some, however, indicated that ECPP cost-effectiveness might have been negatively affected by:

- In some periods, lack of budget to carry out the EU MODEX required in the certification of capacities⁶⁰⁹;
- Low co-financing rate compared to rescEU, reducing its attractiveness⁶¹⁰;
- Labour-intensive proposal requirements to apply for adaptation grants⁶¹¹.

A minority (26%) of DG ECHO Desk Officers agreed that the redefinition of the EMC into the ECPP had a positive impact on cost-effectiveness. Similarly, a minority (39%) agreed that the redefinition of the ECPP in 2019 had a positive impact on the cost-effectiveness of the Mechanism⁶¹².

Decision 2019/420 established rescEU, after which various transition and proper capacities (see Section 2.2.2) were developed. A great majority of DG ECHO Desk Officers either did not have an opinion on the impact rescEU related developments on cost-effectiveness or considered the impact positive (see Figure 57). Figure 57 The great majority of national authorities did not highlight efficiency and cost-effectiveness issues with rescEU. Several indicated that they consider the benefits of rescEU to outweigh the costs, as it allows for a faster response⁶¹³. However, several others expressed concerns about the transparency of the justification for rescEU and its costs⁶¹⁴.

⁶⁰⁶ Commission Implementing Decision of 16 October 2014 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and repealing Commission Decisions 2004/277/EC, Euratom and 2007/606/EC, Euratom (notified under document C(2014) 7489) (Text with EEA relevance) (2014/762/EU) Text with EEA relevance, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2014/762#:~:text=Consolidated%20text%3A%20Commission%20Implementing%20Decision%20of%2016%20October,%28Text%20with%20EEA%20relevance%29%20%282014%2F762%2FEU%29Text%20with%20EEA%20relevance

⁶⁰⁷ HCP, HUSAR, CBRNDET (CBRN detection and sampling), GFFF, GFFF-V, FRB, EMT type 2, TAST, teams with unmanned aerial vehicles/RPAS.

⁶⁰⁸ The budget for grants in Table 5.6 is for adaptation grants and is not directly used for certification activities.

⁶⁰⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁶¹⁰ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (2). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

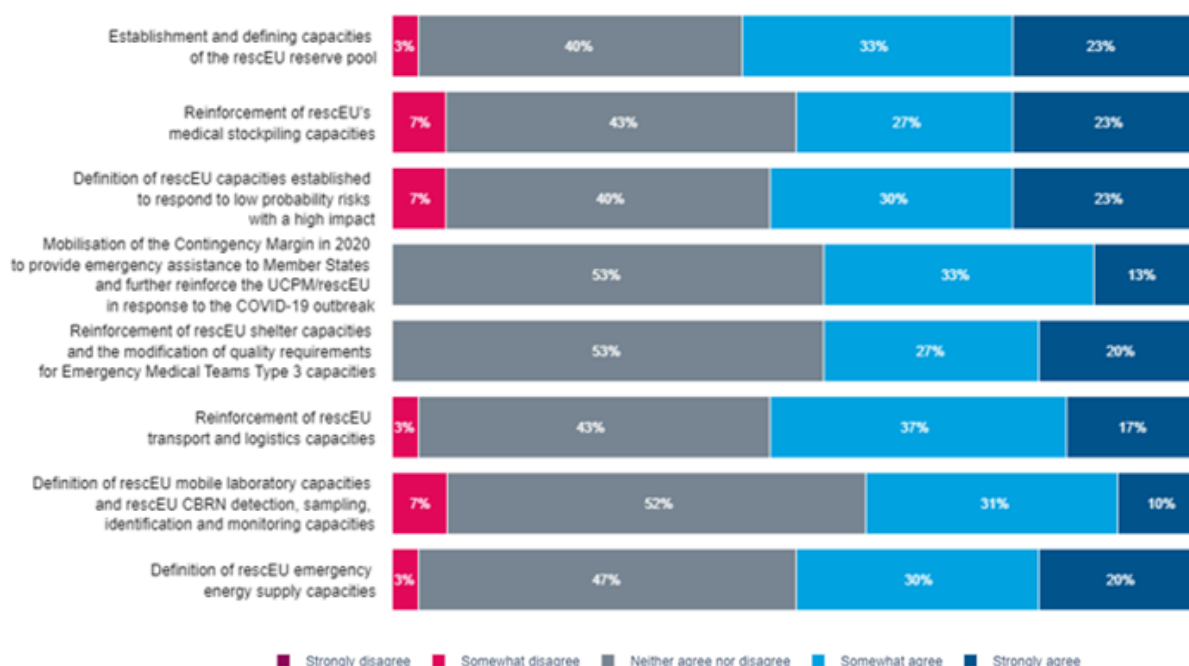
⁶¹¹ Interviews with: national authorities (2).

⁶¹² Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers.

⁶¹³ Interviews with: national authorities (3).

⁶¹⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (4).

Figure 57. Survey of DG ECHO Desk Officers: ‘To what extent do you agree that the following developments since 2017 have had a positive impact on the cost-effectiveness of the implementation of the UCPM?’



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation.

The selection of the necessary rescEU capacities considered the gaps in the ECPP to address evolving needs (e.g. during the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine) and the speed of developing the necessary capacity. The interim evaluation did not have access to formal efficiency and cost-effectiveness analyses and assessments for various scenarios that may have supported DG ECHO’s decision on the development of specific rescEU capacities. National authorities did not have access to those assessments, with some indicating that rescEU capacities should have been driven by strategic analytical needs assessments rather than the availability of budget or ongoing crises/disasters⁶¹⁵.

A review of the grant application forms and invitations or calls for proposals shows that 12 of 28 mentioned efficiency and cost-effectiveness as important elements to be considered when developing offers or as part of the criteria to decide the award of the grant. In some cases, however, the Commission awarded direct grants to Member States without a call for proposals, in order to build those capacities more rapidly.

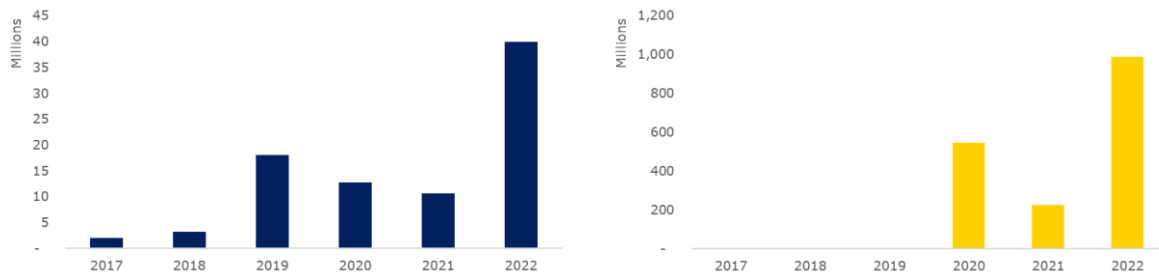
Between 2017 and 2019, all capacities developed were transition capacities related to forest fires. In the context of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020, stockpiling capacities represented about 78% of the proper capacities developed. In 2022, in light of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, new capacities relating to CBRN stockpile, energy supply, transport and shelters were developed. The total allocated budget to rescEU in 2021 was around EUR 235 million and in 2022 it was about EUR 1,026 million, of which 58% had been contracted by the end of 2022.

Figure 58. Contracted budget to rescEU, 2019-2022 (EUR million, 2022 prices)

Transition capacities

Proper capacities

⁶¹⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (4). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

During 2021 and 2022, most (77%) of the budget for rescEU came from the NextGenerationEU budget, with the remainder from the MFF. Some stakeholders expressed some concerns about efficiency and cost-effectiveness of rescEU, due to:

- **Restricted scope and timeframe of NextGenerationEU.** This significantly influenced the choices of what capacities to develop and when. It also left limited time for preparing and responding to a significant number of calls⁶¹⁶;
- **The temporary nature of NextGenerationEU.** This means that maintaining the developed rescEU capacities in the future may not be feasible with a significantly lower budget (MFF only), risking the cost-effectiveness of much of the investment in rescEU capacities^{617,618}. One national authority highlighted that a lack of a long-term approach to managing stocks may hinder building on expertise and lead to duplication of costs.

Box 3. Cost-effectiveness of channelling private donations to Ukraine

The UCPM started channelling private donations in the context of its response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, supported by HERA in its establishment. The positive impact of this innovation on the cost-effectiveness of the response was highlighted by donors, DG ECHO and national authorities. Data on the donations processed by the Belgian and Polish hubs suggest that the overall value of medicines, medical equipment, CBRN counter-measures and hygiene and sanitation items donated (about EUR 7 million of completed donations and EUR 4.2 million in ongoing donations) was about 11 times the cost of operating the hubs (which DG ECHO estimates to be less than EUR 1 million on personal, subcontracting and purchasing costs). This means that the return on investment was extremely high and that the cost-effectiveness of processing donations was positive in principle.

The fact that the UCPM requires the acceptance of offers by Ukraine and ensures the delivery of goods to the authorities was viewed by donors as contributing to cost-effectiveness. Nevertheless, the relationship between costs and benefits appears to depend on the type of goods and the associated complexity of requirements and procedures. In some cases, interviewees stated that the resources required to control the quality/process some of the goods donated (e.g. laptops) were higher than the expected benefits of those goods.

Source: See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

5.2.14 Response

The **ERCC** mobilised and coordinated assistance to disaster-stricken countries in response to requests to the ERCC or through/by (i) the UN and its agencies, or (ii) an international organisation. The ERCC

⁶¹⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2).

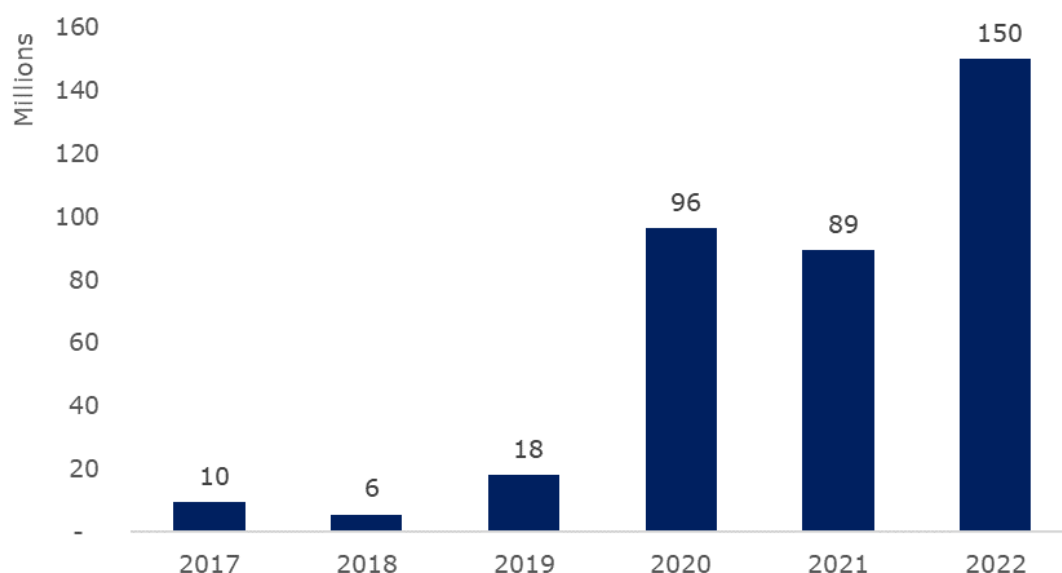
⁶¹⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (1).

⁶¹⁸ For example, a significant share of the rescEU budget was used to set stockpiles, but these capacities need to be maintained in the coming years or they will expire.

response assistance took the form of in-kind assistance, mobilisation of ECPP capacity, and, as a last resort tool, mobilisation of rescEU capacities.

The budget allocated to the ERCC increased 15-fold during the evaluation period, mirroring the significant increase in the number of activations (see Figure 59).

Figure 59. Contracted budget to ERCC, 2017-2022 (EUR million, 2022 prices)



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

Stakeholders were generally positive on the contribution of the ERCC to the cost-effectiveness of the Mechanism.

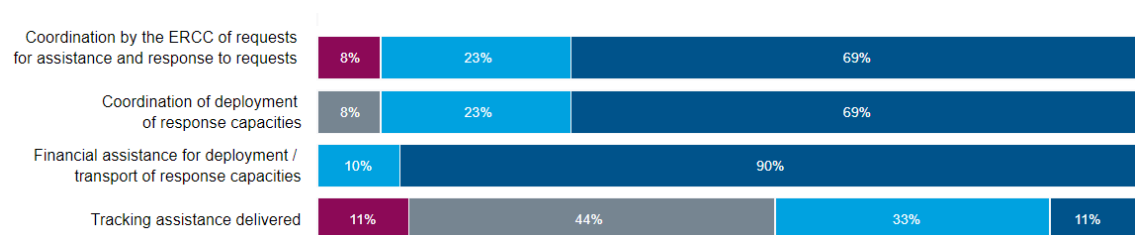
Nearly all DG ECHO Desk Officers strongly or somewhat agreed that coordination of RfA and response to requests by the ERCC and coordination of deployment of response capacities were successful in facilitating a rapid and efficient response (see Figure 60)⁶¹⁹. Similarly, the great majority of national authorities strongly or somewhat agreed that the ERCC's coordination of RfA and response to requests by Member States and Participating States (90%, or 45) and the coordination of deployment of response capacities (88%, or 43) were successful in facilitating a rapid and efficient response⁶²⁰.

Figure 60. Survey of DG ECHO Desk Officers: 'Please indicate the extent to which you think they were successful in facilitating a rapid and efficient response to (imminent) disasters in Member/Participating States and third countries'

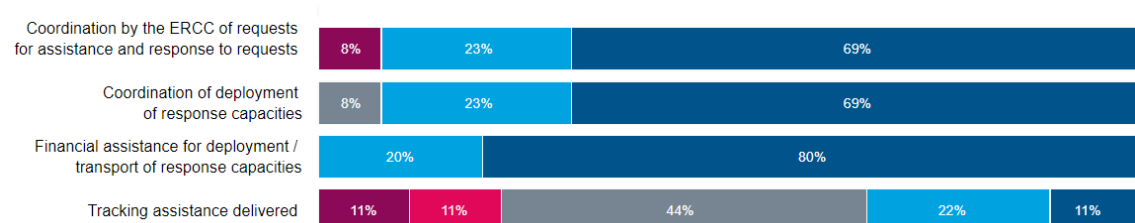
In Member States

⁶¹⁹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers.

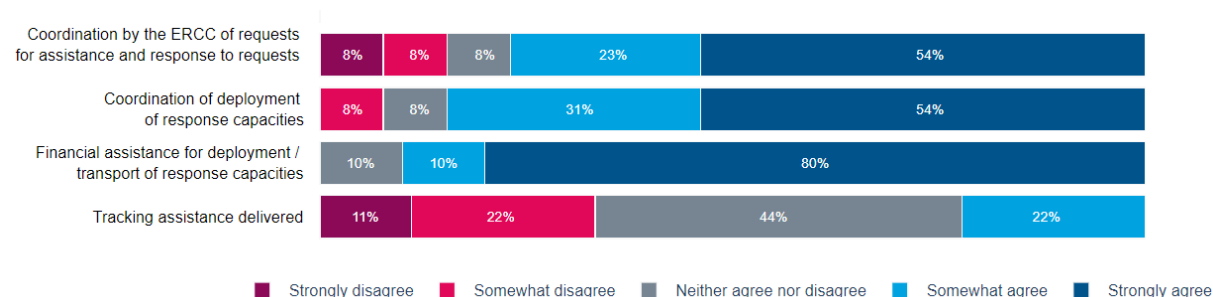
⁶²⁰ Surveys of: national authorities.



In Participating States



In third countries



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data gathered for the interim evaluation.

DG ECHO Desk Officers were less positive about the extent to which tracking of assistance delivered was successful in facilitating a rapid and efficient response, in particular in the context of responses across third countries (see Figure 60). This was particularly highlighted for operations related to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine⁶²¹. The majority of respondents from national authorities (72%, or 34) strongly or somewhat agreed that tracking of assistance delivered was successful in facilitating a rapid and efficient response.

The inadequacy of CECIS to deal with the volume of requests was mentioned by stakeholders as a cause of inefficiencies⁶²². The fact that only some Participating States and no third countries had access to CECIS imposed a significant burden on the ERCC, as it received all RfA by email, which it then uploaded to the CECIS platform. The data model/structure of CECIS limits standardisation and data analysis. A new version of CECIS began to be developed during the interim evaluation and is expected to address several key limitations.

Some stakeholders expressed concerns about potential causes of inefficiencies in the ERCC in future⁶²³:

- Potential preference for rescEU instead of ECPP, given its more attractive payment/reimbursement procedures and co-financing rates;
- Administrative burdens of submitting/responding to requests;

⁶²¹ See Annex 7 for case studies on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and on forest fires.

⁶²² Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (3). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁶²³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (4). 7 *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018–2022*. Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

- Lack of dedicated IT tools to collect and monitor data;
- Risk of possible inefficiencies and duplications brought by the additional layer of coordination with HERA⁶²⁴.

Examples of efficiency and cost-effectiveness were highlighted by DG ECHO Desk Officers, including considerations to prioritise local/regional procurement, pooling assistance from different Member States to send it in one shipment where feasible and cost-effective, and the use of alternative transport and logistical hubs⁶²⁵.

The UCPM response to activations in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine brought additional challenges and highlighted that the model of the ERCC was not optimised for long-lasting operations (and without access to the territory), creating difficulties in needs assessments and tracking assistance, as well as new challenges in the constant rotation of EUCPT deployments⁶²⁶. The ERCC was able to adapt to the new context by setting up hubs, increasing contact with DG ECHO humanitarian assistance teams in Ukraine, and overlapping EUCPT teams to ensure proper handovers.

Judgement criterion:

- JC4.4: The allocation of the budget per pillar is balanced when considering the expected achievements

The allocation of the budget per pillar was generally considered balanced in light of short-term needs and limited funding. However, some stakeholders indicated that a stronger focus on prevention would have been desirable from a longer-term perspective.

The UCPM budget increased significantly between 2017 and 2022 (by about 24 times). The budget to each UCPM pillar also increased during the evaluation period but at different rates (see Figure 61). Most, but not all, of the increase was due to rescEU. As of 2022, excluding rescEU:

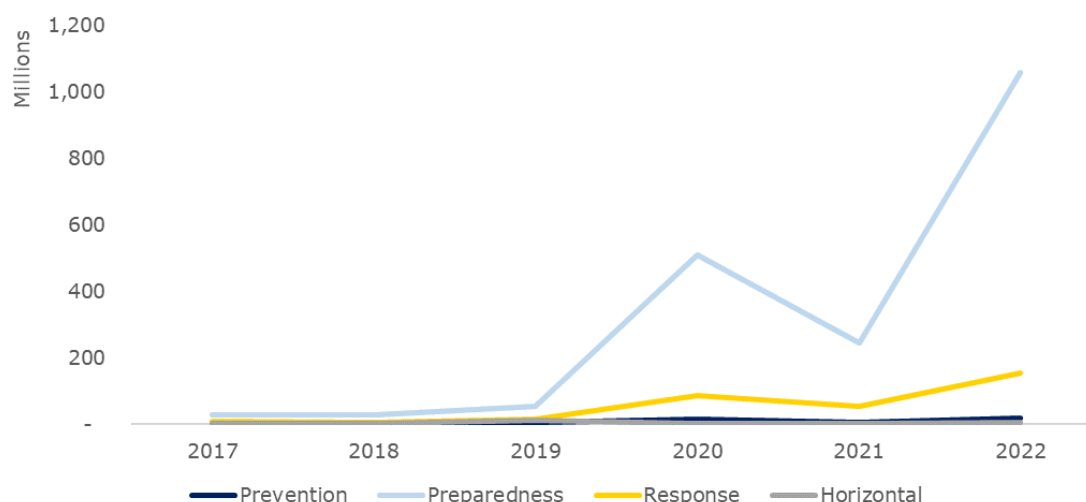
- The budget allocated to prevention and preparedness was three times that of 2017;
- The budget allocated to preparedness was seven times that of 2017;
- The budget allocated to response was about 22 times that of 2017, with most of the change between 2020 and 2022.

Figure 61. UCPM budget, per pillar, 2017-2022

⁶²⁴ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. To ensure clarity on their respective mandates, ECHO and HERA worked together by establishing Standard Operating Procedures, which are in the process of being signed (as of December 2023).

⁶²⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁶²⁶ See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

The adoption of Regulation (EU) 2021/836 changed the minimum level of spending in each pillar, reducing the minimum level for prevention and response, and increasing the level for preparedness (see Table 9). The change signals the intention to focus more on preparedness and less on response⁶²⁷ and prevention⁶²⁸.

Table 9. Minimum and maximum levels of UCPM spending, per pillar, before and after adoption of Regulation (EU) 2021/836

Pillar	Before	After	Variation
Prevention	20% (+/- 8 percentage points (pp))	10% (+/- 4 pp)	↓ (75%)
Preparedness	50% (+/- 8 pp)	85% (+/- 10 pp)	↑ (70%)
Response	30% (+/- 8 pp)	10% (+/- 9 pp)	↓ (66%)

Source: ICF elaboration .

While horizontal activities limit a full disaggregation of budget per pillar, an analysis of the allocated and contracted UCPM budget shows that those limits were, in principle, only met in all pillars in 2021 and 2022. In other years, the share of budget allocated to response was below the relevant limit. In 2019 and 2020, the share of budget allocated to prevention was also lower than the limit (see Table 10). In 2017, 2018 and 2019, the budget allocated to preparedness exceeded the maximum limit⁶²⁹.

Table 10. Share of budget allocated per pillar, 2017-2022

Pillar	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Prevention	14%	14%	5%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Preparedness	64%	73%	64%	83%	80%	86%	83%

⁶²⁷ New limit is three times lower than the previous limit.

⁶²⁸ New limit is four times lower than the previous limit

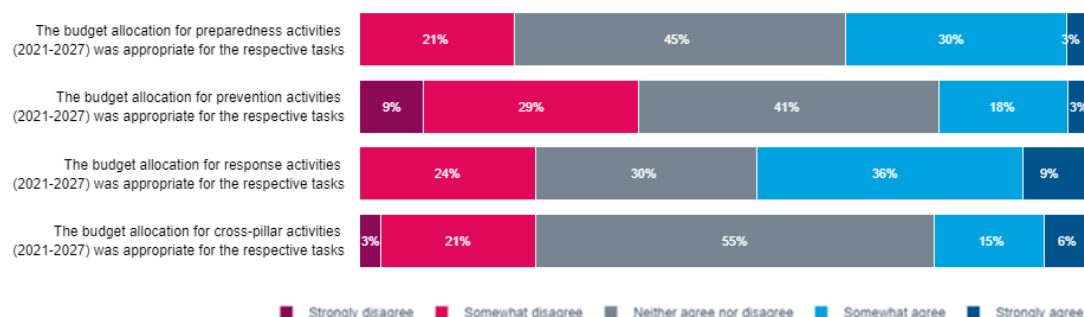
⁶²⁹ The budget to horizontal activities was allocated equally across the three pillars.

Response	17%	10%	18%	14%	17%	12%	14%
Cross-pillar	5%	4%	13%	0%	1%	0%	1%

DG ECHO Desk Officers held mixed views on the adequacy of the allocation of budget per pillar (see Figure 62). The relative majority did not have a clear opinion and the remainder were split between agreeing and disagreeing with the allocation per pillar. Prevention had a higher number of DG ECHO Desk Officers expressing disagreement⁶³⁰, suggesting:

- **A need for a more strategic approach.** While focusing on response is a good short-term approach, the increasing number and variety of disasters requires a more strategic and long-term approach, including more investment in prevention;
- **Investments in prevention are cost-effective.** A higher focus on prevention can bring net benefits in the longer term, as shown by the World Bank study that demonstrated that the great majority of a selection of prevention and preparedness investments (including some of the UCPM activities) had expected benefits higher than their cost⁶³¹;
- **Legislative amendments to the UCPM made prevention/anticipatory disaster risk management even more of a priority.** For example, this was achieved through the introduction of the Union Disaster Resilience Goals;
- **The lack of predictability/stability of the budget for prevention has an impact on the effectiveness of the UCPM.** The budget for prevention experienced high variability during the evaluation period, both in the short term (due to reshuffling of the budget initially allocated to prevention to response capacities/response) and in the longer term (due to the European Commission's multiyear cycle), hindering implementation and the scaling-up of the UCPM prevention programme.

Figure 62. DG ECHO Desk Officers views on allocation of budget per pillar



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation.

Similarly, national authorities and other stakeholders had mixed views on the allocation of budget per pillar, with some highlighting the need for an increase in the budget for prevention⁶³², and others believing that the UCPM might not be the best framework/forum for financing and enhancing prevention initiatives, as it often requires the involvement of other (non-civil protection) actors⁶³³.

⁶³⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (8). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers.

⁶³¹ "World Bank, *Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness*, 2021.

⁶³² Interviews with: national authorities (7).

⁶³³ Interviews with: national authorities (2). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

5.2.2 EQ5: To what extent was the UCPM budgeting system flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events?

Key findings

- The UCPM underwent various modifications, motivated by evolving needs and gap assessments, indicating its flexibility to adapt;
- It was not possible to assess whether the additional costs triggered by those revisions were compensated by efficiency savings;
- The budgeting system was flexible to support Member and Participating States to prepare and respond to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events, in particular from 2019 onwards. Changes to the regulation and the significant and swift increase of the UCPM budget by the budgetary authority to react to the growing budgetary needs (mainly in light of the COVID-19 and to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine) were key ensure this flexibility
- Factors that, in some instances, somewhat limited the flexibility of the UCPM budget included restrictions to the scope and timing of the NextGenerationEU budget, , reliance on overwhelmed Member States, and complex procedures and rules.

Judgement criteria:

- JC5.2: Legislative developments since 2017 (Decision 2019/1310) triggered additional costs, which were compensated by efficiency savings
- JC5.3: Legislative developments since 2017 (e.g. Regulation 2021/88) reinforced the UCPM's budget flexibility to adapt to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events

During the evaluation period, the UCPM underwent various modifications, motivated by evolving needs and gaps assessments, indicating its flexibility to adapt (JC5.3). However, it is not possible to assess whether the additional costs triggered by those revisions were compensated by efficiency savings.

The time lag between identification of the need to revise the UCPM and its amendments varied. While the changes adopted in 2019 had been under discussion since at least 2017, subsequent changes were adopted more quickly, given the urgency of their underlying needs.

The changes to the UCPM, including the budget increase, suggest efforts to increase flexibility while ensuring the predictability of support to Member and Participating States to prevent, prepare and respond to unanticipated events and evolving needs. Interviewed DG ECHO staff highlighted that without these modifications the UCPM would have not been able to have implemented many of its activities, in particular in the context of the unprecedented crises experienced in the period (COVID-19 and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine).⁶³⁴

Key examples are the introduction of rescEU in 2019 and the subsequent revision of the legal framework to incorporate new type of rescEU capacity. This allowed, for example, the stockpiling of medical counter-measures (vaccines, therapeutics), as well as intensive care medical equipment, PPE and laboratory supplies to respond to the emerging needs related to the COVID-19 and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁶³⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

The introduction of indirect management and empowerment of the Commission to adopt delegated acts in certain circumstances are also expected to enable greater flexibility and timeliness of support.

Furthermore, the Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism introduced a greater flexibility on various levels:

- It removed the need to allocate the budget to four different budget lines and allowed the entire UCPM budget (per pillar and inside and outside Europe) to be allocated under a single budget line;
- It introduced the possibility to carry over (and consume) unused commitment and payment appropriations for the Response pillar to the following year.
- It introduced the possibility to conclude budgetary commitments over several years, for example allowing the acquisition of costly Aerial Fire Fighting capacities (planes and helicopters).

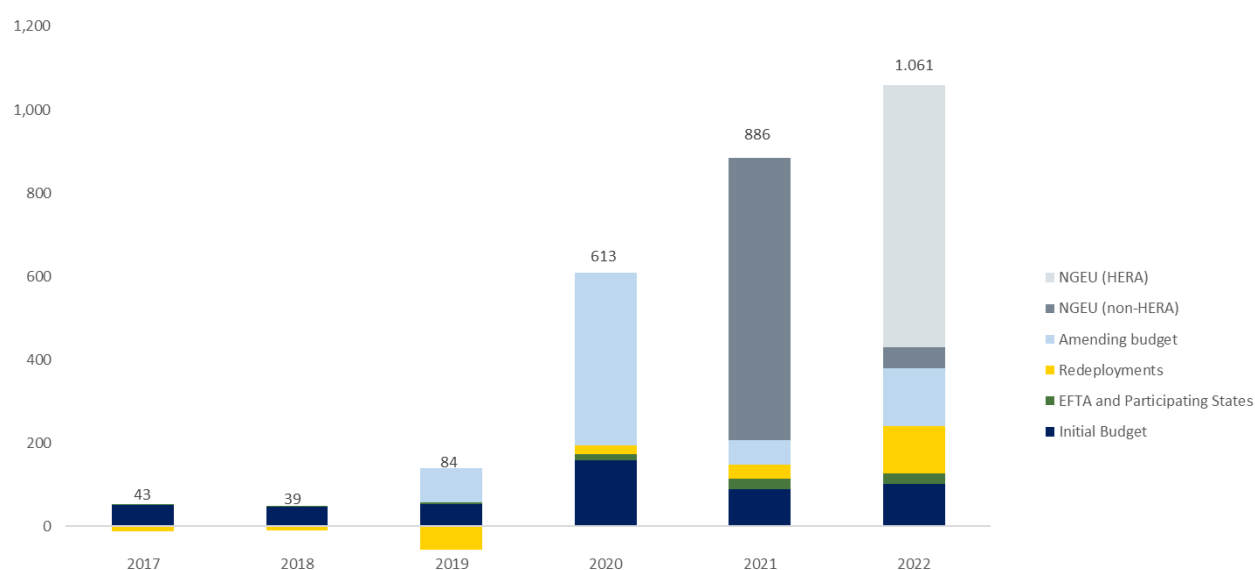
Judgement criterion:

- JC5.1: The budgeting system has been sufficiently flexible for the UCPM to sustainably support Member and Participating States to prevent, prepare and respond to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events (e.g. COVID-19 response)

The budgeting system was flexible support Member and Participating States to prepare and respond to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events. Nevertheless, some opportunities for further improving the flexibility of the system were identified.

As mentioned above, the UCPM budget experienced a massive increase during the evaluation period. While in 2017 the UCPM budget was about EUR 52 million and there were absorption problems, at the end of the evaluation period the total budget was 20 times higher, reaching EUR 1,061 million (of which EUR 354 million was MFF) (see Figure 63).

Figure 63. DG ECHO budget 2017 -2022 (EUR million)

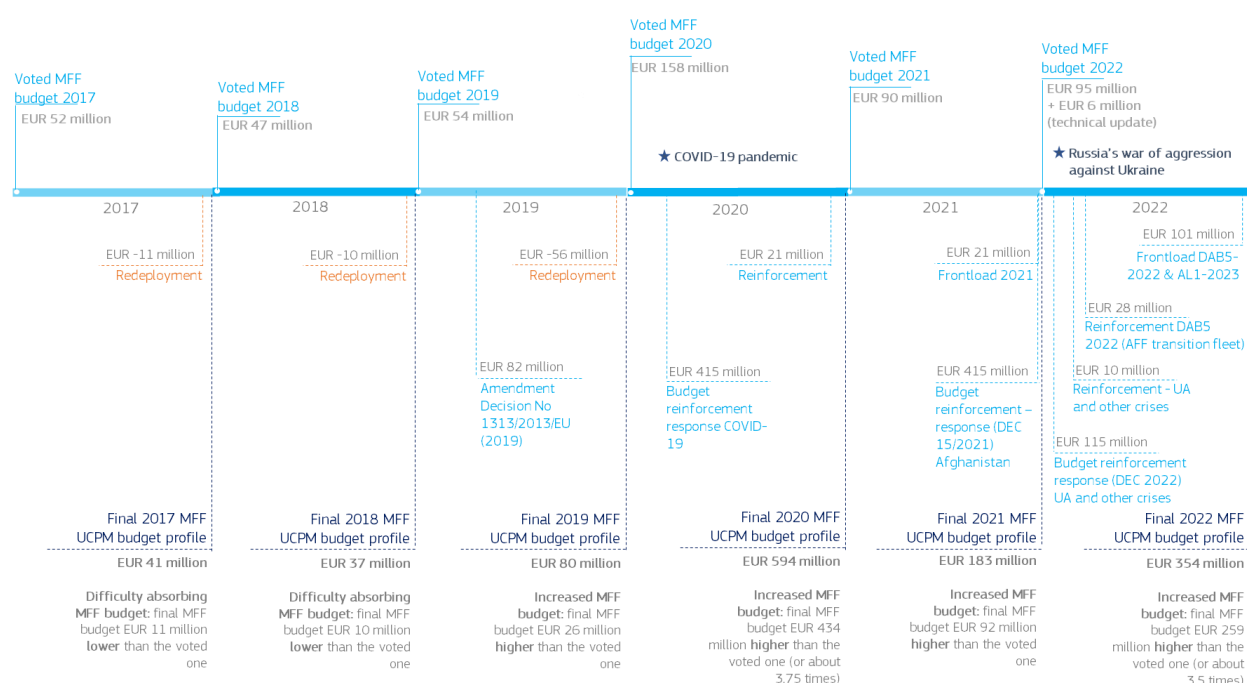


Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

A review of annual reports and evolution of the budget highlighted the flexibility of the allocation of budget to UCPM to respond to emerging needs during the evaluation period, not only through an increase in the voted MFF budget and the allocation of NGEU budget to UCPM, but also through ad hoc budget adjustments to the voted MFF budget throughout the years, (see). These adjustments were made possible by:

- Changes to the legislation and subsequently increased flexibility of the budgetary system (i.e., carry over, single budget line, multi-year budgetary commitments) as mentioned above, which allowed DG ECHO to swiftly proceed to transfers or frontloads from one strand to another or one activity to another when necessary;
- A reactive and supportive budgetary Authority, which since 2019 responded positively to all DG ECHO's requests for necessary reinforcements in a time range of three weeks to two months (as a result of the fact that the growing number and intensity of crises started to have a serious impact on the UCPM budget).

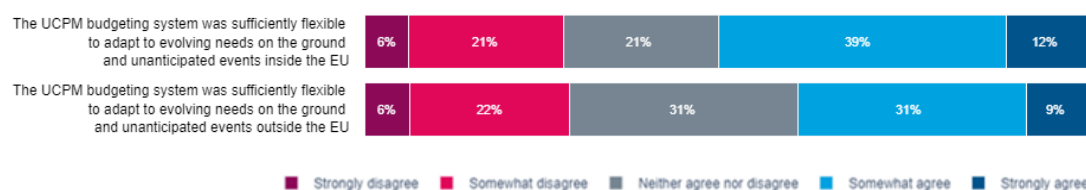
Figure 64. Flexibility of DG ECHO MFF budget 2017 -2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal data.

DG ECHO Desk Officers generally agreed that there was an improvement in budget flexibility during the evaluation period (see Figure 65)⁶³⁵. However, some highlighted that this flexibility was sometimes achieved through budget reshuffles as the budget was not sufficient to address emerging needs. This had, in their view, negative consequences for prevention and non-operational preparedness activities of DG ECHO.⁶³⁶

Figure 65. DG ECHO Desk Officers' views on the flexibility of the UCPM budget



⁶³⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (11).

⁶³⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (5).

Source: ICF elaboration, based on data gathered for the interim evaluation.

Overall, a relative majority of DG ECHO desk officers agreed that the UCPM budget was sufficiently flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events within (51%) and outside (40%) the EU. However, many highlighted that the following elements may have limited that flexibility⁶³⁷:

- **Part of the budget in 2021 and 2022 came from the NextGenerationEU Fund**, which had a narrow scope in terms of what it could be used for (i.e., to address health-related needs);
- **Timeframe of budget adoption (i.e. yearly)**. The MFF budget allocation was annual and the NextGenerationEU budget came with a strict timeframe to be committed and spent (even if the budget could be carried over across the period). The new regulation introduced the possibility to adopt a multi-annual approach in certain cases and the possibility to carry over and frontload;
- **Overwhelmed Member States**. DG ECHO had to rely on overwhelmed Member States to develop capacity, instead of directly procuring some capacities;
- **Complex procedures and rules**. For example, rules on the financing of transport grants became particularly burdensome (for both DG ECHO and Member States) with the significant increase of requests due to COVID-19 and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

One DG ECHO Desk Officer highlighted that the UCPM budget shares the same budget headings with Cohesion Policy and those narrow margins limit its flexibility⁶³⁸. Another element of some concern mentioned by a few DG ECHO staff regarding the existing system going forward, was the lack of certainty on whether and how quickly additional funds may arrive to deal with emerging needs, with some mentioning that a less discretionary approach to budget adjustments (e.g., access to a reserve or buffer funds) in face of emerging needs would be of added value.⁶³⁹

5.2.3 EQ6: To what extent do the measures in place for the internal monitoring and evaluation of the UCPM contribute to the efficient and effective implementation of the intervention?

Key findings

- Overall, there was a lack of indicators to monitor and assess the performance of the results of each UCPM component/activity and their outcomes/impacts consistently and homogeneously;
- UCPM data collection and management systems and tools were not appropriate to support sound collection and analysis of the data. The tracking of assistance was particularly limited;
- There were monitoring and controlling actions at various levels, including missions, collection of feedback by participants on activities, monitoring exercises, and audits (by the Internal Audit Service, ECA, etc.), but results of these actions were not consistently recorded and explored.

Judgement criterion:

- JC6.1: The indicators selected allowed the UCPM to identify and correct inefficiencies or any other issues associated with the implementation of the Decision

⁶³⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (10).

⁶³⁸ Feedback from DG ECHO September 2023.

⁶³⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (5).

The UCPM made progress in monitoring and evaluation by introducing two key strategic performance indicators (KPIs) and various result and output indicators. However, assessment of the available documentation and feedback from DG ECHO Desk Officers suggests a lack of indicators to monitor and assess the quality of the results of each UCPM component/activity and their outcomes/impacts and the resources used to deliver them consistently and homogeneously (JC 6.1). Nevertheless, contracts were awarded based on concrete criteria and their fulfilment was assessed accordingly by DG ECHO.

During the evaluation period, the progress of UCPM was monitored and reported through strategic indicators, predefined result indicators and specific output indicators.

At strategic level, only speed/time of response was consistently monitored. In 2020, an additional strategic indicator was introduced to assess the adequacy of response of the UCPM⁶⁴⁰. Result indicators were also defined in the strategic plans for 2019-2020⁶⁴¹ and 2020-2024⁶⁴² and in the annual management plans. Draft outcome indicators were developed for the Knowledge Network.

Despite the positive developments in monitoring and reporting against strategic KPIs, the existing indicators and processes were not adequate to assess and monitor efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the evaluation period, as they focus on results without incorporating quality, use of resources/cost and outcomes/impact considerations. In practice, this limited the influence of cost-effectiveness and efficiency considerations on: (i) the decision-making process on allocation of funds per pillar and activity, and (ii) the selection of alternative options (e.g. projects, transport solutions)⁶⁴³. DG ECHO Desk Officers highlighted a lack of awareness of UCPM KPIs, their adequacy to measure efficiency, and the effectiveness of internal monitoring and evaluation systems to assess efficiency of the implementation of the Decision (see Figure 66)⁶⁴⁴.

The evaluation also showed some limitations related to the KPIs and monitoring systems, including:

- The indicator on average speed was not highly informative because the timeliness of response is influenced by the type of disaster and reaction of Member States⁶⁴⁵;
- The indicator on adequacy of response can be misleading/overly general, as it captures both full and partial responses to RfA. The ERCC makes an appropriate judgement call on where the UCPM presents added value and this should be captured in the indicators;
- Risk awareness of the public (Article 3(2)(d)) is difficult to measure in a single indicator. The indicator on progress in implementing the prevention framework by the number of DRM Summary Reports submitted (Article 3(2)(a)) is not fit for purpose as it does not consider the extent to which DRM Summary Reports were used, for example⁶⁴⁶;

⁶⁴⁰ The Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and Strategic Plan 2020-2024 include indicators for the assessment of reasonable assurance (multiannual residual error rate for the 2016-2020 SP; estimated risk at closure for the 2020-2024 plan). The residual error rate is the ratio between the amount at risk and the final budget. The amount at risk is the representative detected error rate multiplied by the part of the budget which has not been audited, added to the amount of detected ineligible expenditure that has not yet been corrected, i.e. recoveries orders issued, awaiting cashing.

⁶⁴¹ 'The average speed of interventions under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (from the acceptance of the offer to deployment), 'The number of modules included in the voluntary pool of the European Emergency Response Capacity'; 'The number of national risk assessments submitted by IPA II14 and EU Neighbourhood countries'; 'The number of beneficiaries reached through the European Union Aid Volunteers initiative'; 'The number of offers received and coordinated by the ERCC'; 'The average speed of interventions under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism for deployments related to the EU refugee crisis'; 'The number of risk assessments submitted to the Commission by Member States'; 'The number of modules included in the voluntary pool of the European Emergency Response Capacity'.

⁶⁴² 'Number of countries participating in UCPM that have adopted and implemented national disaster risk reduction strategies'; 'Number of scientific and technical assessments and advice provided to the ERCC support of UCPM operations'; 'Areas where there is an increase of the country's response capacity to given events'; 'Response time of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism to a request of assistance'; 'Adequacy of response of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism'.

⁶⁴³ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (5).

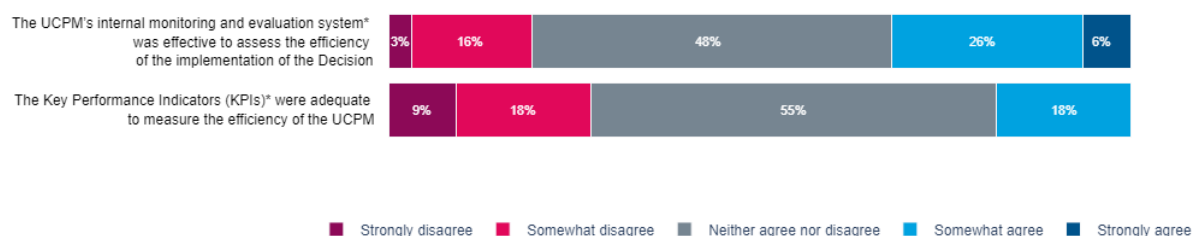
⁶⁴⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (3), indicating that UCPM does not use the KPI.

⁶⁴⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (3).

⁶⁴⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (2).

- The evidence base to set targets was sometimes not robust⁶⁴⁷;
- The indicators focused mainly on results and less on outcomes/impact, as well as mainly on response rather than prevention⁶⁴⁸;
- There were no clear links to the existing indicators or the UCPM's specific and general objectives.

Figure 66. DG ECHO Desk Officers' views on adequacy of UCPM KPIs and monitoring systems



Source: ICF elaboration, based on data gathered for the interim evaluation.

Some stakeholders agreed that there is a need to improve existing KPIs and develop further indicators. They noted that the Union Disaster Resilience Goals represent a positive development⁶⁴⁹. By contrast, others expressed concerns about the workload connected with monitoring KPIs, given the limited human resources⁶⁵⁰.

Judgement criterion:

- JC6.2: Monitoring and evaluation data have been properly collected and analysed

UCPM data collection and management systems and tools were not appropriate to support sound collection and analysis of the data. The tracking of assistance was particularly limited (JC 6.2).

Several DG ECHO Desk Officers and experts noted significant room for improvement in data collection and management and stated that further efforts should have been taken to promote consistent and harmonised data collection by Member States⁶⁵¹. Existing UCPM data collection systems and tools were considered outdated, inadequate, and inefficient^{652,653}. The development of CECIS 2.0 was seen as a potential step forward in improving data collection and reporting on activities in the response sector. Whether this will be effective will depend on Member States' use of this integrated system⁶⁵⁴.

During the evaluation period, there were monitoring and controlling actions at various levels, including missions, collection of feedback by participants on activities, monitoring exercises, and audits (by the Internal Audit Service, ECA, etc.). However, results were not consistently recorded and explored.

Judgement criterion:

⁶⁴⁷ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁶⁴⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (3). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁶⁴⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (2). Focus group:: cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023; with DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁶⁵⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (2).

⁶⁵¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (4). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁶⁵² Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (2). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

⁶⁵³ The lack of data made a CBA unfeasible in the context of the case studies.

⁶⁵⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

- JC6.3: There is scope for some simplification or burden reduction in the activities carried out by the UCPM. This criterion is covered in EQ4 and EQ5 (see Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2)

5.3 Relevance

This subsection explores how well the UCPM addressed EU and national needs during the evaluation period. It includes an examination of whether the UCPM's general and specific objectives, as well as its activities, were aligned with EU and national needs. It then assesses the extent to which the UCPM was flexible in adapting to emerging needs and developments (including unanticipated events) and whether it is perceived as sufficiently flexible to adapt to future needs. Finally, it examines the extent to which the UCPM was able to incorporate recommendations and lessons.

- 5.3.1 EQ7: To what extent were the UCPM activities and objectives relevant to the civil protection needs of the EU and to the European Commission's priorities for 2023-2024, as well as to the needs of Member and Participating States and third countries?

Key findings

- During the evaluation period, the UCPM effectively identified and addressed EU and national needs in the field of civil protection. This showed the relevance of UCPM's objectives in the field of prevention, preparedness and response;
- Several activities indicated that the UCPM effectively identified EU and national needs in the field of prevention. These included DG ECHO's funding of research projects on understanding the needs of civil protection authorities, the compilation of the overview document of disaster risks in the EU, as well as recent changes to the PPP. Although evidence shows a need for further investment in prevention initiatives, some stakeholders questioned whether the UCPM constitutes the right forum for such further investment;
- UCPM preparedness activities were relevant to meeting EU and national needs. However, concerns were raised about the prioritisation of rescEU over the ECPP, as well as the need for increased focus on safety and security during UCPM deployments. The CECIS platform and the procedure for nomination of experts could be refined;
- UCPM response activities were appropriate to address EU and national needs. However, evidence shows that KPIs on the adequacy and speed of response were not fit for purpose;
- UCPM activities were relevant to the European Commission's priorities for 2023-2024, including the European Green Deal, the proposed Single Market Emergency Instrument, and the EU's enlargement priorities. However, the environmental sustainability of the UCPM should be strengthened.

Judgement criteria:

- JC7.1: Main EU and national (MS/PS/TC) needs addressed by the UCPM in the evaluation period were identified;
- JC7.2: The UCPM's general/specific objectives were appropriate to address identified EU and national needs;
- JC7.3: The UCPM's activities were suitable to address identified EU and national needs;

The former JC7"4 ("All current and expected future needs within the scope of the UCPM are adequately addressed") will be addressed in EQ8. This EQ will focus on whether the UCPM

addressed national and EU needs during the evaluation period, while EQ8 explores whether the UCPM was/will be sufficiently flexible to address national and EU emerging needs. A new judgement criterion was added in this EQ, namely: 'JC7.4. The UCPM's activities were relevant to the European Commission's priorities for 2023-2024'.

Overall, civil protection authorities and experts indicated that their countries' civil protection needs were identified and addressed during the evaluation period⁶⁵⁵. National authorities also expressed positive views about cooperation with DG ECHO, which allowed them to voice their needs⁶⁵⁶. However, given the numerous changes within UCPM activities between 2017 and 2022, it was sometimes challenging for national authorities to stay fully informed and up to date with all initiatives⁶⁵⁷. A small minority of civil protection authorities highlighted a need for greater transparency about the cost of different UCPM activities (see Section 5.2.1)⁶⁵⁸. Only a minority of stakeholders indicated that some civil protection needs could remain unaddressed⁶⁵⁹, primarily related to the future role of the UCPM and whether it will address all emerging needs (see Section 5.3.2).

During the evaluation period, the UCPM identified national and EU **prevention** needs. The UCPM funded research to better understand the needs of **civil protection authorities** for scaling-up disaster risk management investments. Indeed, DG ECHO and the World Bank undertook a study that resulted in three publications modelling the potential impact of floods and earthquakes on Europe's society and economy, and quantifying the costs and benefits of investment in disaster resilience⁶⁶⁰. **'Understanding the Needs of Civil Protection Agencies and Opportunities for Scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments'** summarised insights into the challenges and opportunities for civil protection authorities to leverage investments for disaster prevention and preparedness.

The study identified a set of overarching challenges for scaling-up investment in prevention activities⁶⁶¹. These include:

- **Limited funding for disaster risk management initiatives**, with a high focus and share of related funds being oriented towards disaster response;
- **Low political buy-in for investments in prevention**, mitigation and preparedness, exacerbated by the lack of compelling evidence showcasing their benefits;
- **Challenges in accessing and using EU funds** for ex ante disaster risk management investment, including institutional and technical limitations;
- **Insufficient human resources within civil protection authorities dedicated to ex ante disaster risk management interventions**. Given that prevention and disaster risk management policies involve different sectors, authorities and policy fields, civil protection authorities face difficulties in collecting and analysing data and information, limiting their ability to advocate for the necessary resources.

DG ECHO produced **overviews of natural and man-made disaster risks that the EU may face** in 2017 and 2020, providing valuable data on trends, priorities and emerging disaster risks. A minority of stakeholders highlighted the relevance of the overview document of disaster risks in the EU, which

⁶⁵⁵ Surveys of: national authorities (22/48); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (10/18). However, 17/48 national authorities and 10 experts in civil protection did not have a strong opinion.

⁶⁵⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (20)

⁶⁵⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (3); DG ECHO (1). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁶⁵⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (4).

⁶⁵⁹ Surveys of: experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (6/18); national authorities (9/48).

⁶⁶⁰ World Bank, *Understanding the Needs of Civil Protection Agencies and Opportunities for Scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021; World Bank, *Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense*, 2021; World Bank, *Financial Risk and Opportunities to Build Resilience in Europe*, 2021.

⁶⁶¹ World Bank, *Understanding the Needs of Civil Protection Agencies and Opportunities for Scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021.

provides useful insights on cross-border risks⁶⁶². Two EU stakeholders noted that the DG ECHO-commissioned World Bank study was an important tool to help national authorities to provide grounding on further investments in prevention⁶⁶³.

However, a minority of stakeholders underlined that prevention (and, to a certain extent, preparedness) initiatives under the UCPM did not completely meet their needs.

They underlined that the process of compiling the DRM Summary Reports is resource-intensive, expressing concerns about the limited expertise and resources within national civil protection authorities to effectively implement prevention initiatives⁶⁶⁴. While stakeholders agreed that further investments on prevention are needed (see Section 5.1.1.1)⁶⁶⁵, a minority questioned whether the UCPM constitutes the right forum and framework to further invest or collaborate on certain prevention initiatives when synergies could be developed with other EU level or research and innovation funding programmes (e.g. Horizon Europe)⁶⁶⁶.

Stakeholders expressed a need to improve alignment between the development of capacity in the ECPP and rescEU with the results of systematic needs assessments, emphasising the importance of using strategic and analytical assessments to inform decision-making and allocation of resources⁶⁶⁷. They recommended that capacity in both the ECPP and rescEU be consistently selected on the basis of insights and findings from risk mapping and scenario-building activities.

DG ECHO Desk Officers indicated that the flexibility of the UCPM budget was sometimes achieved through budget reshuffles, with negative impacts for prevention and non-operational preparedness activities, which were occasionally deprioritised and their funding reduced or removed (see Section 5.2.2).

For the **PPP**, projects carried out under single-country grants (**Track I**) provided civil protection authorities with a valuable funding source to invest in prevention initiatives⁶⁶⁸. However, scope for improvement was identified, including the tight timeline to apply and implement grants, and lack of clarity on some aspects, such as co-financing rules, procurement, beneficiaries, and eligible activities⁶⁶⁹. These issues suggest that Member States' needs were not consistently addressed. For projects carried out under multi-country grants (**Track II**), the 2021 external evaluation found that projects' objectives, priorities, and activities were generally well aligned with the needs of Member/Participating States and eligible third countries⁶⁷⁰. However, scope for improvement was identified in the priority-setting process, as well as in addressing the lack of an accessible mapping of all EU/UCPM civil protection projects in the field of prevention and preparedness to avoid duplication of efforts at EU level.

⁶⁶² Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (4); international stakeholder (1).

⁶⁶³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (5).

⁶⁶⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (3); EU stakeholder (1). Focus group with: national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID-19.

⁶⁶⁵ European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021, 2022*; EESC, *Consolidating the EU-Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022. Interviews with: DG ECHO (13); EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (6); international stakeholders (2).

⁶⁶⁶ Focus group with: national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. Interviews with: national authorities (6); EU stakeholders (2).

⁶⁶⁷ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (5); experts in civil protection (2). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. European Committee of the Regions, *Preparing for and dealing with crises: strengthening the resilience of the Union, its regions and cities*, 2023.

⁶⁶⁸ World Bank, *Understanding the Needs of Civil Protection Agencies and Opportunities for Scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments*, 2021.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁰ European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021.

Looking ahead, in 2023, DG ECHO transformed⁶⁷¹:

- **Former Track I grants into 'Technical Assistance for Disaster Risk Management'**. These grants will provide national civil protection and other disaster risk management authorities with financial support to develop strategic disaster risk management actions. Grants aim to prepare investments or strengthen the institutional and policy framework for disaster risk management. DG ECHO intends to speed-up the application process and address Member States' specific needs for technical assistance (as opposed to addressing thematic priorities pre-defined by the Commission);
- **Former Track II grants into KAPP**, which merges Prevention and Preparedness, the Knowledge Network, and FSX. Additionally, DG ECHO plans to develop an online hub to map different funding opportunities, thereby increasing coordination with and accessibility of other EU programmes⁶⁷².

While these changes aim to better align activities with national needs and increase coherence among prevention and preparedness projects, it is too early to assess whether these changes will enhance the relevance of the PPP. Similarly, the **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** (adopted after the evaluation period) are perceived as an important and relevant initiative that will increase the visibility of disaster prevention and make disaster risk reduction outputs more accessible⁶⁷³.

On preparedness, UCPM activities between 2017 and 2022 met EU and national needs by strengthening EU and national capacities to prepare and respond to disasters. This was particularly true in the establishment of **rescEU**, which strengthened Union and national preparedness by creating a common European reserve of resources to be mobilised when assistance from the ECPP is unavailable or insufficient. Stakeholders agreed that the development of rescEU was relevant to addressing both EU and national needs, as it contributed to enhanced national preparedness⁶⁷⁴. Under the ECPP, adaptation grants effectively supported national authorities to upgrade and repair their response capacities, resulting in enhanced preparedness of the UCPM⁶⁷⁵.

Although rescEU was established as a last resort tool for when ECPP capacities are insufficient, stakeholders (mainly national authorities) raised concerns about its prioritisation over the ECPP⁶⁷⁶. While an increased focus on rescEU between 2019 and 2022 was normal, given its recent entry into force, civil protection authorities stated that the ECPP should remain the central instrument when it comes to UCPM preparedness⁶⁷⁷. To ensure compliance with the principle of subsidiarity, the purpose and task of rescEU should remain a last resort, while facilitating greater interaction among

⁶⁷¹ European Commission, *Note to DG ECHO management: Prevention and Preparedness Programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme*, 2022.

⁶⁷² Where relevant, the evaluation team mentions activities taking place beyond the evaluation period where they (will/may) have an impact on evaluation findings.

⁶⁷³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (5); international stakeholders (2); national authorities (5). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (11/14); national authorities (31/48).

⁶⁷⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (11); national authorities (24); international stakeholders (6); EU stakeholders (11); experts in civil protection (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (12/12); national authorities (36/46). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

⁶⁷⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (9).

⁶⁷⁶ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023; DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); national civil protection authorities (8).

⁶⁷⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (8); DG ECHO (3). Focus group with DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

affected Member States⁶⁷⁸. A minority of stakeholders reported that the balance between ECPP and rescEU is maintained⁶⁷⁹, or that rescEU could be grown further⁶⁸⁰.

Between 2017 and 2022, the UCPM's **financial support for transport and assistance** gained in prominence and use, largely due to the increased number of offers of assistance in response to climate-related events, COVID-19 and, from the start of 2022, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. However, the procedures for co-financing transport costs were not adapted to the increasing number of operations coordinated and co-financed by the ERCC, leading to delays in processing transport and operations grants. There were 50 grants and three transport service order forms processed in 2019, compared to 345 grants and 131 transport service order forms in 2022. Beneficiaries experienced delays in processing co-financing of their operations and perceived the system as excessively bureaucratic and cumbersome⁶⁸¹. Stakeholders advocated for an increase in the 75% co-financing rate for the transport and operation of ECPP modules⁶⁸² and for financial support to cover administrative, VAT, and back-office costs within rescEU grants⁶⁸³.

The **Training and Exercises Programme** adequately addressed civil protection needs at national and EU level⁶⁸⁴. A majority of stakeholders involved in the Programme agreed that the number of participants was adequate, that participants had the right set of skills and experience, and that experts trained were more likely to be deployed⁶⁸⁵. However, evidence suggests that the profile of participants was not always adequate, due to insufficient information about the training content prior to the training or to language barriers (see Section 5.1.2)⁶⁸⁶.

Stakeholders indicated that participants were generally satisfied with the content of the activities carried out during online and in-person training, table-top exercises and EU MODEX⁶⁸⁷, as well as the methodology⁶⁸⁸ and usefulness of learning⁶⁸⁹.

However, a minority indicated that **some national training needs remained unmet**⁶⁹⁰, including the practical use of CECIS, aerial coordination and evacuation procedures, geological risks, **safety and security** within UCPM deployments, and better awareness of humanitarian aid actors (see Section 5.4.3). Although a security course is provided as part of the UCPM Training Programme, UCPM activations in high-risk locations revealed the need to emphasise this aspect. For instance, the 2022 UCPM activation in Pakistan highlighted a need to focus on safety and security aspects for team

⁶⁷⁸ 'The new reserve is aimed at coordinating, supporting and supplementing the action of Member States, rather than giving the EU its own resources or new competences' (European Committee of the Regions, *Opinion on the review of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2018). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities.

⁶⁷⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (1).

⁶⁸⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholders (1). European Committee of the Regions, *Preparing for and dealing with crises: strengthening the resilience of the Union, its regions and cities*, 2023.

⁶⁸¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); national authorities (4).

⁶⁸² Focus group with: national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. Interviews with: national authorities (2); DG ECHO (3); experts in civil protection (1). Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation 2020-2022*, 2023.

⁶⁸³ Focus group with: national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (9). Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation 2020-2022*, 2023.

⁶⁸⁴ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (24/32 and 31/34, respectively).

⁶⁸⁵ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (33/36, 24/35 and 23/34, respectively).

⁶⁸⁶ Progress reports and final reports on the various training in the period.

⁶⁸⁷ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (31/36, 39/40, 21/25 and 23/27, respectively).

⁶⁸⁸ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – online training (28/36), in-person training (38/40), table-top exercises (20/25), EU MODEX (23/27).

⁶⁸⁹ Surveys of: training and Exercises Programme stakeholders – online training (30/35), in-person training (37/38), table-top exercises (20/24), EU MODEX (22/25).

⁶⁹⁰ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (11/33). Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (3).

members deployed in UCPM missions⁶⁹¹. Similarly, during the 2021 UCPM activation in Haiti, there was a lack of physical security awareness and communication on the security situation⁶⁹². However, there is no evidence that the security of civil protection personnel was compromised⁶⁹³.

Evidence suggests a low deployment rate among the total number of experts trained⁶⁹⁴ and many deployed experts did not undergo all necessary training before being deployed⁶⁹⁵. Looking ahead, the new Training and Exercises Programme will introduce a deployable training path, targeting experts to be deployed. In parallel, it will introduce a set of non-deployable courses for civil protection and disaster risk management actors who hold a support function and are not expected to be deployed. This curriculum change is expected to better meet participants' expectations and needs⁶⁹⁶. Stakeholders noted that the procedure for the **nomination of experts** for UCPM deployments could be improved to better meet EU and national needs. DG ECHO stakeholders underlined that the availability and diversity of experts was not always assured because of insufficient nominations by national authorities⁶⁹⁷. However, a minority reported that experts proposed by Member States were not always nominated and criticised the lack of transparency in the nomination procedure, as well as inadequate gender balance⁶⁹⁸.

Evidence also shows that during the period evaluated, the following UCPM activities effectively met national needs, albeit with margins for further improving their offer:

- **EWS.** Stakeholders underlined the relevance of developing and enhancing EWS⁶⁹⁹. National stakeholders from Member and Participating States reported that while EU-level EWS are not their primary tool, they effectively complement national tools⁷⁰⁰. During the evaluation period, EWS were systematically improved to help their contribution to enhancing preparedness. They could, however, be more effective (see Section 5.1.1.2);
- The **host nation support** guidelines were seen as highly relevant. Stakeholders underlined their value as an important tool to coordinate relief efforts⁷⁰¹. Some national authorities reported using the UCPM's guidelines to develop their own national guidelines and coordinate response efforts under UCPM activations or bilateral agreements⁷⁰². However,

⁶⁹¹ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁶⁹² European Commission, *Outcome of the Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

⁶⁹³ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation 2020-2022*, 2023.

⁶⁹⁴ European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (2); professional organisations (1); national authority (1). See Annex 7 for coherence of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁶⁹⁵ European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (2); professional organisations (1); national authority (1). See Annex 7 for coherence of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁶⁹⁶ See Annex 7 for case study on coherence of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁶⁹⁷ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *Outcome document. Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Outcome document. Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 2017 UCPM activations*, 2018; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁶⁹⁸ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*. Interviews with: professional organisation (1); national authority (1); experts in civil protection (2).

⁶⁹⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (16); experts in civil protection (3); DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (3); international stakeholders (2). See Annex 7 for case studies on floods and on forest fires.

⁷⁰⁰ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers - Member States (6/7), Participating States (6/7), third countries (3/7); national authorities (38/38); DG ECHO (3/24). Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (16). See Annex 7 for case study on floods.

⁷⁰¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (2); national authorities (18). European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2020 UCPM activations*, 2021.

⁷⁰² Interviews with: international stakeholders (1); national authorities (4).

stakeholders agreed that the guidelines could benefit from an update and expansion, for example by including best practices⁷⁰³. The guidelines are due to be updated in 2023⁷⁰⁴;

- The limited data available suggest that **advisory missions** carried out during the period evaluated addressed national needs, primarily in third countries⁷⁰⁵. They start with a preparatory phase in which DG ECHO and the requesting country define the needs, scope, and objectives of the mission so as to tailor it to the country's needs;
- **Peer Review Programme** was seen as particularly relevant to national authorities⁷⁰⁶. Peer reviews result in tailored short, medium, and long-term recommendations, designed to improve a country's disaster risk management and civil protection systems. In North Macedonia, the peer review output became an important reference document, as it was comprehensive, identified gaps in their system and provided practical suggestions⁷⁰⁷.

On forest fires, national authorities expressed their appreciation that Lessons Learnt Meetings were held in Member States rather than Brussels, which they said better addressed the specific needs of Member and Participating States⁷⁰⁸.

Opportunities to improve the relevance of **CECIS** were identified, as the platform did not fully meet EU and national needs. Despite facilitating real-time exchanges between competent national authorities and contact points designated by Member States, Participating States and the ERCC, its current functionalities are limited⁷⁰⁹. For instance:

- It does not allow an overview of the available capacities per type (e.g. available aerial forest fight capacities), but only by level of commitment (e.g. number of each capacity type under rescEU or the ECPP);
- Given the lack of a secured Trans-European Services for Telematics between Administrations (sTESTA), the majority of Participating States (and all third countries) do not have access to CECIS. This creates additional workload for the ERCC in uploading email RfA and offers from these countries.

CECIS is currently being updated and improved, with a new version, CECIS 2.0, due. One solution envisioned for CECIS 2.0 is to include the development 'CECIS Lite', allowing users to access the CECIS portal through different tools and avoid the complications of sTESTA. The use of CECIS Lite would be relevant for Participating States without access to sTESTA, experts deployed on UCPM missions, and other organisations in Member and Participating States to which civil protection authorities would like to provide access to CECIS (e.g. Ministries of Health or Foreign Affairs)⁷¹⁰.

Stakeholders agreed that UCPM activities in the field of **response** addressed Member, Participating States and third countries' needs⁷¹¹. RfA and offers of assets were tailored to the requesting State's needs. On disaster types, a majority of DG ECHO Desk Officers indicated that UCPM activities were

⁷⁰³ Interviews with: national authorities (5); DG ECHO (3). European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

⁷⁰⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁷⁰⁵ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (6/7); national authorities (22/35). European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 24/25 April 2023*. See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

⁷⁰⁶ Surveys of: national authorities (20/35). Interviews with: national authorities (9); experts in civil protection (1).

⁷⁰⁷ Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 9 December 2022.

⁷⁰⁸ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

⁷⁰⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (6); national authorities (6). European Commission, *Study on the Development of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre ERCC*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁷¹⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁷¹¹ Interviews with: national authorities (20); DG ECHO (9); EU stakeholders (6); experts in civil protection (6). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

effective in supporting national authorities to address meteorological and geo-physical disasters, pandemics, CBRN accidents, marine events, other man-made disasters, and multi-hazard events⁷¹².

Challenges were identified in the **KPIs** on the adequacy and speed of response, which are deemed insufficient to accurately monitor the UCPM's performance given the evolving risk landscape (see Section 5.1.1.3). For instance, the KPIs do not distinguish between disaster types, preventing a more accurate evaluation of the UCPM's performance over time (see Sections 5.1 and 5.2) and failing to meet EU and national needs⁷¹³. Ensuring accurate monitoring of the UCPM's performance on response activities is important for Member and Participating States, given the potential to develop tailored response strategies depending on the crisis.

Third countries account for around two-thirds of UCPM activations, showcasing the importance of the **UCPM's external dimension** and its international relevance in response activities. Although the UCPM provides support both within and outside the EU, it was initially conceived as an instrument for intra-EU solidarity, and a minority of stakeholders remain cautious about the increased involvement of the UCPM in third countries, noting the need for more clarity on the future role of the UCPM⁷¹⁴. This was also linked to concerns about the future sustainability of the UCPM, given the expanding complexity and frequency of disasters within and outside the EU (see Section 5.3.2)⁷¹⁵.

Judgement criterion:

- JC7.4. The UCPM's activities were relevant to the European Commission's priorities for 2023-2024

Overall, the UCPM activities implemented during the evaluation period were relevant to several of the **European Commission's legislative priorities for 2023 and 2024** that touch directly or indirectly on civil protection and contingent fields⁷¹⁶. These include:

- **European Green Deal.** The European Commission plans to advance the proposals for a European Green Deal, notably the 'Fit for 55' package. This will contribute to EU leadership in the global fight against climate change. Between 2017 and 2022, several activities were implemented to ensure that climate change considerations were considered within the UCPM framework. Examples included the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines, which advise Member States to identify climate change impacts and adaptation measures in their DRM Summary Reports. Similarly, the recently introduced Union Disaster Resilience Goals integrate climate change considerations within the UCPM framework. They recognise that disaster resilience should be sustainable, paying special attention to minimising the environmental impact of civil protection operations⁷¹⁷. However, research suggests that more can be done to improve the environmental sustainability of the UCPM, including collecting environmental footprint data, promoting the purchase of greening vehicles at

⁷¹² Surveys of: national authorities (33/34); national authorities (31/34); national authorities (31/34); national authorities (18/34); national authorities (30/34); national authorities (23/32); national authorities (19/33).

⁷¹³ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 2022 UCPM activations on 24/25 April 2023*. Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁷¹⁴ European Commission, *Minutes from the Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*. Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (2); DG ECHO (1).

⁷¹⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (3); DG ECHO (7); EU stakeholders (1). Surveys of: national authorities (1). EESC, *Consolidating the EU-Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires and on COVID-19 repatriations/consular services. European Commission, *Study on the Development of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre ERCC*, 2023; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁷¹⁶ European Commission, *Joint Declaration of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. EU Legislative Priorities for 2023 and 2024*, 2022.

⁷¹⁷ European Commission, *Recommendation of 8 February 2023 on Union Disaster Resilience Goals 2023/C 56/01*, 2023.

national level, and increasing the visibility of good green practices after UCPM deployments (see Section 5.4.3)⁷¹⁸;

- **Strengthen the single market, including by working on the Single Market Emergency Instrument.** In 2022, the European Commission proposed a Single Market Emergency Instrument (SMEI), intended to protect the functioning of supply chains and the free movement of persons, goods and services when these are affected by emergencies. The impact assessment report on the Regulation on a Single Market Emergency refers to the UCPM as an EU instrument ‘for general crisis response’⁷¹⁹. The SMEI will complement other EU instruments for crisis management, such as the UCPM⁷²⁰;
- **Continue cooperation with candidate countries** in the Western Balkans, along with Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, in view of their future accession to the Union. Overall, the UCPM was also relevant to the EU’s priority to continue cooperation with EU Neighbouring countries. As of June 2023, the UCPM counts nine Participating States⁷²¹, with Albania and Bosnia Herzegovina joining in 2022, and Ukraine in 2023. Regional cooperation with the Western Balkans and the Southern Neighbourhood (non-UCPM Participating States) is also ensured through the IPA regional programmes and Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and man-made Disasters (PPRD) (see Section 5.4.3)⁷²²;
- Beyond the work falling under the ordinary legislative procedure, the European Commission declared its commitment to **stand by Ukraine** and tackle the impact of Russia’s war of aggression⁷²³. UCPM activations responded to the Ukrainian crisis between 2021 and 2022, alongside the private donation initiative overseen by DG ECHO to support response activities. The development of energy and CBRN rescEU capacities indicate that the UCPM activities were relevant for this EU priority.

⁷¹⁸ European Commission, *Study on greening the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2023.

⁷¹⁹ European Commission, Impact Assessment Report for a Single Market Emergency Instrument, Staff Working Document, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=SWD%3A2022%3A289%3AFIN>

⁷²⁰ Ibid. Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁷²¹ Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Türkiye, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine.

⁷²² Focus group with: national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁷²³ European Commission, *Joint Declaration of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. EU Legislative Priorities for 2023 and 2024*, 2022.

5.3.2 EQ8: Is the UCPM sufficiently flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground (including unanticipated events) and emerging developments in the field of civil protection?

Key findings

- The UCPM was sufficiently flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground, including unanticipated events. Its cooperation with the private sector and activations in response to the Ukrainian crisis and to the COVID-19 pandemic showed the flexibility and adaptability of the UCPM to respond to unexpected emergencies and changing demands. However, DG ECHO's organisational set-up is only partially appropriate to support Member and Participating States and address new needs. Evidence suggests that DG ECHO's organisational structure did not ensure sufficient coordination among units working on different UCPM pillars;
- The UCPM integrated a focus on identifying ways to address emerging needs and developments in its activities, with scientific and technological research and development used to explore emerging issues. For instance, the ERCC 2.0 initiative provided the ERCC with the tools to better anticipate events and act as a cross-sectoral hub;
- There are some concerns that the UCPM might not have the flexibility and adaptability needed to address new and emerging needs and developments stemming from an increasingly complex threat and risk landscape. Stakeholders highlighted the future sustainability of the UCPM and the ERCC, in particular, and their ability to cope with crises and emergencies with increasing complexity, scope and frequency (such as climate change). Some noted the need to better define the role of the UCPM in third countries and during man-made disasters. This suggests that a wider discussion about the EU crisis management framework might be useful, particularly the degree to which it is adequate to withstand future challenges and threats in its current set-up.

Judgement criteria:

- JC8.1: New and emerging needs (including: developments in drivers (e.g. climate breakdown), (un)anticipated needs, high impact low probability events Hi-LO (e.g. COVID-19 crisis, Russia's war against Ukraine)) and emerging developments (e.g. scientific and technological research) in the field of civil protection had, and may have in the future, an impact on the UCPM;
- JC8.2: The UCPM's objectives and activities are appropriate to address new and emerging needs;
- JC8.3: Emerging developments (e.g. scientific and technological research and development that has become available since the creation of the UCPM) were taken on board and integrated into its functioning and activities;
- JC8.4: DG ECHO's organisational set up and capacity in the field of the UCPM is appropriate to support Member and Participating States to address the new and emerging needs and developments identified;
- JC8.5: Internal/external factors enabling/inhibiting the UCPM's ability adapt to new needs and developments were identified;
- JC7.4 All current and expected future needs within the scope of the UCPM are adequately addressed.

This subsection discusses the extent to which the UCPM had the necessary flexibility during the evaluation period to adapt to new and emerging needs and developments on the ground. It also discusses whether DG ECHO's organisational set-up effectively supported Member and Participating States.

It then explores the factors that might hinder/enable the flexibility and adaptability of the UCPM beyond the period evaluated. More specifically, it assesses the extent to which the UCPM is perceived as able to incorporate emerging needs and developments.

5.3.2.1 Flexibility and adaptability of the UCPM during 2017-2022

Evidence suggests that the UCPM was sufficiently flexible to adapt to evolving needs and developments during the evaluation period⁷²⁴. National authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities agreed that the UCPM prevention⁷²⁵, preparedness⁷²⁶, and response⁷²⁷ activities could to adapt to emerging needs and developments on the ground. DG ECHO stakeholders also agreed⁷²⁸, although around 34% of DG ECHO Desk Officers did not state an opinion⁷²⁹.

On **prevention**, the 2021 evaluation of the **PPP** found that the projects implemented were suitable to address some of the emerging needs identified⁷³⁰. Facilitating factors included:

- DG ECHO's formulation of UCPM's general and specific objectives when drafting calls for proposals enabled close alignment between projects and PPP objectives;
- Ad hoc consultations with several DG ECHO units and EU institution stakeholders at priority-setting stage;
- Merging the prevention and preparedness calls for proposals avoided duplication of effort and made calls easier to monitor.

There is limited evidence on the flexibility of other prevention activities, including integration of National Risk Assessments into the overview document of disaster risks in the EU and the Union Disaster Resilience Goals. The **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** aim to address emerging needs and developments⁷³¹ by promoting an approach that considers interdependencies between multiple risks, the impacts of climate change, and coherence among relevant policy sectors⁷³². It remains too early to assess the extent to which they have been successful in doing so.

For **preparedness** activities, the establishment of the **rescEU** reserve was highlighted as a prime example of the UCPM's flexibility and ability to maintain its relevance despite changing requirements and pressures⁷³³. The diversity of RfA during the evaluation period prompted a flexible approach to capability development, including the development of rescEU capacities as varied as medical stockpiles, MEDEVAC, aerial forest firefighting, emergency shelters, and energy supply capacities. While this 'adapt as we fight' approach⁷³⁴ proved the flexibility of the UCPM, stakeholders raised

⁷²⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (15); EU stakeholders (16); experts in civil protection (3); national authorities (22); professional organisations (2).

⁷²⁵ Surveys of: national authorities (39/45); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (11/17).

⁷²⁶ Surveys of: national authorities (34/46); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (10/16).

⁷²⁷ Surveys of: national authorities (38/46); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (9/15).

⁷²⁸ Surveys of: DG ECHO - prevention (17/31), preparedness (18/30), response (19/29).

⁷²⁹ Surveys of: DG ECHO - prevention (11/31), preparedness (12/30), response (9/29).

⁷³⁰ European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021.

⁷³¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (4); national authorities (3).

⁷³² European Commission, *Recommendation of 8 February 2023 on Union Disaster Resilience Goals 2023/C56/01*, 2023.

⁷³³ See Annex 7 for case studies on floods, on forest fires, and on COVID-19. Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023.

⁷³⁴ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

concerns about the development of capacities within rescEU and the ECPP, noting that the process seemed to be steered by existing crises rather than informed by a scientific or needs-assessment-based approach (see Section 5.3.1 and Section 5.1.1.2)⁷³⁵. During COVID-19, DG ECHO ensured that capacities continued to be certified by introducing the possibility to conduct some certification steps online, and also deploying some capacities before being registered, where necessary. **Evidence shows that the Training and Exercises⁷³⁶ and EoE Programmes were flexible to adapt to emerging needs and requirements.** For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, some training courses and exercises were conducted remotely⁷³⁷. Stakeholders generally agreed that emerging training needs were covered by the UCPM training courses and exercises⁷³⁸. The Training and Exercises Programme aimed to incorporate emerging developments in its activities, with stakeholders expressing positive views on the scenario-building exercises⁷³⁹. However, suggested improvements included the potential to incorporate more innovative solutions to training and exercise activities (e.g. a minority of stakeholders suggested the use of virtual or augmented reality) and ensuring that exercises better represent real-life situations and align with national needs (e.g. the use of virtual reality in the discussion-based exercise on marine pollution in 2023)⁷⁴⁰. Finally, the EoE Programme was valuable in responding to changing needs due to the different areas of expertise covered by the exchanges⁷⁴¹.

EWS incorporated a strong focus on emerging needs and developments. They built on recommendations in the 2017 interim evaluation of the UCPM and EWS expert group meetings to: i) incorporate more scientific expertise; ii) build closer synergies between systems; and iii) improve functionalities⁷⁴² (see Section 5.1.1.2). However, evidence an ongoing need to better integrate EU and national level EWS⁷⁴³.

Stakeholders did not comment on the flexibility of the UCPM in relation to the recently established **Knowledge Network**. Evidence suggests that the Knowledge Network has the potential to incorporate emerging needs and developments within the UCPM by bringing together different stakeholders to ensure cross-sectoral cooperation and ensure links with the scientific community⁷⁴⁴.

The number of UCPM activations grew substantially during the evaluation period, from 32 in 2017 to 232 in 2022⁷⁴⁵. The nature of emergencies prompting activation also changed and evolved. Between 2017 and 2018, natural events accounted for the largest share of annual activations (60%). However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the more recent monkeypox outbreak, health emergencies accounted for a substantially larger share of activations between 2020 and 2022. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a surge in UCPM multi-hazard⁷⁴⁶ activations, as countries sought

⁷³⁵ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (5); experts in civil protection (2). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. European Committee of the Regions, *Preparing for and dealing with crises: strengthening the resilience of the Union, its regions and cities*, 2023.

⁷³⁶ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

⁷³⁷ Training Consortium, *UCPM Training Programme 18th cycle. UCPM Introduction Course (CMI)*, 2021; European Commission, *Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

⁷³⁸ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (20/24).

⁷³⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (5). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – Member States (9), Participating States (9).

⁷⁴⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (2); national authority (1); professional organisations (2). See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁷⁴¹ THW, *'Exchange of Experts in civil Protection Programme*, 2018. Interviews with: professional organisation (1).

⁷⁴² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *Early Warning System Meeting Minutes*, 2018, 2020, 2022. –

⁷⁴³ See Annex 7 for case study on floods. Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); national authorities (2); experts in civil protection (1); EU stakeholders (1).

⁷⁴⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (5); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (3); national authorities (6).

⁷⁴⁵ There were 20 UCPM activations in 2018 and in 2019.

⁷⁴⁶ The multi-hazard category was introduced as a new event type in the CECIS system to capture the complexity when two or more hazards interact with one another and create one disaster event.

assistance with citizen repatriation. 2022 was marked by 126 RfA (~50% of activations for this year) in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Accordingly, while the average annual number of natural events leading to a UCPM activation remained constant between 2017-2022, they accounted for only one-quarter of total activations between 2020 and 2022, compared to 60% in previous years. The UCPM needed to respond to i) disasters previously not confronted, in countries that did not traditionally activate the UCPM and had no experience with some disasters (e.g. Sweden), ii) an increased number of disasters occurring yearly; and iii) disasters occurring simultaneously (e.g. responding to the earthquake in Croatia at the same time as wider COVID-19 response efforts). This proved the flexibility of UCPM's response activities.

The UCPM showed its ability to adapt to new demands and challenges of increasing volume, complexity and scope. Challenges in recent years included natural disasters, Hi-Lo events, a surge in man-made disasters and a heightened occurrence of complex emergencies. Stakeholders noted that the UCPM maintained a high level of quality of response and significant adaptability⁷⁴⁷, particularly DG ECHO's cooperation with the private sector⁷⁴⁸ and activations in response to the unfolding of the war against Ukraine⁷⁴⁹ and the COVID-19 pandemic⁷⁵⁰. Although these unprecedented crises implied major challenges for the UCPM, they also prompted the Mechanism to evolve (see Section 5.1.3).

The flexibility and adaptability of modules to changing circumstances was recognised as a best practice during UCPM deployments. For example, water purification modules supported the rehabilitation of affected structures⁷⁵¹. The flexibility, adaptability, and scalability of TAST during UCPM deployments was similarly regarded as a good practice⁷⁵².

Stakeholders noted that financing procedures were not sufficiently flexible and offered limited opportunities for adaptation to different crises situations⁷⁵³. For example, in the response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, transport co-financing ensured that only 75% of the cost of transport from the logistics hubs in Romania, Slovakia, and Poland to Ukraine was co-financed by ECHO, placing a high burden on the Member States hosting those hubs⁷⁵⁴. However, in the second half of 2023, the Commission agreed to cover 100% of pooled assistance going from the logistical hubs to Ukraine, leading to increased offers of assistance from UCPM Member and Participating States and increased use of logistical hubs⁷⁵⁵.

During the evaluation period, the increased frequency, scope and complexity of **unexpected emergencies highlighted the need to improve cross-sectoral coordination, as well as strategic**

⁷⁴⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (9); national authorities (3); international organisations (3). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine, 2022*; Kantar, *'Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023. See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires and on Ukrainian response.*

⁷⁴⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (4); national authority (1); European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme annual meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *'UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's war on Ukraine, 2022.*

⁷⁴⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (1); DG ECHO (6); EU stakeholders (6).

⁷⁵⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (10); DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (4). European Commission, *'Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe, 2023.*

⁷⁵¹ European Commission, *'Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations', 2022*; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique, 2019*; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *'Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations, 2022.*

⁷⁵² European Commission, *'Lessons and good practices identified from TAST deployments, 2019.*

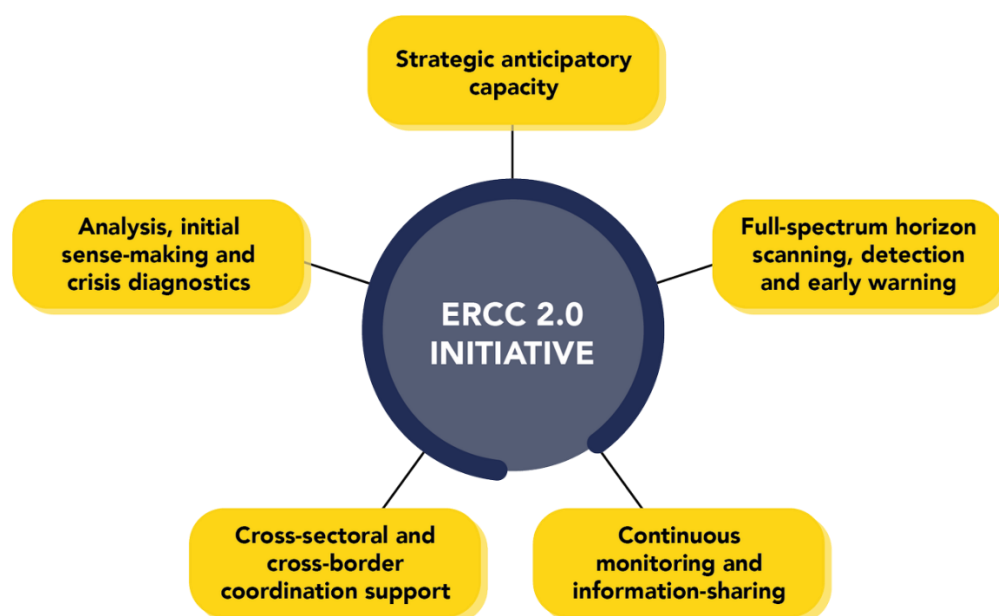
⁷⁵³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (6); EU stakeholders (1). Kantar, *'Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023. Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.*

⁷⁵⁴ Kantar, *'Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023.*

⁷⁵⁵ Feedback from ISG.

anticipatory capacity, including through foresight and contingency planning⁷⁵⁶. To address these needs, in 2021, DG ECHO launched the **ERCC 2.0 initiative**. This comprises several work strands aimed at strengthening the understanding of risks to which Europe will be exposed in the medium and long-term. It seeks to strengthen the ERCC's role as an operational hub and enhance its anticipatory capacity (see Figure 67).

Figure 67. ERCC 2.0 initiative



Source: ICF elaboration⁷⁵⁷.

More specifically, the proposed main activities of the ERCC 2.0 initiative include:

- Establishing a multi-hazard alert dashboard – the **Global Situation System**;
- Developing a set of **foreseeable worst-case scenarios** that Europe may face in the decades to come;
- Developing a **Scientific and Technical Advisory Facility (STAF)** to provide the ERCC with advisory services on emergency services, operational preparedness services, and strategic anticipation. These services are based on existing capacities within the European Commission (such as DG JRC, DG RTD), and scientific partnership (European Natural Hazard Scientific Partnership, or 'Aristotle').

The ERCC 2.0 initiative depends on a coordinated decision to develop the ERCC as a true cross-sectoral hub, providing it with the necessary tools to anticipate events and develop foresight

⁷⁵⁶ European Commission, 'Strategic Crisis Management in the EU, 2022; European Commission, 'UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting: Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe, 2022; European Commission, 'UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting: Preliminary lessons from Russia's war on Ukraine, 2022; European Commission, 'Outcome of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations, 2020; European Commission, 'Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM Activations, 2022; European Commission, 'Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2020 UCPM activations, 2021. European Commission, Minutes from the Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 24/25 April 2023; European Commission, 'Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe, 2023; Kantar, Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022, 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (16); EU stakeholders (12); national authorities (6); international stakeholder (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO (11). '''

⁷⁵⁷ European Commission, 'Minutes of the Early Warning Systems Expert Group Meeting, 2022; European Commission, 'Enhancing foresight capacity of the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre, 2023.

capabilities for increased situational awareness and to identify emerging capacity gaps (such as rescEU CBRN, shelter, energy)⁷⁵⁸.

The evidence suggests that DG ECHO's organisational set up is somewhat appropriate to support Member and Participating States and address new needs. However, it did not ensure sufficient coordination among units working on different UCPM pillars.

DG ECHO Desk Officers indicated that the internal reorganisation somewhat hindered coordination across UCPM activities⁷⁵⁹. More specifically, the division between Directorate A (emergency management and rescEU) and Directorate B (disaster preparedness and prevention) was not conducive to coherence between response activities and those related to prevention and preparedness (see Section 5.4.1). Other DG ECHO stakeholders indicated that the organisational set-up was not sufficiently flexible to adapt to emerging needs and developments beyond the evaluation period. Concerns were raised about governance and the adequacy of the human and financial resources allocated⁷⁶⁰.

Conversely, national authorities and experts in civil protection believed that the DG ECHO organisational set-up was sufficiently flexible to adapt to emerging needs and developments after 2022⁷⁶¹. They also felt positively about their communication with DG ECHO⁷⁶².

Overall, DG ECHO's organisational set-up appears somewhat appropriate to support national needs, albeit with room for improvement in its structure to enhance internal coherence among UCPM activities across the three pillars (see Section 5.4.1).

5.3.2.2 Flexibility and adaptability of the UCPM beyond the evaluation period

Beyond the period evaluated, the UCPM will need to continue to address new and emerging needs and developments. These will be shaped by the consequences of **climate change**, a threat multiplier expected to affect the **frequency and severity** of natural disasters, with political, sociological and economic repercussions⁷⁶³. Man-made disasters will exacerbate the disaster risk landscape, adding layers of complexity.

Future emergencies are expected to become increasingly **complex** and multi-faceted and to have cross-sectoral or cascading effects. **UCPM will need to face more complex emergencies and offer access to:**

- **Improved cross-sectoral cooperation and crisis management**⁷⁶⁴. Complex emergencies require a holistic approach, with the involvement of multiple actors and sectors, all of which need to coordinate to prevent, prepare and respond to disasters at EU and national level. Both natural and man-made disasters will require the UCPM to effectively coordinate its activities with a variety of sectors and related actors;

⁷⁵⁸ European Commission, 'UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting: preliminary lessons from Russia's war on Ukraine, 2022.

⁷⁵⁹ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (10). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (3). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁷⁶⁰ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (12/29), 7/29 respondents agreed that DG ECHO organisational set-up was sufficiently flexible to adapt to emerging needs and developments, and 10/29 neither agreed nor disagreed.

⁷⁶¹ Surveys of: national authorities (24/45); experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities (6/14).

⁷⁶² Interviews with: national authorities (20).

⁷⁶³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (9); EU stakeholders (8); national authorities (11). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (11/21); national authorities (12/25).

⁷⁶⁴ European Commission, *Strategic Crisis Management in the EU*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting: Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting: Preliminary lessons from Russia's war on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Outcome of the Lessons Learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM Activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2020 UCPM activations*, 2021; European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023; European Commission, *Minutes from the Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 24/25 April 2023*. Interviews with: DG ECHO (16); EU stakeholders (12); DG ECHO (16); national authorities (6); international stakeholder (1). Surveys of: DG ECHO (11/21). See Annex 7 for case study on floods.

- **Enhanced resilience and strategic foresight capabilities**⁷⁶⁵. Risk-based crisis management should be complemented with a resilience-oriented crisis management approach that fully acknowledges the challenges associated with large-scale, transboundary and complex systemic interdependencies. The assessment of complex emergencies can also benefit from foresight and horizon scanning, which can help to mitigate the risk of missing early warnings;
- **An approach grounded in scientific knowledge** and facilitating its operationalisation, including through the use of new technologies. The UCPM should strive to increase access and use of scientific knowledge and results by Member and Participating States. The importance of access to **technical and scientific experts** during UCPM deployments was noted as an emerging need⁷⁶⁶;
- **Efficient and secure information management systems**. Given the increased complexity and frequency of disasters, there remains a need to improve information management systems, including handling classified information and managing communications and public messaging⁷⁶⁷;
- Other emerging needs include the importance of scaling-up **investments in prevention** and **raise awareness on disaster risks** among the general public⁷⁶⁸. Public risk awareness and preparedness raising is recognised as an important progress area for civil protection – the Union Disaster Resilience Goals call on Member States to strengthen civil protection authorities' capacities to develop preventive action (Goal 1). However, cross-sector cooperation and information exchange for reporting (e.g. compiling DRM Summary Reports) can be cumbersome for civil protection authorities (see Section 5.3.1). While cross-sector cooperation is acknowledged as central to improved risk assessment and civil protection action, the feasibility of involvement of other sectors is highly contingent on the institutional set-up of civil protection in a given country. Some stakeholders considered that non-civil protection authorities and their funding frameworks would be better placed to lead certain sectoral risk assessments or prevention investment initiatives⁷⁶⁹.

Figure 68 presents a non-exhaustive overview of the main disaster types that triggered UCPM activations during the evaluation period, along with external factors/drivers (climate change, conflicts, and associated migratory flows) that have had, and will continue to have, an impact on the UCPM.

⁷⁶⁵ European Commission, *Scientific Advice Mechanism: Scientific Advice to European Policy in a Complex World*, 2019; European Commission, *Strategic crisis management in the EU*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Study on the Development of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre ERCC*, 2023; European Commission, *7th European Civil Protection Forum. Final Report*, 2022. Interviews with: DG ECHO (6); EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (2).

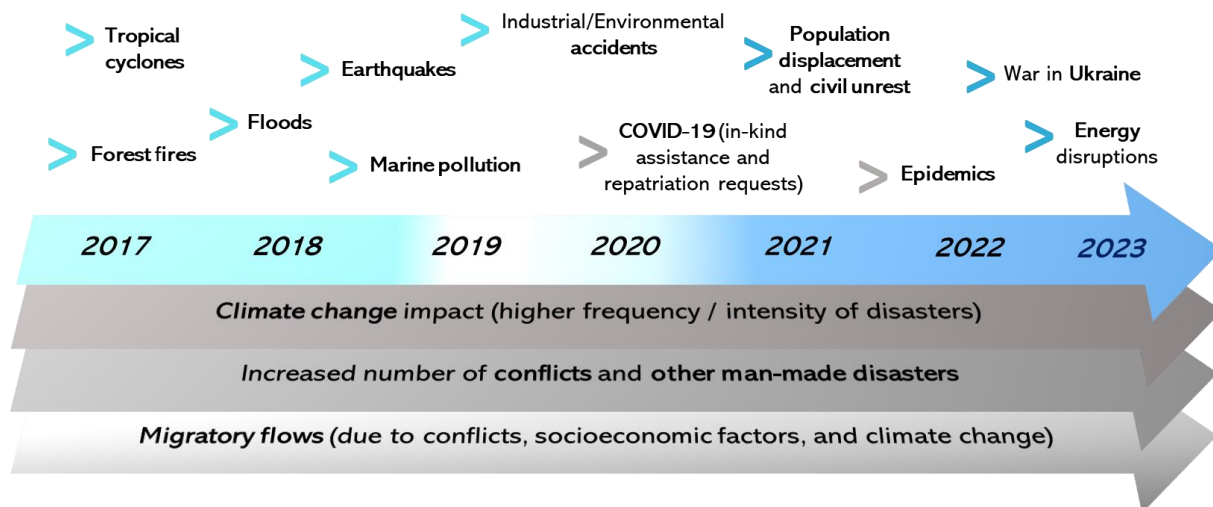
⁷⁶⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (3); International stakeholders (3); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (4). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (10/21). European Commission, *7th European Civil Protection Forum. Final Report*, 2022; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting: Lessons identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2021; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Early Warning System Expert Group. Meeting Minutes*, 2019; European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2020 UCPM activations*, 2021. European Commission, *Minutes of the Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 24/25 April 2023*. See Annex 7 for case Study on COVID-19.

⁷⁶⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (2). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. European Commission, *Study on the Development of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre ERCC*, 2023; European Commission, *Enhancing foresight capacity of the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre*, 2023.

⁷⁶⁸ See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires and on COVID-19. Interviews with: DG ECHO (5); national authorities (6); EU stakeholders (3). European Commission, *7th European Civil Protection Forum. Final Report*, 2022; World Bank, *Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense*, 2021; World Bank, *Financial Risk and Opportunities to Build Resilience in Europe*, 2021.

⁷⁶⁹ Focus group with: national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. Interviews with: national authorities (6); EU stakeholders (2).

Figure 68. Evolving risk landscape: natural disasters, man-made disasters, external factors



Source: ICF elaboration.

According to stakeholders, the UCPM objectives⁷⁷⁰, as well as its prevention⁷⁷¹, preparedness⁷⁷² and response activities⁷⁷³ are sufficiently flexible to adapt to the emerging needs and developments forecast beyond the evaluation period.

However, concerns were raised about the sustainability of the UCPM's – particularly the ERCC's – ability to cope with future emergencies. The ERCC is already facing an increase in workload due to the widening of its mandate and the increasing frequency, scope and complexity of crises within and outside the EU (see Section 5.1.3). While the ERCC is well equipped and ready to respond to more circumscribed events and disasters (floods, earthquakes, extreme weather events), there are concerns that it may not have all the capacities required to address multiple and concurrent complex crises affecting different regions of Europe and the globe⁷⁷⁴. For example, according to the EESC, the UCPM 'is no longer sufficiently sized to respond to natural disasters linked to climate change in terms of prevention, warning, planning, forecasting, and operational capacity'⁷⁷⁵. **The UCPM's ability to continue to respond to large-scale, complex and protracted crises is limited by its human resources capabilities, its co-financing set-up, IT systems, staff turnover, and access to specific transport resources⁷⁷⁶.**

While the flexibility and adaptability of the UCPM are recognised, some capacities and mechanisms would benefit from strengthening, with a view to tackling current and future challenges.

Stakeholders agreed that **cross-sectoral cooperation** is needed to prevent, prepare and respond to disasters, which requires coordination with sectors beyond the civil protection field. At EU level, where civil protection is a support competence, DG ECHO needs to regularly and meaningfully

⁷⁷⁰ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (15/29); national authorities (34/45).

⁷⁷¹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (14/30); national authorities (30/45).

⁷⁷² Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (14/30); national authorities (34/45).

⁷⁷³ Surveys of: national authorities (38/45); DG ECHO Desk Officers (11/29), while 15/29 did not have a strong opinion.

⁷⁷⁴ European Commission, *Study on the Development of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre ERCC*, 2023; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023.

⁷⁷⁵ EESC, *Consolidating the EU's civil protection mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

⁷⁷⁶ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023; European Commission, *Study on the Development of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre ERCC*, 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (3).

involve Member States to ensure that national needs are taken into account. This proves particularly challenging because civil protection authorities are not the only actors with which DG ECHO needs to cooperate. Cooperation with other actors (EU stakeholders and national authorities) inevitably leads to increased workload. Some DG ECHO stakeholders suggested strengthening civil protection authorities at national level and ensuring that Member States are more vocal about their needs⁷⁷⁷. At national level, cross-sectoral cooperation is challenging given the limited resources of civil protection authorities (see Section 5.3.1).

Stakeholders raised concerns about the perceived 'excessive flexibility' of the UCPM, especially given its current mandate and future sustainability⁷⁷⁸.

It was questioned whether the UCPM should continue to operate in **man-made disasters, particularly during conflicts**⁷⁷⁹. In fact, during complex emergencies, recourse to civil protection assets should be the exception rather than the rule, as it risks compromising the perception of the neutrality and impartiality of the relief effort⁷⁸⁰. During the UCPM activation in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, humanitarian actors found it challenging to cooperate with UCPM actors, due to the risk of being associated with EU Member States or Ukraine, thereby compromising their perceived neutrality and impartiality⁷⁸¹.

Stakeholders highlighted a need to better define the future role of the UCPM in **third countries**, particularly given the extensive travel distance and substantial allocation of resources to these activations⁷⁸².

While DG ECHO and EU stakeholders advocated for an expansion of the UCPM to respond to so-called **hybrid threats**⁷⁸³ and cooperate with the **private sector**⁷⁸⁴, national authorities expressed concerns about the dilution **of the UCPM's identity** as a forum primarily focused on **civil protection**.⁷⁸⁵ For instance, some national authorities were less favourable to increased involvement of the private sector, considering civil protection a national competence that the private sector should only complement with in-kind assistance (e.g. logistics, transport) to address temporary shortages or capacity gaps⁷⁸⁶.

Overall, while changes are necessary to ensure that the UCPM maintains its relevance and effectiveness in today's and tomorrow's crises, this process must ensure the buy-in of Member and Participating States⁷⁸⁷.

⁷⁷⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (7).

⁷⁷⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (7); EU stakeholders (3); international stakeholders (3); experts in civil protection (2); national authorities (12).

⁷⁷⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (12). EESC, *Consolidating the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

⁷⁸⁰ European Commission, *Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*, 2008.

⁷⁸¹ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on Ukrainian response.

⁷⁸² Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (2). European Commission, *Minutes from the Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁷⁸³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (7); EU stakeholders (5).

⁷⁸⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (6). European Commission, *Minutes from the Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 2022 UCPM activations on 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Preliminary Lessons from Russia's war on Ukraine*, 2022.

⁷⁸⁵ Focus group with: national authorities and experts civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. Interviews with: national authorities (12). Surveys of: national authorities (8).

⁷⁸⁶ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁷⁸⁷ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); national authorities (5).

5.3.3 EQ9: To what extent was the UCPM able to incorporate recommendations and lessons learnt?

Key findings

- The UCPM made efforts to address recommendations derived from external evaluations of the Mechanism, especially for the PPP and UCPM training and exercises;
- The introduction of the KAPP call for proposals and the new Training and Exercises Programme will address many recommendations of external evaluations;
- DG ECHO could improve communications to key stakeholders on how changes to the UCPM are based on evaluations;
- The UCPM could advance the implementation of strategic recommendations from external evaluations;
- The UCPM was able to capitalise and implement some of the lessons from the Lessons Learnt Programme and, to a lesser extent, EU presidency workshops;
- Improvements were introduced to increase the likelihood that lessons identified through the Lessons Learnt Programme would be implemented, such as the introduction of focal points and clearer attribution of responsibility;
- Further adjustments to improve the uptake of lessons identified in the Lessons Learnt Programme included:
 - Enhanced systematic implementation of lessons to ensure that they are consistently and effectively applied;
 - Increased identification of lessons on prevention and preparedness to strengthen proactive measures and risk mitigation;
 - Streamlined lessons to focus on the most critical and impactful, while also ensuring a clearer attribution of responsibility to the relevant stakeholders.

Across the period evaluated, DG ECHO made significant efforts to address recommendations from external evaluations and lessons from internal UCPM initiatives.

Judgement criterion:

- JC9.1: Recommendations and issues identified in external evaluations and studies of the UCPM (e.g. 2017 interim evaluation, study on the UCPM Training Programme) were addressed.

The UCPM capitalised on and implemented some of the recommendations made as part of the following external evaluations:

- 2017 interim evaluation of the UCPM⁷⁸⁸;
- ECA reports (2016⁷⁸⁹ and 2020⁷⁹⁰);
- Evaluation on the definitions, gaps and costs of UCPM response capacities (2019);
- Study on the UCPM Training Programme (2019⁷⁹¹);

⁷⁸⁸ European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017*.

⁷⁸⁹ ECA, *Union Civil protection Mechanism: the coordination of responses to disasters outside the EU has been broadly effective*, Special report, 2016.

⁷⁹⁰ ECA, *Opinion No. 9/2020 accompanying the Commission's proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No. 1313/2013/EU on a UCPM (COM(2020) 220 final)*, 2020.

⁷⁹¹ European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019.

- Evaluation of PPP projects (single country grants Track 1⁷⁹² and multi-country grants Track 2 - 2021⁷⁹³).

Key stakeholders acknowledged the UCPM's efforts to address recommendations derived from external evaluations of the Mechanism. However, the communications of those justifications for changes to the UCPM could be improved. The majority of stakeholders agreed that the UCPM made significant efforts to address recommendations from external evaluations⁷⁹⁴. Only a small minority of DG ECHO stakeholders disagreed that key recommendations from external evaluations were taken on board (although 42% had no opinion, suggesting a potential lack of awareness⁷⁹⁵). National and expert stakeholders suggested that DG ECHO could enhance its communication of the rationale behind changes to the UCPM⁷⁹⁶, including highlighting relevant justifications for changes based on findings from evaluations and impact assessments⁷⁹⁷.

The UCPM made efforts to address recommendations that apply to all aspects of the UCPM, including its pillars, as well as recommendations related to certain UCPM activities. The UCPM made the most progress in implementing recommendations on cross-pillar activities that had standalone, dedicated evaluations (PPP, Training and Exercises Programme). The UCPM also made progress in addressing recommendations on the field of response (delivery of assistance, CECIS), preparedness (ECPP) and prevention (DRM Summary Reports). Progress towards implementing general strategic recommendations could be improved.

The UCPM made significant progress towards implementing recommendations on its cross-pillar activities, especially those that had dedicated, standalone evaluations:

- **PPP:** DG ECHO responded proactively to the evaluations of projects funded under the PPP at both single and multi-country level. It developed an internal document that mapped the Programme's strengths and weaknesses, as well as planned actions to address recommendations⁷⁹⁸. The UCPM responded to external recommendations on the PPP by implementing three key measures: KAPP calls, the Knowledge Network online platform spaces, and guidance for applicants on their grant applications (see Table 11). The KAPP calls combine existing mechanisms funded by the UCPM to enhance consistency in the projects funded and the evaluation process for proposals. The Knowledge Network includes comprehensive information and outputs from all funded projects, aiming to make the impacts of these projects more sustainable⁷⁹⁹. Applicants for the 2023 KAPP call were given guidance on the essential information to provide to national authorities responsible for granting approval for their applications. This will allow national authorities to provide more informed decisions when approving grants, ensuring closer coherence and complementarity with ongoing national initiatives;

⁷⁹² European Commission, *Note to DG ECHO Management: Prevention and Preparedness Programme1: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme*, 2022.

⁷⁹³ European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021.

⁷⁹⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (3); national authorities (6); professional organisations (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (17/33s).

⁷⁹⁵ Survey of: DG ECHO Desk Officers – disagree (2/33), neither agree nor disagree (14/33).

⁷⁹⁶ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1); national authorities (3). Joint Letter from Member States to the Commission on UCPM budget transparency.

⁷⁹⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (3).

⁷⁹⁸ European Commission, *Note to DG ECHO Management: Prevention and Preparedness Programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme*, 2022.

⁷⁹⁹ See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities. European Commission, *Commission Notice Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management*, Art. 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU2019/C 428/07, 2019.

- **Training and Exercises Programme:** The design of the new Training and Exercises Programme (which will be implemented from September 2023 onward) incorporates a substantial number of elements derived from external evaluations. Steps have been taken to increase structural ties between UCPM training and exercises by including them under the same activity (see Table 11). The introduction of a deployable training path is a significant advance, requiring participants to take part in EU MODEX and undergo evaluation/assessment of their performance to certify them as deployable experts in the ECPP⁸⁰⁰. This ensures a more tailored approach to UCPM training, targeting a higher number of effectively trained experts to be deployed (see Section 5.1).

⁸⁰⁰ See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities. European Commission, *UCPM Training and Exercises – Participant Performance Assessment and Evaluation in the UCPM Training Courses*, 2021.

Table 11. Overview of key recommendations on PPP and Training and Exercises Programme

UCPM activity	Recommendations	Progress made/planned
PPP	Increase awareness, accessibility and engagement with ongoing and past EU-funded projects on civil protection prevention and preparedness and their results	<p>The Knowledge Network online platform project spaces includes all project outputs, as well as links to other relevant EU funding sources. Its impact will depend on the extent of its dissemination to key stakeholders</p> <p>The merging of disaster resilience calls into KAPP calls will help to address the duplication of funding across UCPM funding</p> <p>The 2023 KAPP call introduced the obligation for the consortium to deliver a mapping of relevant initiatives within the UCPM, including an evaluation of potential synergies between ongoing initiatives or incorporation of existing results within the first six months</p>
	Establish an internal PMER policy to assess the performance and quality of the PPP	DG ECHO will develop results-oriented monitoring of projects and reporting
	Continue to simplify the PPP reporting and monitoring mechanism	DG ECHO will work towards administrative simplification and increased efficiency for itself and Member States
	Provide soft guidance on the minimum information to be provided to national authorities for endorsement	In the context of the 2023 KAPP call for proposals, applicants were provided with recommendations for minimum project descriptions to be submitted to national civil protection authorities when seeking endorsement for an application for a project grant through the Knowledge Network
	Introduce clearer requirements for DG ECHO Desk Officers, including enhanced communication and engagement with PPP beneficiaries	DG ECHO will strive for high quality projects, by providing increasingly robust and technical guidance to beneficiaries during implementation
Training and	Improve Programme design, implementation and review, structure, curriculum and objectives, including:	The new Training and Exercises Programme will include online introductory sessions on the UCPM, available to a wider audience (such as EU delegations, DG ECHO field

UCPM activity	Recommendations	Progress made/planned
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identification of needs - introductory seminar on UCPM for awareness-raising - pyramid structure for more advanced courses on the basis of deployment needs - more online and refresher courses - stricter criteria for the selection of trainers - courses in more languages 	office staff, EU Neighbourhood national authorities). The new Programme will also have a deployable training path, refresher courses and stricter criteria for trainers
	Enhance the governance of the training programme by 1) moving towards online delivery, and 2) establishing an internal monitoring and evaluation system to enhance performance and quality	The UCPM online platform and registration tools are to the functioning of the Training and Exercises Programme and were developed across the evaluation period
	Improve links between UCPM pillars (mainly prevention and preparedness) and the new Training and Exercises Programme	The new Training and Exercises Programme introduces structural links between training and exercises
	Enhance the selection of participants for training and nomination for deployment	The new Training and Exercises Programme includes stricter criteria for participants for the deployable training path, offering more online courses on the UCPM for a wider audience
	Streamline existing database of trained experts	Databases of trained experts (and deployments) appear to have been developed during the evaluation period. However, Directorate A and Directorate B have separate databases, which could be streamlined to avoid inconsistencies and duplication of effort
	Evaluate performance of the expert	In the deployable training path, the assessment of performance could be linked to the certification of experts registered in the ECPP

Source: ICF elaboration, based on data collected for the interim evaluation⁸⁰¹.

⁸⁰¹ European Commission, *Note to DG ECHO Management: Prevention and Preparedness Programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme*, 2022; European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)*, 2021¹; European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019; European Commission, *UCPM Training and Exercises – Participant Performance Assessment and Evaluation in the UCPM Training Courses*, 2021. See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

The limited data available show that the UCPM made efforts to address recommendations on its activities in preparedness, response and prevention:

- **Response activities**, such as **CECIS** and the delivery of assistance. Recommendations to improve the CECIS platform are being addressed through the design of CECIS 2.0⁸⁰². The extent to which this platform will address these recommendations will be verified once the new platform is finalised, albeit promising revisions and adjustments are envisioned (e.g. accessible to Participating States). On the **delivery of assistance**, the UCPM has made efforts to address recommendations to establish more targeted pools of experts, including technical experts, through the potential development of a 'pool of deployable experts', encompassing experts who completed the deployable training path and technical expert profiles responding to particular criteria for types of disasters⁸⁰³. The UCPM is addressing recommendations to assess the speed of response, with significant room for improvement on monitoring (see Section 5.2)⁸⁰⁴. It made some progress on strengthening cooperation with EU delegations, such as offering more online training on the UCPM⁸⁰⁵, although the EESC noted the room for further improvement here⁸⁰⁶;
- **Preparedness activities**, primarily the **ECPP**. DG ECHO commissioned an external evaluation of ECPP capacity in 2019 and subsequently revised most certification procedures, tools and capacity goals⁸⁰⁷;
- **Prevention activities**, primarily **DRM Summary Reports**. The UCPM adapted the reporting guidelines to incorporate recommendations to include climate change adaptation and health risks in the reporting process⁸⁰⁸.

Limited available evidence suggests that the UCPM could do more to address strategic recommendations, particularly scope of intervention, monitoring and data collection activities. The 2017 interim evaluation highlighted the need to clarify the exact scope of civil protection interventions outside the EU, as well as the specific scope for the UCPM's intervention for man-made disasters⁸⁰⁹. However, these issues are still outstanding, with persistent concerns about the scope of UCPM activities and its sustainability in the evolving disaster risk landscape⁸¹⁰ (see Section 5.3.2).

The 2017 interim evaluation recommended introducing KPIs and monitoring. While KPIs were subsequently introduced in the field of response, this recommendation remains to be addressed

⁸⁰² ECA, *Union Civil protection Mechanism: the coordination of responses to disasters outside the EU has been broadly effective*, Special report, 2016; European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016*, 2017. Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

⁸⁰³ Interview with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Note for the Attention of Head of Cabinet ALEŠKA SIMKIĆ. UCPM strategy for the Southern Neighbourhood*, 2021; European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016*, 2017. See Annex 7 for case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁸⁰⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016*, 2017; European Commission, *Civil Protection – Performance*, 2023, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/programme-performance-statements/civil-protection-performance_en

⁸⁰⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016*, 2017.

⁸⁰⁶ EESC, *Consolidating the EU-Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

⁸⁰⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1). Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services, *Evaluation Study of Definitions, gaps and costs of Response Capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2019.

⁸⁰⁸ European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016*, 2017.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁸¹⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (3). Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

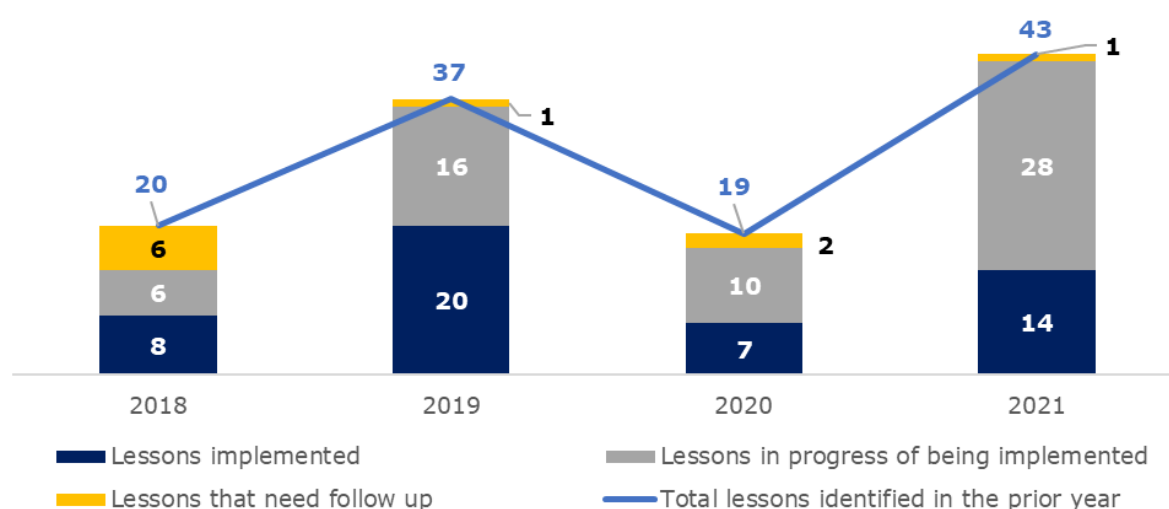
across all pillars consistently, alongside the establishment of monitoring efforts focusing on the UCPM as a whole (see Section 5.2)⁸¹¹.

Judgement criterion:

- JC9.2: Recommendations and lessons learnt identified within UCPM initiatives (e.g. Lessons Learnt Programme, Workshops with the EU Presidency) were taken on board

The UCPM capitalised on and implemented some of the lessons identified from the Lessons Learnt Programme and, to a lesser extent, from Workshops with the EU Presidency. Key stakeholders agreed that the UCPM identified and took on board lessons and recommendations from the Lessons Learnt Programme⁸¹² and to a lesser extent from the Workshops with the EU Presidency⁸¹³. Across the evaluation period, DG ECHO made increasing efforts to identify and address lessons identified through the Lessons Learnt Programme (see Figure 69). The total lessons identified through the Lessons Learnt Programme throughout the period evaluated increased from 20 in 2018 to 43 in 2021⁸¹⁴. The increase in the number of lessons identified is accompanied by a corresponding increase in the processing and implementation of those lessons. There was a decrease in the number of lessons requiring follow-up, indicating DG ECHO's ongoing efforts to actively consider and address the lessons identified.

Figure 69. Overview of lessons identified and implemented from the Lessons Learnt Programme, 2018-2021



Source: ICF elaboration, based on Lessons Learnt Outcome reports 2018-2021.

The UCPM improved the Lessons Learnt Programme to increase the likelihood of effective integration and implementation of lessons identified. DG ECHO introduced several improvements

⁸¹¹ European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016, 2017*; European Commission, *Civil Protection – Performance*, 2023, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/performance-and-reporting/programme-performance-statements/civil-protection-performance_en; ECA, *Opinion No. 9/2020 accompanying the Commission's proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No. 1313/2013/EU on a UCPM (COM(2020) 220 final)*, 2020.

⁸¹² Interviews with: DG ECHO (7); experts in civil protection (3); professional organisations (2); EU stakeholders (1); national stakeholders (12). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (24/33); experts in civil protection (1/10).

⁸¹³ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (20/33).

⁸¹⁴ European Commission, *Lessons Learnt Programme Outcome Reports, 2017-2022*.

to ensure that lessons identified were taken on board more often and consistently at EU and national level:

- **Introduction of designated focal points within units working directly with the Programme.** The focal points' responsibility is to ensure that lessons are integrated into their respective unit's activities⁸¹⁵;
- **Increasing attribution of lessons to stakeholders.** Since 2018, Programme outcome reports clearly specify the lessons that are relevant at EU or national level⁸¹⁶, facilitating a culture of accountability;
- **Thematic Lessons Learnt Meetings.** Lessons Learnt Meetings are conducted following specific deployments or large-scale response efforts (e.g. COVID-19, forest fire seasons, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine) and have been instrumental in generating targeted lessons for specific disaster types. These meetings have facilitated the identification of specific insights and recommendations that can be effectively incorporated and applied for future similar events⁸¹⁷;
- **Lessons Learnt Meetings taking place in Member States rather than Brussels.** In the context of forest fires, the Meeting in January 2023 in a Member State rather than in Brussels was particularly valued by stakeholder and facilitated national engagement with lessons (see Figure 70).

Figure 70. Lesson: organising Lessons Learnt Programme meetings outside Brussels



Source: ICF elaboration, based on case study on forest fires (see Annex 7).

There is room for a more systematic approach to implementing lessons identified, increasing identification of lessons on preparedness and response, and attributing lessons to key audiences. The following opportunities for improvement were identified:

- **More systematic implementation of lessons.** The majority of stakeholders agreed that the rate of implementation of lessons identified at EU and national level could be improved⁸¹⁸. Some stakeholders highlighted that the current low rate may be due to a lack of follow-up and dissemination of lessons identified to relevant stakeholders⁸¹⁹. Despite the improvements to the attribution of lessons at EU and national level, stakeholders argued that further clarification of the assignment of responsibilities (i.e. identification of a task owner) for each lesson, both within and outside DG ECHO, could improve implementation⁸²⁰. A minority of stakeholders highlighted that too many lessons are identified and suggested that

⁸¹⁵ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020.

⁸¹⁶ European Commission, *Lessons Learnt Programme Outcome Reports*, 2017-2022.

⁸¹⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁸¹⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (5); national authorities (5); experts in civil protection (1); international stakeholders (1).

⁸¹⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2); experts in civil protection (1).

⁸²⁰ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1). European Commission, *Lessons Learnt Programme Outcome Reports*, 2017-2022.

fewer lessons be attributed a priority level to ensure that critical lessons are more meaningfully incorporated⁸²¹;

- **More lessons could focus on prevention and preparedness, as the majority are in the field of response.** Stakeholders emphasised that the majority of lessons pertain to response activities⁸²², with a need for a greater focus on identifying lessons in prevention and preparedness⁸²³. This would be valuable in improving overall disaster management and enhancing proactive measures to mitigate risks before they escalate into crises.

The main lessons identified through UCPM internal initiatives and taken on board across the evaluation period were:

- **Training and Exercises Programme.** Stakeholders agreed that lessons identified for the Training and Exercises Programme were successfully taken on board⁸²⁴. A professional organisation supporting the implementation of UCPM activities underlined that training and exercises have a lot of activities embedded to identify and reflect on potential improvements⁸²⁵. Similarly, a professional organisation supporting the implementation of exercises is creating a database to collect and monitor lessons⁸²⁶;
- **Logistical hubs.** Lessons Learnt Meetings in 2017 and 2019 identified the need for storage facilities or regional hubs to enhance response capabilities⁸²⁷. These lessons were put into action and resulted in the establishment of logistical hubs during the response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine⁸²⁸;
- **Cooperation with EU delegations.** Enhancing response through further engagement and cooperation with EU delegations was identified as a lesson during the evaluation period. Although certain improvements have been made, such as the introduction of online UCPM training for EU delegations, the need persists⁸²⁹.

Some stakeholders argued that the Knowledge Network may improve the uptake of lessons identified in the Lessons Learnt Programme. Stakeholders suggested that the incorporation of the Lessons Learnt Programme within the Knowledge Network could have an impact⁸³⁰ by disseminating the lessons more widely and creating a structural link to other UCPM activities.

5.4 Coherence

This subsection examines the extent to which the activities of the UCPM were coherent with one another and whether they worked well with other actions outside the Mechanism. It investigates potential complementarities, overlaps or unexploited synergies.

More specifically, it discusses the internal coherence of the UCPM activities and whether they worked together and reinforced one another. It then assesses external coherence, i.e. the extent to which the UCPM coordinated its activities with other national interventions in the civil protection

⁸²¹ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1); DG ECHO (1).

⁸²² Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2).

⁸²³ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2).

⁸²⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (2).

⁸²⁵ Interviews with: professional organisations (1). EU MODEX, *Final Progress Report EU MODEX 2019-2020 lot 3*, 2020.

⁸²⁶ Interviews with: professional organisations (1).

⁸²⁷ European Commission, *Lessons Learnt Programme Outcome Reports*, 2017, 2019.

⁸²⁸ European Commission, *Lessons Learnt Programme Outcome Report on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine*,.

⁸²⁹ European Commission, *Lessons Learnt Programme Outcome Reports*, 2017, 2019; EESC, *Consolidating the EU-Civil Protection: Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022

⁸³⁰ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (2); DG ECHO (1); national authorities (1); EU stakeholders (1).

field and other policy fields, as well as whether and how UCPM activities were coherent with other EU and international interventions in relevant policy fields.

5.4.1 EQ10: To what extent are the UCPM activities across the three pillars internally coherent and complementary to one another?

Key findings

- The UCPM Decision sufficiently defines the prevention, preparedness, and response pillars to allow for a balance within and between activities;
- The expansion of the UCPM activities between 2017 and 2022 did not affect its internal coherence, with several synergies and complementarities within and across its three pillars;
- Although the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines ensured greater coherence across DRM Summary Reports, heterogeneity persists in the methodologies used, risks covered, and sectors involved;
- Preparedness activities were coherent with one another. However, concerns were raised about the perceived prioritisation of rescEU over the ECPP. More time is needed to adequately evaluate synergies among more recent activities;
- The coherence of response activities within the UCPM was largely ensured by the ERCC, which coordinated, monitored and supported real-time responses to emergencies within and outside the EU. The logistical portfolio of the UCPM was also internally coherent;
- There was a good level of coherence across the three UCPM pillars, notwithstanding some room for improvement. The Lessons Learnt Programme provided a good forum to exchange lessons and good practices on prevention, preparedness and response activities. However, the internal reorganisation of DG ECHO somewhat hindered coordination and coherence across UCPM activities. Stakeholders indicated that the process of developing capacity at UCPM level should be better informed by scientific evidence and adequate needs assessments, resulting in a clear overview of capacities and gaps.

Judgement criterion:

- JC10.1: The Decision sufficiently defines the pillars to allow for a balance within and between activities

Overall, Decision (EU) 1313/2013 sufficiently defines the three UCPM pillars to allow for a balance within and between activities. Each chapter describes the main elements of each pillar considered – prevention (Chapter II), preparedness (Chapter III) and response (Chapter IV).

Activities do not always fall under one pillar but may straddle different phases of the disaster management cycle. For example, Union Disaster Resilience Goals are discussed under the prevention chapter, but support prevention *and* preparedness action. However, the Decision does not have a specific section or chapter on so-called horizontal activities, but, rather, discusses them under one of the relevant pillars. Only a minority of stakeholders mentioned that the structure of the UCPM Decision could be improved (noting the need for clearer definitions of key concepts, e.g. indicating what is covered under prevention, compared to preparedness) or that the distinction between pillars is not appropriate due to the cross-cutting nature of UCPM activities⁸³¹.

⁸³¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (3). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (1/32).

Judgement criterion:

- JC10.2: No significant gaps or overlaps between UCPM activities within and across pillars can be detected
- JC10.3: Synergies and complementarities within and between activities organised under the three pillars of the UCPM were identified and created, where possible
- JC10.4: Synergies and complementarities with UCPM cross-pillar/horizontal activities and activities across the three pillars of the UCPM were identified and created, where possible

The following subsections assess the extent to which the activities under each UCPM pillar were mutually reinforcing and coherent, exploring their complementarities and/or unexploited synergies. It then reports the level of coherence of activities across the three pillars.

5.4.1.1 Prevention

Activities under the prevention pillar were found to be coherent with one another. There is, however, room for improvement in the harmonisation of DRM Summary Reports.

Between 2017 and 2022, the UCPM took several steps to ensure the internal coherence of the prevention pillar, notably developing a more coherent framework for DRM Summary Reports. The 2019 revision of the UCPM Decision brought additional reporting obligations for Member and Participating States. The Commission then adopted reporting guidelines on disaster risk management for Member States submitting DRM Summary Reports (201 Article 6 reporting guidelines)⁸³² to ensure a consistent overview of risks at EU level.

Although the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines ensured greater coherence across DRM Summary Reports, heterogeneity persists. DRM Summary Reports often differ in the types of risks covered, methodologies adopted, use of quantitative data, and cooperation with other sectors, complicating any comprehensive assessment at EU level in the overview document of disaster risks in the EU⁸³³ (see Section 5.1.1.1). The development of the **Risk Data Hub** in 2017 was an important initiative that aims to offer a common platform to access data and methodologies, facilitating a more harmonised approach to risk management⁸³⁴.

The main findings from the 2020 overview document of disaster risks in the EU informed and were coherent with other UCPM activities under the prevention pillar. For example, they supported the importance of considering **climate change as a key risk driver** and repeatedly underlined the need to gather high quality data to produce more comparable DRM Summary Reports⁸³⁵. The disaster risks highlighted in the overview document of disaster risks in the EU were well covered within the projects within the PPP, albeit with some exceptions (industrial accidents; animal and plant diseases).

The **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** are expected to ensure better coherence under the prevention pillar, as they set an overall European resilience agenda, promoting a coherent set of goals and specific objectives for key civil protection prevention (and preparedness) action to 2030⁸³⁶. Finally, DG ECHO aligned the 2023 Disaster Resilience Grants with the Union Disaster Resilience Goals⁸³⁷.

⁸³² European Commission, *Commission Notice Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management*, Art. 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU, 2019.

⁸³³ Focus group: with national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023; on cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); national authorities (4); EU stakeholders (3); international stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disasters the European Union may face*, 2020.

⁸³⁴ European Commission, *Risk Data Hub – web platform to facilitate management of disaster risks*, JRC, 2019.

⁸³⁵ European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face*, 2020.

⁸³⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (4); national authorities (2); international stakeholder (1).

⁸³⁷ European Commission, *Minutes from Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

5.4.1.2 Preparedness

Data collected for the interim evaluation shows high overall coherence among UCPM activities in the field of preparedness, as confirmed by most DG ECHO Desk Officers consulted⁸³⁸. However, more time is needed to evaluate the results and synergies among more recent activities.

rescEU and the **ECPP** are inherently complementary because rescEU was designed as last resort tool to be mobilised in worst-case disaster scenarios when emergency assistance from the ECPP cannot be mobilised or is insufficient. The ERCC verifies whether spontaneous offers and the ECPP capacities can be mobilised in the first instance. However, concerns were raised about the perceived prioritisation of rescEU capacities over the ECPP, with stakeholders suggesting that the ECPP has been given less attention and treated as a secondary option. Some national civil protection authorities stated that the ECPP should remain the core preparedness tool of the UCPM⁸³⁹, while recognising the added value of rescEU for in-kind assistance, CBRN and logistics.

Several activities carried out between 2017 and 2022 created synergies and complementarities between **EWS** by providing different types of information and analysis on various types of disasters and emergencies. For example, EFFIS and EFAS provide specific information on forest fires and floods, respectively, while the European Drought Observatory (EDO) and the European Seismic Hazard Information System (ESHIS) focus on drought and seismic hazards. DG ECHO and the JRC improved the integration and interoperability of the existing EWS and developed a more holistic approach to disaster risk reduction and emergency response⁸⁴⁰. By combining and integrating these systems, the UCPM enhanced its overall situational awareness and preparedness for a wide range of potential disasters and emergencies. For instance, one of the main objectives of these interoperability efforts was to better integrate the systems for floods, forest fires, and drought into GDACS in order to develop an enhanced GDACS+. Overall, the complexity and diversity of the hazards that need to be monitored, the wide range of data sources to be analysed, and the methods needed to do so make this process challenging⁸⁴¹.

The **UCPM Training Programme** was expanded into a new **Training and Exercises Programme**. The inclusion of exercises followed a recommendation from the 2019 study of the UCPM Training Programme that the Programme could benefit from the creation of a unique training system that included both exercises and training courses⁸⁴². A majority of stakeholders involved in the Training and Exercises Programme considered the courses and exercises coherent and complementary⁸⁴³. The new Training and Exercises Programme was recently redesigned and has been implemented since September 2023. The recent changes were perceived to have the potential to enhance coherence between the different activities offered⁸⁴⁴.

Areas for improvement were identified in **CECIS**⁸⁴⁵. The current version of CECIS allows for unstructured data entry, making it difficult to obtain comparable data on the types and causes of disasters. CECIS does not allow an overview of the available capacities per type (e.g. available aerial

⁸³⁸ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (/31).

⁸³⁹ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities in 9 May 2023; DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (5); national civil protection authorities (9); EU stakeholders (4).

⁸⁴⁰ European Commission, *Early Warning System Expert Group. Meeting Minutes*, 2019, 2020, 2021. European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; Interviews with: DG ECHO (3).

⁸⁴¹ European Commission, *Early Warning System Expert Group. Meeting Minutes*, 2019, 2020, 2021. European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁸⁴² European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programm*, 2019.

⁸⁴³ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (22/31).

⁸⁴⁴ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (23/30). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁸⁴⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (6); national authorities (6). European Commission, *'Study on the Development of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre ERCC*, 2023.

forest fight capacity), but only by level of commitment (e.g. number of each capacity type under rescEU or the ECPP). CECIS is being updated and redesigned as CECIS 2.0⁸⁴⁶.

Other recent developments implemented within the UCPM that are expected to improve coherence among preparedness activities include the Disaster Resilience Grants and the establishment of the Knowledge Network:

- **Disaster Resilience Grants:** The 2021 evaluation of the PPP found that the absence of a structured link between the Programme and other UCPM activities risked duplication of effort and limited general complementarity⁸⁴⁷. The PPP comprises two strands, (i) Technical Assistance for Disaster Risk Management, which includes grants for national civil protection and other disaster risk management authorities to develop strategic disaster risk management actions; and (ii) KAPP, which merges three previously separate calls, prevention and preparedness, Knowledge Network, and FSX. Evidence shows that the KAPP calls will likely have a significant positive impact on coherence among UCPM-funded activities (please see in Annex 7 the ICF Case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities for further details).⁸⁴⁸
- **Knowledge Network.** Although stakeholders recognised the potential of the Knowledge Network to ensure that the different UCPM preparedness activities are coherent and reinforce one another, the extent to which such a broad mandate can effectively achieve this objective remains to be seen⁸⁴⁹. The outputs of the Knowledge Network are still relatively unknown to authorities in Member and Participating States, and several stakeholders underlined that results cannot be evaluated because the Network is still ‘under construction’⁸⁵⁰. DG ECHO staff implementing activities within the Knowledge Network do not feel they own the activities carried out under its umbrella⁸⁵¹. However, this situation could be attributed to the early stage of the Knowledge Network’s development.

5.4.1.3 Response

The coherence of response activities within the UCPM was largely ensured by the **ERCC**, which coordinated, monitored and supported real-time responses to emergencies within and outside the EU. More specifically, the ERCC coordinated the matching of requests and offers of assistance, so that countries did not have to manage these issues on a bilateral basis. As some Participating States and all third countries do not have access to CECIS, the ERCC also coordinated RfA and offers by these States by uploading the necessary information on CECIS and coordinating with the requesting State by email. This process allowed response activities within and outside the EU to be handled in a similar way. DG ECHO desk officers expressed positive views on the coherence between response activities⁸⁵².

Finally, evidence shows clear logic between different areas of the UCPM **logistics** portfolio⁸⁵³. Logistics activities are streamlined and internally coherent, with each activity having a complementary role. For instance, when Member and Participating States have their own transport or can secure transport themselves, the grants enable them to have the transport and the operations

⁸⁴⁶ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2).

⁸⁴⁷ European Commission, ‘Evaluation of the European Commission’s Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014–2020), 2021.

⁸⁴⁸ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁸⁴⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (6); DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (5); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (3).

⁸⁵⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (12); DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (4); experts in civil protection (2); professional organisations (2); international stakeholders (2). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

⁸⁵¹ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁸⁵² Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (21/31).

⁸⁵³ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission’s civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018–2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020–2022, 2023.*

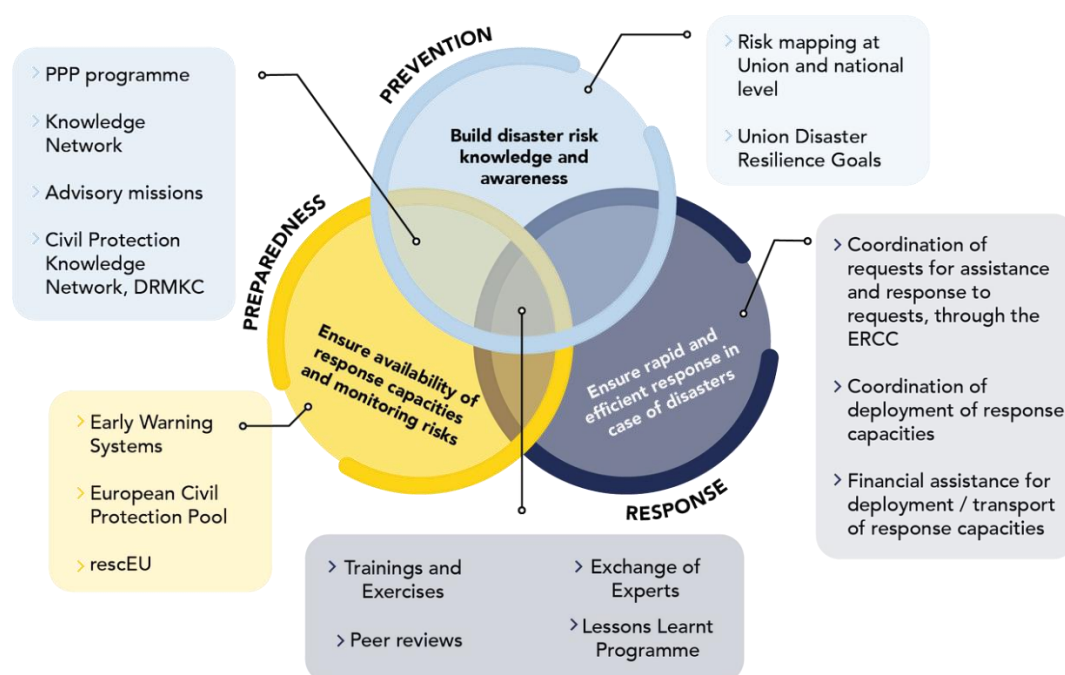
co-financed. In cases where the Member or Participating State is unable to secure transport due to difficulties in reaching the final location, they can apply to enlist the services of a **transport broker**. Both logistics types were often used alongside one another during a single emergency⁸⁵⁴.

The extent to which the UCPM effectively coordinated its response with national authorities, EU institutions and international organisations is discussed under Sections 5.4.2 and 5.4.3, respectively.

5.4.14 Coherence across pillars

While there was a good level of coherence between activities across the UCPM pillars, evidence shows room for improvement. Figure 71 illustrates how the different pillars theoretically interlink.

Figure 71. Interactions between UCPM pillars and activities



Source: ICF elaboration.

The Training and Exercises Programme and the Lessons Learnt Programme are illustrative of efforts to ensure coherence and complementarity across the three UCPM pillars. The **Training and Exercise Programme** prepared civil protection experts and emergency management personnel to acquire the knowledge *to prevent, prepare and respond* to disasters. It also contributed to improving the **interoperability** of modules, which was highlighted as a critical element to focus on during Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meetings following UCPM deployments⁸⁵⁵. DG ECHO organised a series of workshops on host nation support for AFF to improve interoperability between crews and facilitate exchanges between AFF actors⁸⁵⁶. According to stakeholders involved in the Training and Exercises Programme, training courses were coherent and complementary to other UCPM activities⁸⁵⁷, particularly response activities (coordination of deployment of response capacities, ERCC coordination of RfA and offers by Member and Participating States)⁸⁵⁸.

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁵ Interviews with: professional organisation (1); DG ECHO (2); national authority (1). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations, 2019*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Forest Fire Season 2021, 2022*; European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons identified from 2022 Wildfire season, 2023*.

⁸⁵⁶ European Commission, *Minutes from the Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/24 April 2023*.

⁸⁵⁷ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (19/27).

⁸⁵⁸ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (27/27).

The Lessons Learnt Programme was seen as a good forum for exchanges, as it helped to identify lessons and good practices from UCPM deployments and horizontal activities⁸⁵⁹. In 2019, focal points were identified across units to ensure that relevant lessons and good practices were implemented across DG ECHO in a cross-sectoral manner through prevention, preparedness and response activities. This responded to the findings of the 2017 interim evaluation, which had highlighted shortcomings in this respect. Since 2020, the Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meetings have systematically included more in-depth discussions and exchanges of lessons and good practices covering the whole disaster risk management cycle, including the (previously neglected) prevention pillar⁸⁶⁰.

Clear synergies exist between the prevention and preparedness pillars in establishing capacity goals under the ECPP. The Commission and Member States assess the suitability of capacity goals at least every two years and, if necessary, revise them on the basis of risks identified in National Risk Assessments or other international sources⁸⁶¹. However, stakeholders noted that the process of developing capacities within both the ECPP and rescEU could be improved. They pointed to the potential to better ensure that capability development planning is informed from the bottom-up on the basis of scientific evidence and adequate preparedness needs assessments, resulting in a clear overview of available capacities and gaps (see Section 5.1.1.2)⁸⁶².

On the **links between preparedness and response**, the evidence suggests that a low share experts who are trained are subsequently deployed⁸⁶³ and many deployed experts did not undergo all of the required training⁸⁶⁴. The new Training and Exercises Programme will introduce a deployable training path for experts to be deployed, alongside a set of courses for civil protection and disaster risk management actors who hold a support function to the UCPM and who are not expected to be deployed. This curriculum change is expected to ensure increased coherence and better meet participants' expectations⁸⁶⁵.

Other horizontal activities that ensured synergies across UCPM pillars included:

- **Advisory missions and the PPP**, which focused on both prevention and/or preparedness;
- **Peer Review Programme**, which strengthened cooperation between Member and Participating States and contributed to an integrated approach to disaster risk management by linking risk prevention, preparedness, and response actions;
- **EoE Programme**, whose exchanges focused on the main disasters that led to UCPM activations⁸⁶⁶.

⁸⁵⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); national authorities (7).

⁸⁶⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2). European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2020 UCPM activations*, 2021; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁸⁶¹ Article 14 Commission Implementing Decision of 16 October 2014 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and repealing Commission Decisions 2004/277/EC. Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services, *Evaluation study of definitions, gaps, and costs of response capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2019.

⁸⁶² Interviews with: experts in civil protection (2); national authorities (5). Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. European Committee of the Regions, *Preparing for and dealing with crises: strengthening the resilience of the Union, its regions and cities*, COM(2021) 576 final. See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁸⁶³ European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (2); professional organisations (1); national authority (1). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁸⁶⁴ European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); experts in civil protection (2); professional organisations (1); national authority (1). See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁸⁶⁵ See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁸⁶⁶ THW, *Exchange of Experts in Civil Protection Programme. Final Report*, Contract No. ECHO/SER/2016/738300, 2018. Interviews with: experts in civil protection (1); professional organisations (1); national authorities (1).

While a majority of DG ECHO Desk Officers considered UCPM activities across the three pillars to be coherent and complementary⁸⁶⁷, they observed that the **internal reorganisation of DG ECHO somewhat hindered coordination and coherence across UCPM activities**⁸⁶⁸. Stakeholders noted that the reorganisation of DG ECHO into Directorate A (emergency management and rescEU) and Directorate B (disaster preparedness and prevention) improved cooperation between civil protection and humanitarian aid staff and gave increased focus to prevention activities⁸⁶⁹, but did not contribute positively to the overall internal coherence of UCPM activities across pillars⁸⁷⁰. The organisational structure of DG ECHO is currently being reviewed.

DG ECHO aligned the 2023 Disaster Resilience Grants with the Union Disaster Resilience Goals⁸⁷¹, in the wake of the 2021 evaluation of the PPP, which found that the projects had little connection with other UCPM activities⁸⁷².

The activities of the **Knowledge Network** remain relatively unknown to authorities in Member and Participating States, and several stakeholders underlined that results cannot be evaluated because the Network is still 'under construction'⁸⁷³.

Finally, the development of the **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** has the potential to enhance coherence across UCPM activities⁸⁷⁴, covering goals spanning the main phases of the disaster management cycle (anticipate, prepare, alert, respond) and adding the secure goal, which aims to ensure that civil protection systems remain operational 24/7 during and after disasters.

5.4.2 EQ11: To what extent do UCPM activities complement national interventions in the field of civil protection and other policy fields?

Key findings

- Synergies and complementarities were created between UCPM prevention and preparedness activities and national activities in the field of civil protection;
- Clear complementarities were identified in the development of capacities at rescEU, ECPP and national level. Additionally, host nation support guidelines complemented national efforts by ensuring a thorough understanding of roles and responsibilities between national response systems and the UCPM. Progress was also made in the integration of EU and national EWS;
- Response activities within the UCPM were coherent and complementary with national interventions. Factors that contributed to ensuring an effective response during UCPM missions included the deployment of ERCC Liaison Officers and the involvement of EU delegations. The UCPM also effectively coordinated its response activities with the private sector, but a clearer framework is needed for such cooperation.

Judgement criterion:

⁸⁶⁷ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (19/32).

⁸⁶⁸ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (10/24). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (3/38).

⁸⁶⁹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3).

⁸⁷⁰ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (10). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (3/38).

⁸⁷¹ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁸⁷² European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects 2014–2020, 2021*.

⁸⁷³ Interviews with: national authorities (12); DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (4); experts in civil protection (2); professional organisations (2); international stakeholders (2). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

⁸⁷⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (4); international partners (1); national authorities (2).

- JC11.1: Synergies and complementarities were created between UCPM prevention and preparedness activities and national (MS, PS, TC) activities in the field of CP and other policy fields

Most civil protection authorities indicated that prevention and preparedness activities within the UCPM were coherent and complementary with national interventions. National authorities underlined the complementarities between the ECPP, rescEU, and the development of capacities at national level⁸⁷⁵. Other UCPM activities that complemented national prevention and preparedness interventions included the Training and Exercises Programme⁸⁷⁶, EoE Programme⁸⁷⁷, Peer Review Programme⁸⁷⁸ and the Union Disaster Resilience Goals⁸⁷⁹. National authorities also agreed that there were no avoidable overlaps between UCPM and national civil protection activities⁸⁸⁰.

During the evaluation period, progress was evident in the **integration of national and EU EWS**⁸⁸¹. For instance, the Global Flood Awareness System (GloFAS) was upgraded with a new global flood monitoring component that exploits satellite monitoring capacity and provides near-real time information. While public warning is a national responsibility, DG ECHO supports the implementation of effective national public warning systems. Under the Galileo programme, the Galileo Emergency Warning System (GEWS) and Galileo infrastructure are offered to Member and Participating States as a complementary system to broadcast alert messages. GEWS is designed to complement existing national broadcasting systems when existing systems are insufficient, such as in case of destruction or saturation of traditional alert systems. The ERCC ensured that notifications of potential disasters from the EU EWS were shared with the relevant 24/7 civil protection contact points. However, a minority of stakeholders underlined that the integration of existing EWS could be improved⁸⁸².

Evidence suggests that **host nation support guidelines** contributed to a thorough understanding of roles and responsibilities between national response systems and the UCPM, facilitating consistent collaboration⁸⁸³. However, stakeholders indicated that the guidelines could be updated or improved (e.g. including more recent best practices)⁸⁸⁴.

On the coherence between UCPM prevention and preparedness activities and national activities in other policy fields, national authorities highlighted the positive synergies with public health (particularly given the UCPM response to the COVID-19 pandemic). Indeed, stakeholders mostly commented on the synergies between the UCPM and other EU-level initiatives beyond the civil protection field (see Section 5.4.3). Evidence from desk research shows that the UCPM prevention and preparedness initiatives were coherent with other national policies and initiatives in other fields, such as:

⁸⁷⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (17). Surveys of: national authorities (31/42).

⁸⁷⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (9); professional organisations (2); DG ECHO (3); experts in civil protection (2). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires. Surveys of: national authorities (33/40).

⁸⁷⁷ Interviews with: national authorities (2); professional organisations (1). Surveys of: national authorities (29/38).

⁸⁷⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (4); experts in civil protection (1). Surveys of: national authorities (20/35). Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO.

⁸⁷⁹ Surveys of: national authorities (22/37).

⁸⁸⁰ Surveys of: national authorities (35/44).

⁸⁸¹ European Commission, *Minutes of the Early Warning Systems Expert Working Group Meeting, 2022*; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁸⁸² Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (2). See Annex 7 for case study on floods.

⁸⁸³ European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations, 2020*; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2020 UCPM activations, 2021*; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*. Interviews with: national authorities (18); DG ECHO (3); international partners (1).

⁸⁸⁴ European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2021 UCPM activations, 2022*. Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); national authorities (3).

- **Environment and climate.** Several projects financed through the PPP aimed to protect the environment in the event of disasters, involved national environmental research institutes, and successfully promoted sustainable disaster prevention in Member States⁸⁸⁵. Sustainability was also recognised as a horizontal principle in the implementation of the Union Disaster Resilience Goals, with specific attention to be paid to minimising the environmental impact of civil protection operations⁸⁸⁶;
- **Education and awareness.** One of the UCPM's specific objectives is to increase public awareness of disasters, supporting Member States' actions. Among other UCPM-level initiatives, Action 4 of the Wildfire Prevention Action Plan aims to enhance citizen protection, preparedness and prevention of wildfire risk through the collection of good practices on raising wildfire awareness in Europe⁸⁸⁷. Union Disaster Resilience Goal No. 2 aims to significantly increase the level of disaster risk awareness among the population in each Member State;
- **Cultural heritage conservation.** Article 1 of the UCPM Decision provides that the protection to be ensured by the UCPM covers primarily people, but also the environment and property, including cultural heritage. Some of the projects financed through the PPP aimed to protect cultural heritage from the consequence of disasters and to develop tailored preparedness measures⁸⁸⁸;
- **International cooperation and diplomacy.** Although the UCPM is primarily intended to function as an instrument for European solidarity against disasters, national authorities also used it as a complementary foreign policy tool⁸⁸⁹ when UCPM assistance is requested in third countries and during repatriation requests. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Member and Participating States with smaller diplomatic networks and fewer citizens overseas benefited from UCPM support enabling them to secure seats for their citizens on flights chartered by other Member and Participating States, avoiding the need to charter their own plane for a small number of individuals⁸⁹⁰.

Judgement criterion:

- **JC11.2:** The UCPM effectively coordinated its response with national actors (MS, PS, TC), with other activities in the field and with other actors / policy fields.

Response activities within the UCPM were coherent and complementary with national civil protection interventions. Countries can request assistance from the UCPM when their response capacity is insufficient to respond in the event of a large-scale disaster. National authorities expressed positive views on the ERCC's coordination of RfA, response to requests, and deployment of response capacity, which were considered highly coherent and complementary to national

⁸⁸⁵ European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects 2014-2020*, 2021.

⁸⁸⁶ European Commission, *Recommendation of 8 February 2023 on Union Disaster Resilience Goals 2023/C 56/01*, 2023.

⁸⁸⁷ Knowledge Network, *Wildfire Prevention Action Plan call for practices*, 2022.

⁸⁸⁸ See, for instance, the ProCultHer project, <https://www.proculther.eu/#:~:text=Protecting%20Cultural%20Heritage%20from%20the%20Consequences%20of%20Disasters,at%20risk%20of%20disaster%20at%20all%20territorial%20levels>.


⁸⁸⁹ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023.

⁸⁹⁰ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on Ukrainian response.

interventions⁸⁹¹. They also agreed that the financial assistance for the deployment and transport of response capacities was complementary to national efforts⁸⁹².

The **deployment of ERCC Liaison Officers** and the role of **EU delegations** during UCPM activations were considered best practice (see Figure 72).

Figure 72. Lesson: ERCC Liaison Officers and EU delegations during UCPM activations



Lesson learnt

ERCC Liaison Officers and EU delegations during UCPM activations

On **ERCC Liaison Officers** played a crucial role in coordinating the exchange of information and cooperation between the ERCC and national authorities during emergencies. They coordinated the arrival of the UCPM assistance, conducted needs assessments and liaised with the national authorities requesting assistance, thereby facilitating response activities.

EU delegations also played a valuable role during deployments outside Europe by coordinating with local authorities to understand the needs and priorities of the affected country. EU Delegations offered logistical and administrative support to UCPM teams, as well as access to a wealth of knowledge about the country and about key national actors and stakeholders. This helped to generate synergies and complementarities between UCPM activities and those already in place at national level. For instance, the EU Delegation supported the EUCPT in ensuring that local authorities have a clear understanding about the scope of the mission, as well as what the UCPM could and could not provide. The situational awareness and understanding of the local context to which EU delegation staff could provide access to was deemed crucial to facilitate coordination between UCPM and national interventions, facilitating smoother activation of the Mechanism than would otherwise have been possible. For example, a recent instance where the Liaison Officer and the EU Delegation played a critical role in ensuring a coherent and smooth activation of the UCPM **occurred during the 2022 activation in response to the tropical cyclone Batsirai in Madagascar**.

Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG ECHO internal documents⁸⁹³.

To ensure coherence between the UCPM and national initiatives and to raise awareness of the UCPM among EU delegations, the Knowledge Network created an e-learning course on the UCPM, available on the EU Academy platform, targeting EU delegation staff (as well as Member States' embassies, and DG ECHO field office staff). DG ECHO also plans to organise information sessions for EU Heads of Delegations and their deputies (especially where DG ECHO has no staff presence), as well as to establish civil protection contact points in EU delegations and share relevant lessons learnt with them.

Between 2017 and 2022, the UCPM coordinated its activities at national level with several different actors and policy fields beyond civil protection. These included national authorities covering other policy sectors, such as Ministries of Health, flood management authorities, and Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Overall, while the UCPM managed to coordinate its activities with national authorities beyond civil protection, there is a need to increase familiarity with the UCPM among other national authorities (see Section 5.4.3)⁸⁹⁴. Stakeholders underlined the need for more

⁸⁹¹ Interviews with: national authorities (20); DG ECHO (9); experts in civil protection (5). Surveys of: national authorities (39).

⁸⁹² Surveys of: national authorities (35/42).

⁸⁹³ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2020 UCPM activations*, 2021; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018–2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020–2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID–19 repatriations/consular services; Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); national authorities (1). European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Preliminary Lessons from Russia's war on Ukraine*, 2022; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*. European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2017 UCPM activations*, 2018; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019. Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO on 9 December 2022. See Annex 7 for case studies on COVID–19 repatriations/consular services, on forest fires, and on Ukrainian response.

⁸⁹⁴ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID–19 wave in Europe*, 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (2). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

cross-sectoral cooperation (at EU and national level) to better prevent, prepare and respond to disasters (see Section 5.3.2)⁸⁹⁵.

The UCPM coordinated its response with the **private sector** in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (see Box 4).

Box 4. EU-level private donation initiative within the UCPM

The purpose of the EU-level private donation initiative was to fill gaps in assistance, easing the burden on Member and Participating States by supplementing national offers of assistance with the involvement of private sector actors. It allowed **private donations to complement national offers** and reinforced EU solidarity in channelling assistance to Ukraine.

In collaboration with Belgian and Polish authorities, two hubs were established: i) a rescEU medical, shelter and CBRN hub in Belgium (managed by the Federal Public Service Health), and ii) a rescEU energy hub in Poland (managed by the Governmental Strategic Reserves Agency, RARS).

DG ECHO, supported by HERA in the initial phases of the initiative, was responsible for evaluating the offers received by the private sector and ensuring that the offers matched the needs identified by the Ukrainian authorities. The hubs oversaw the logistics, quality checks and transport, once the donation agreement was signed.

Source: ICF elaboration, based on Minutes from Lessons Learnt Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023.

Although the private donation initiative was considered to function effectively, DG ECHO indicated the need to establish a **permanent structure and/or framework for private donations within the UCPM Decision** to clarify procedures and mitigate liability risks⁸⁹⁶. However, some national authorities were less disposed towards increased involvement of the private sector, as they consider civil protection a national competence and believe that the private sector should only complement efforts with in-kind assistance to address temporary shortages or gaps in capacity (see Section 5.3.2)⁸⁹⁷.

Finally, evidence suggests that there were potential unexploited synergies in **civil-military coordination during emergencies**. For example, military assets and platforms could offer transport and logistical advantages to UCPM operations⁸⁹⁸. One instance in which the deployment of military assets proved valuable was the UCPM activation in response to the earthquake in Haiti, when a Dutch navy ship provided efficient and effective solutions for certain operational tasks (e.g. providing medical supplies via smaller crafts or reconnaissance via helicopter)⁸⁹⁹. DG ECHO encouraged Member and Participating States to increase the availability of transport capacities by exploring potential synergies with their own law enforcement and military forces⁹⁰⁰.

⁸⁹⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (11); EU stakeholders (12); national authorities (6); international stakeholder (1). Focus group: on cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023; with national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁸⁹⁶ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*. Interviews with: DG ECHO (2). See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁸⁹⁷ Focus group with: national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁸⁹⁸ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (5); international stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Lessons from the first Covid-19 wave in Europe*, 2023; European Commission, *Outcome document on Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 2017 UCPM activations*, 2018; European Commission, *Outcome document on Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019.

⁸⁹⁹ European Commission, *Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations*, 2022.

⁹⁰⁰ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020.

5.4.3 EQ12: To what extent are UCPM activities coherent and complementary to other EU and international interventions in the field of civil protection and other policy fields?

Key findings

- There were synergies and complementarities between UCPM activities and other EU and international interventions in civil protection and other policy fields;
- The UCPM fostered synergies with initiatives across several policy fields, including humanitarian aid, public health, home affairs and consular support. However, there is scope to foster greater coherence and integration with other EU and international interventions in other policy fields;
- The deployment of Liaison Officers from different Commission services (DG SANTE, HERA) to DG ECHO was a good practice to foster synergies and ensure improved cross-sectoral cooperation;
- Some stakeholders raised concerns about the delineation of roles between DG ECHO and HERA, although others felt it was clear;
- The COVID-19 pandemic showed the ability of the UCPM to respond to cross-sectoral crises, given the involvement of authorities beyond civil protection, such as Ministries of Health and Ministries of Foreign Affairs. However, the crisis showed the need to increase awareness of the UCPM among non-civil protection actors;
- The UCPM activities were coherent with the research and innovation agenda, as well as environment and climate change adaptation policies. However, further synergies could be established to improve the environmental sustainability of the UCPM and promote relevant research projects;
- At international level, the UCPM Decision is coherent with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. DG ECHO and the UNDRR took steps to avoid overlaps and duplication of effort. Despite the UCPM effectively coordinating its response with other international level actors (e.g. NATO, UN OCHA), there were unexploited synergies on knowledge sharing, as well as low awareness of the humanitarian aid cluster among the civil protection community.

Judgement criterion:

- JC12.1: There are synergies and complementarities between UCPM activities and other EU interventions related to civil protection (e.g. HERA) and other policy fields (e.g. Asylum and Migration Integration Fund (AMIF), Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN)), as well as relevant international frameworks and initiatives (e.g. the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, UN OCHA)

There were synergies and complementarities between UCPM activities and other EU and international interventions in civil protection and other policy fields.

The UCPM touches on elements that are relevant to several other policy areas. Assessing its external coherence thus means exploring the extent to which it established synergies with other EU and international initiatives, especially given the expansion of its activities throughout the evaluation period (see Figure 73).

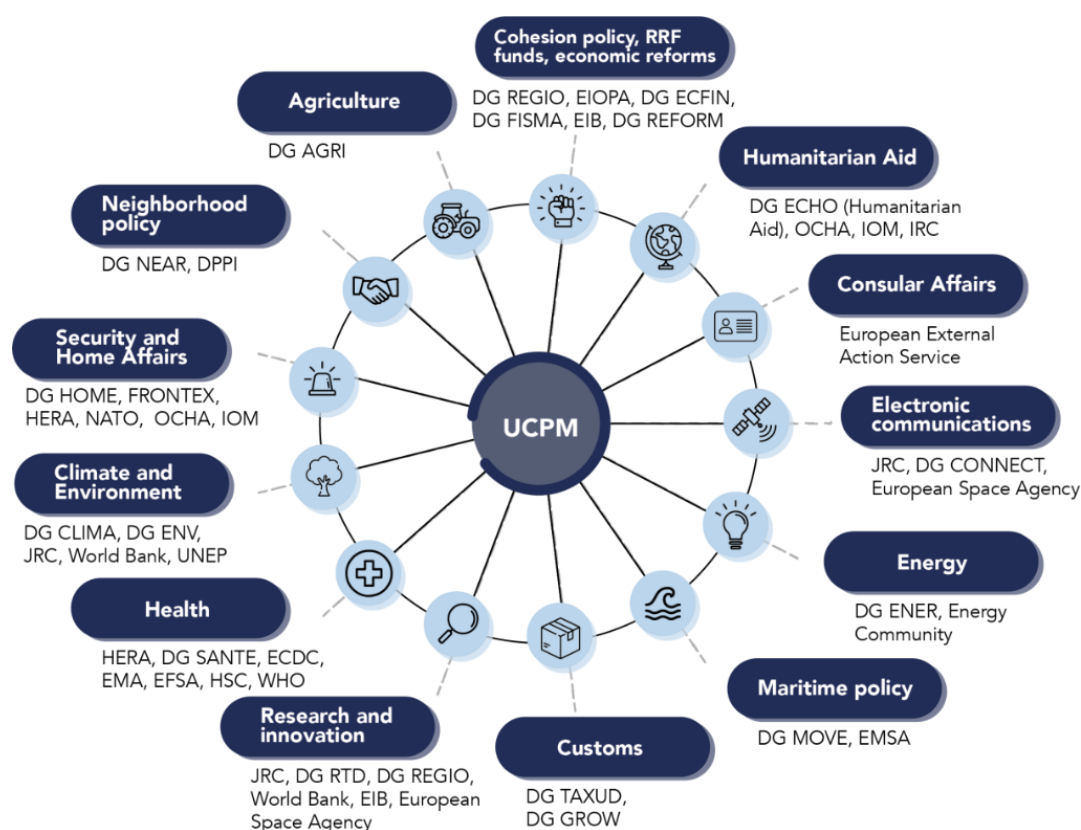
The following sub-sections assess the extent to which the UCPM linked to and complemented other EU-level policy areas, identifying synergies and potential overlaps and discussing the ways in which

the UCPM collaborated with relevant EU institutions, agencies and other international organisations in each focus area. The policy areas reviewed include:

- Humanitarian aid;
- Public health;
- Maritime policy;
- Climate change adaptation policy;
- Environmental policy;
- Migration and home affairs, including CBRN, critical infrastructure, asylum and migration;
- European Neighbourhood Policy;
- Research and innovation;
- Consular support;
- Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Forest Strategy;
- Cohesion Policy, Recovery and Resilience Fund.

It then examines the coherence between the UCPM and other international frameworks (the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction) and other interventions to safeguard international peace and security.

Figure 73. EU and international policy areas and actors with which the UCPM interacts



Source: ICF elaboration.

Notes: This overview is not exhaustive.

5.4.3.1 Humanitarian aid

Between 2017 and 2022, there was a good degree of coherence and complementarity between UCPM interventions and EU and international humanitarian aid initiatives.

The interlinkages between the UCPM and EU-level humanitarian aid activities are numerous. The UCPM Decision stresses the need to ensure complementarity in responses to humanitarian crises in

third countries, particularly with actions under Regulation (EC) No 1257/96⁹⁰¹ and those implemented in line with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid⁹⁰². Civil protection resources are an important contribution to humanitarian actions based on humanitarian need assessments and their possible advantages in terms of speed, specialisation, efficiency and effectiveness, especially in the early phase of relief response. However, in complex emergencies, recourse to civil protection assets should be the exception⁹⁰³. The 2019 revision of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid recognises the important role of the UCPM in crisis response and emphasises the need for closer coordination and collaboration between civil protection and humanitarian actors to ensure a more effective and integrated response to disasters and crises⁹⁰⁴. In 2021, DG ECHO developed the **European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC)**, which is designed to complement the UCPM and to rely on the operational readiness of ERCC⁹⁰⁵. In this framework, the ERCC is crucial in ensuring synergies and complementarities between the UCPM and humanitarian aid operations.

Overall, **DG ECHO Desk Officers agreed that the UCPM was effective in creating synergies and complementarities with the humanitarian aid field**⁹⁰⁶. Examples of UCPM activations that showed synergies and complementarities with humanitarian aid included the 2022 activations in Madagascar in response to the tropical cyclone Batsirai, and in Pakistan in response to floods⁹⁰⁷. In Pakistan, the cooperation with DG ECHO partners implementing humanitarian actions was beneficial, as they provided the network to distribute clean water to the affected population⁹⁰⁸. The deployment of DG ECHO humanitarian experts and ERCC Liaison Officers with humanitarian aid expertise was considered a best practice in strengthening synergies with civil protection⁹⁰⁹. The added value of the Humanitarian Aid Bridge and its potential for UCPM deployments to face logistical challenges was also highlighted⁹¹⁰. Overall, the presence of DG ECHO in the field proved a valuable source of information for the ERCC during UCPM activations in third countries.

However, evidence suggests that there is still a need to ensure a better understanding of humanitarian aid actors (such as UN OCHA, UNICEF, WFP) among deployed UCPM team members⁹¹¹, and vice versa⁹¹². Stakeholders indicated the need for increased focus on humanitarian aid principles and actors in the UCPM training courses, as well as the added value of deploying humanitarian aid experts during UCPM mission⁹¹³.

Stakeholders suggested that **cooperation between the UCPM and relevant international organisations** (e.g. IOM, WFP, UN OCHA) works well, and that cooperation with NATO's Euro-Atlantic

⁹⁰¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid.

⁹⁰² Article 26(2) and (3) Decision (EU) 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

⁹⁰³ 'Complex emergencies might arise when there is a combination of factors such as armed conflict, displacement of people, and natural disasters, that leads to a serious humanitarian crisis' (Council of the EU, European Parliament, European Commission, *Joint statement. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*, 2008).

⁹⁰⁴ Council of the EU, European Parliament, European Commission, *Joint statement. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*, 2008.

⁹⁰⁵ European Commission, *Communication on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles*, 2021.

⁹⁰⁶ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (26/32). Interviews with: DG ECHO (9); national authorities (2); international stakeholders (4).

⁹⁰⁷ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁹ European Commission, *'Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020; European Commission, *'Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2019.

⁹¹⁰ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁹¹¹ Ibid. Interviews with: experts in civil protection (4); international stakeholders (2); national authorities (3). European Commission, *'Outcome document on Lessons Learnt Annual Meeting on 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019.

⁹¹² European Commission, *'Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023.

⁹¹³ Interviews with: experts in civil protection (3); national authorities (3); international stakeholders (2). CN APELL-RO, *'Euromodex Lot 2 2017-2018 Final Consolidated Report*, 2018; European Commission, *'Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt meeting on the 2017 UCPM activations*, 2018; European Commission, *'Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *'Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique*, 2020; European Commission, *'Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019.

Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) improved after the COVID-19 pandemic⁹¹⁴. **SOPs** were considered a useful tool for effective cooperation and reducing the uncertainty in logistics arrangements⁹¹⁵. DG ECHO civil protection representatives participate in relevant global meetings with humanitarian aid partners, such as the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW), co-organised with UN OCHA, and the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) regional meetings⁹¹⁶.

On the UCPM activation in response to **Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine**, evidence shows that relations between DG ECHO civil protection and DG ECHO humanitarian aid were strengthened⁹¹⁷. For instance, the presence of DG ECHO field officers in Ukraine filled information gaps, given that civil protection authorities could not access the Ukrainian territory⁹¹⁸. Synergies were also created to address logistics challenges. However, **there is still a need to clarify the links between civil protection and humanitarian aid, and the role of the UCPM in man-made disasters more generally** (see Section 5.3.2). Coordination and cooperation in the field was limited, and the interaction between the two side of DG ECHO was mostly the result of individuals' proactiveness⁹¹⁹.

5.4.3.2 Public health

Overall, the UCPM framework was coherent with other EU and international level actions in the field of health. Although more synergies were established after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is room for improvement and further coherence.

Although other actors such as DG SANTE, the ECDC, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and HERA play a major role in the prevention, preparedness and response planning for acute health emergencies, the UCPM also aims to ensure protection against acute health emergencies. **Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 on serious cross-border threats to health** is the framework for EU action on health emergencies, coordinated by the Health Security Committee (HSC), while the ECDC identifies, assesses and communicates threats to health from communicable diseases⁹²⁰. Regulation 2022/2371 refers to the role of the UCPM in assisting Member States in the event of a serious cross-border health threat and establishes a framework covering prevention, preparedness and response planning, which is mainly the competence of the HSC. Importantly, in 2021, the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA) was established: its mission is to, among others, prevent, detect, and rapidly respond to health emergencies.

Under **prevention**, the ECDC plays an important role in monitoring and assessing current and emerging threats from infectious diseases. Its research outputs, including its rapid risk assessments, fit into the overview document of disaster risks in the EU, developed on the basis of Article 6 of the UCPM Decision⁹²¹. The 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines advise Member States to cooperate with other types of stakeholders, including health services⁹²².

⁹¹⁴ Interviews with: international stakeholders (6); DG ECHO (7); experts in civil protection (2).

⁹¹⁵ European Commission, *'Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 UCPM activations*, 2019; European Commission, *'Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2017 UCPM activations*, 2018. Interviews with: DG ECHO (1); EU stakeholder (1); international stakeholders (2).

⁹¹⁶ European Commission, *'Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations*, 2020.

⁹¹⁷ See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁹¹⁸ See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

⁹¹⁹ See Annex 7 for case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.'

⁹²⁰ Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 on serious cross-border threats to health and repealing Decision No 1082/2013/EU.

⁹²¹ European Commission, *'Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face*, 2020.

⁹²² European Commission, *Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management, Art. 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU*, 2019.

The 2021 revision of the UCPM Decision significantly strengthened the UCPM medical **preparedness** by including the rescEU reserve of medical items and medical evacuation capabilities. This was done in response to lessons identified during the COVID-19 pandemic, which thoroughly tested the UCPM's ability to respond to large-scale disasters. The UCPM Training and Exercise Programme also includes dedicated courses on assisting victims of mass casualty disasters, such as the Burn Assessment Team course, and the EMT Coordination Cell Courses, delivered in partnership with the WHO. DG ECHO cooperates with the WHO for the certification of the EMTs.

The UCPM also cooperates with the recently established **Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA)**. Created in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, HERA is responsible for ensuring the availability and access to critical medical countermeasures that are needed in times of crisis, such as epidemics, radiological disasters and nuclear disasters. Contrary to the (larger) scope of the UCPM, HERA focuses on **medical countermeasures**. The mandate of HERA includes, among other missions, promoting research and development of medical countermeasures and related technologies, addressing market challenges and boosting the EU's open strategic autonomy in medical countermeasures production, increasing stockpiling capacity of medical countermeasures, and strengthening knowledge and skills in preparedness and response related to medical countermeasures.⁹²³ The only overlapping task between HERA and the UCPM is stockpiling, and for this task cooperation between HERA and the UCPM is in place. While the competencies of HERA are clearly defined in its mandate, some stakeholders expressed concerns about the perceived lack of clarity in the allocation of responsibilities between UCPM and HERA.⁹²⁴ However, others indicated that the delineation of responsibilities is clear and that cooperation between UCPM and HERA enhances the overall preparedness of the EU.⁹²⁵

On **response**, evidence shows the importance of facilitating the mobilisation and deployment of medical experts in UCPM missions or within the ERCC, with ongoing discussions on how to best make use of this expertise in a structured way⁹²⁶. As a good practice, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ERCC was reinforced with an epidemiologist from the JRC. Similarly, in the context of the UCPM activation in Ukraine, HERA deployed a Liaison Officer to assess needs in the field of health. DG ECHO also cooperated with the DG SANTE and ECDC, with the latter sending epidemiological experts to DG ECHO.

Overall, coordination with health actors was crucial to ensuring an effective response at EU and national level. For example, the 2017 UCPM activation in Uganda to face the potentially serious Marburg Virus outbreak was seen as a positive example of UCPM coordination with health actors, such as the WHO, the Ugandan Minister of Health, and Médecins Sans Frontières⁹²⁷. Although DG ECHO Desk Officers considered synergies and complementarities with the public health policy field to have been established⁹²⁸, **the COVID-19 pandemic showed the need to increase knowledge and awareness of the UCPM among health authorities at national level**⁹²⁹.

⁹²³ Article 2 Decision of 16 September 2021 establishing the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority 2021/C 393 I/02.

⁹²⁴ Focus group with: DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023. Interviews with: DG ECHO (8); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (8). See Annex 7 for case study on COVID-19.

⁹²⁵ See Annex 7 for case study on COVID-19. Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2).

⁹²⁶ European Commission, *'Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe'*, 2023. European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting on 24/25 April 2023*; Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2).

⁹²⁷ European Commission, *'Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2017 UCPM activations'*, 2018.

⁹²⁸ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (27/31).

⁹²⁹ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023; European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2020 UCPM activations*, 2021; European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID-19.

Finally, the UCPM complemented and strengthened the support offered through the **Emergency Support Instrument (ESI)**, which was activated from April 2020 to January 2022⁹³⁰. Unlike the UCPM, the ESI was primarily a funding opportunity for Member States to mitigate the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. Recital 4 of Regulation (EU) 2020/521 provided that, given the nature and the consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak, the measures under the UCPM were limited in scale and did not allow a sufficient response or make it possible to effectively address the large-scale consequences of the COVID-19 crisis within the Union. In other words, the ESI was a complementary instrument in addition to efforts under the UCPM and rescEU, in particular⁹³¹. DG ECHO actions under the ESI were grouped under the Mobility Package and included the transport of cargo, patients and medical teams in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.4.3.3 Maritime policy

The UCPM Decision and its activities were generally aligned with the maritime policy field, although evidence suggests that the UCPM lacks sufficient emphasis on marine pollution.

The UCPM cooperates with the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) to respond to marine pollution cases. The allocation of responsibilities between the UCPM and EMSA on marine pollution is set out in their respective legislative frameworks. The EMSA Regulation provides that ‘requests for mobilisation of anti-pollution actions shall be relayed through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism’ and that EMSA ‘may also provide assistance in case of pollution caused by ships as well as marine pollution caused by oil and gas installations affecting those third countries sharing a regional sea basin with the Union, in line with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism’⁹³². Article 1(6) of the UCPM Decision specifies that it does not apply to actions carried out under the EMSA Regulation.

Coherence between the activities of EMSA and the UCPM and their overall coordination and integration is facilitated through several instruments and initiatives:

- **DG ECHO signed a renewed working arrangement with EMSA in February 2023.** This is intended to enhance cooperation in marine pollution, maritime SAR operations, security and safety incidents, enabling faster mobilisation of resources to support Member States or third countries⁹³³. The new working arrangement is deemed more practical than the previous version and has expanded the definition of maritime incidents to include acts of piracy⁹³⁴;
- **The ERCC has access to the SafeSeaNet platform**, a vessel traffic monitoring system managed by EMSA. In turn, **EMSA has access to CECIS Marine Pollution**, a system supporting the coordination of responses to maritime pollution incidents between national, EU and international authorities. EMSA’s vessels, such as oil spill response vessels and pollution control ships, can be made available through the UCPM in the event of a disaster that requires their specialised capabilities. In this way, EMSA’s vessels can complement the UCPM’s resources, enhancing the effectiveness of disaster response operation;
- **The Training and Exercises Programme provided a dedicated core course on maritime incidents, the Technical Expert Course for Maritime Incidents (TEC MI).** This training is no longer part of the new Training and Exercises Programme. Marine pollution was also a frequent disaster risk among the projects awarded within the PPP between 2017 and 2022.

⁹³⁰ Council Regulation (EU) 2020/521 of 14 April 2020 activating the emergency support under Regulation (EU) 2016/369, and amending its provisions taking into account the COVID-19 outbreak.

⁹³¹ European Commission, *Questions and Answers on Emergency Support Instrument*, 2020.

⁹³² Article 2 Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2002 establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency.

⁹³³ European Commission, *Renewed working arrangement between ECHO and EMSA officially signed*, 2023.

⁹³⁴ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2).

Several stakeholders underlined that the UCPM lacks sufficient emphasis on marine pollution⁹³⁵.

Cooperation between EMSA, DG MOVE and the ERCC was deemed to be functioning effectively in response activities⁹³⁶. EMSA is often contacted to obtain satellite images, but DG MOVE and the EEAS should also be involved, although responses may be slower as requests might need to be evaluated for security concerns and/or political reasons.

Several stakeholders reported that the interface of the CECIS Marine Pollution Platform could be improved, and possible overlaps between CECIS Marine Pollution and SafeSeatNet could be reduced, especially double reporting by national authorities⁹³⁷. For example, in the event of a maritime pollution incident, both platforms may be used to exchange information on the type and extent of the pollution.

5.4.3.4 Climate change adaptation policies

Several synergies were created between the UCPM and climate change adaptation policies. However, there remains room for improvement in the environmental sustainability of the UCPM.

UCPM Decision 1313/2013 refers to the likely impacts of climate change on disaster risks in several instances. In turn, the **2021 EU strategy on adaptation to climate change** refers to the role of the UCPM to respond to more severe and longer disasters, given the impact of climate change.

The **2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines** are largely coherent with EU-level climate change policy. They advise Member States to identify climate change impacts and climate change adaptation measures in their DRM Summary Reports. The 2019 version constitutes a step forward compared to the 2015 guidelines, as it refers to the impacts of climate change in a more systematic way and adds that the guidelines aim to 'encourage an exchange of good practices in preparing civil protection systems to cope with the impact of climate change'⁹³⁸. This may have been taken on board by Member and Participating States, as the latest overview document of disaster risks in the EU revealed that 25 of the 30 national reports mentioned climate change as a driver or risk, higher than in the previous reporting cycle⁹³⁹.

The non-exhaustive list of EU-level legislation on specific risks (included in the annex to the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines) does not reflect current EU-level policy landscape (which changed after the 2020 European Green Deal Package) on climate change adaptation, such as the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change, and the **European Climate Risk Assessment (EUCRA)**. EUCRA will assess current and future climate change impacts and risks relating to the environment, economy and wider society in Europe. The first EUCRA (expected in 2024) will be an expert-driven assessment primarily based on a review and synthesis of existing data and knowledge from various sources. The assessment will focus on complex climate risks, such as cross-border, cascading and compound risks. As EUCRA seeks to complement the existing knowledge base on the assessment of climate-related hazards and risks in Europe, it will be crucial to ensure that findings of these two overviews (EUCRA and the overview of risk developed under the UCPM Decision) will inform and complement one another⁹⁴⁰.

⁹³⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (4). Surveys of: national authorities (1/51). EESC, *Consolidating the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

⁹³⁶ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2).

⁹³⁷ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (1).

⁹³⁸ European Commission, *Notice Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management*, Art. 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU2019/C 428/07, 2019.

⁹³⁹ The 2017 interim evaluation revealed that 'many EU Member States do not yet fully integrate climate change adaptation into their NRA' (European Commission, *Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2017, p. 79).

⁹⁴⁰ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2). The EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change provides funding opportunities to support EU regions, cities and local authorities in their efforts to build resilience against the impacts of climate change. Initiatives supported in this framework might also be relevant to supporting climate risk assessments, raising awareness of disaster risks among citizens, and

The recently introduced **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** integrate climate change considerations within the UCPM framework by underlining sustainability as a horizontal principle in the implementation of each and advising Member States to consider the impacts of climate change on disaster risks in their risk assessments, risk management planning, and detection and forecasting systems⁹⁴¹.

Other newly introduced UCPM initiatives show good synergies with EU-level policies on climate change adaptation, such as the **Knowledge Network**, which provides a platform for sharing best practices, exchanging information and experiences, and developing common approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. DG ECHO strongly cooperates with the JRC under the **EWS** working group, and the impacts of climate change are frequently discussed, given the importance of integrating climate change considerations into forecasting systems⁹⁴².

Stakeholders agreed that the UCPM was effective in creating synergies with EU interventions in climate change adaptation⁹⁴³. However, they also agreed that there is room for improvement. The UCPM could be further strengthened as regards fostering existing greening policies, practices, and examples of 'greening initiatives'. Specifically, a recent study on greening the UCPM found that⁹⁴⁴:

- **Environmental footprint data and indicators are not readily available for an accurate estimation and monitoring of: (i) carbon emissions and (ii) the broader environmental footprint.** Improved data availability on vehicle/equipment use and goods purchased would make it possible to estimate and monitor the carbon footprint of the UCPM, as well as the broader environmental footprint of civil protection activities. Rethinking transport and equipment use (by tracking their use in UCPM operations) would also help to establish distance travelled by different vehicles and equipment;
- **Although some civil protection authorities have begun to purchase greening vehicles, there are significant information gaps and challenges, such as cost and effectiveness, in some crisis contexts.** While Disaster Resilience Grants provide funding to Member and Participating States to improve disaster risk management capacities (by supporting studies, training, and development of risk assessments), funding for infrastructure or equipment in Member and Participating States is outside the scope of the Grants. DG ECHO grant schemes could be adjusted or complemented to encourage greening by boosting their uptake and increasing their value for greening efforts. This would necessitate increased financial resources and knowledge of financing opportunities for the purchase of greener transport and equipment;
- **Many civil protection actors perceived a lack of reporting and acting on information from crisis that could reduce the impacts from future crises and provide information on the most effective greening efforts.** Suggestions included embedding greening lessons for UCPM deployments in the Lessons Learnt Programme or extending the role of environmental experts to include feedback on environmental issues.

The study on greening the UCPM gave an overview of the approaches taken by some Member and Participating States on incorporating environmental considerations into civil protection activities, showing growing awareness and commitment. These included the adoption of green public

harmonising prevention efforts among regional, local, and national authorities (European Commission, EU Mission: Adaptation to Climate Change, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/adaptation-climate-change_en#funding-opportunities

⁹⁴¹ European Commission, *Recommendation on Union Disaster Resilience Goals*, 2023.

⁹⁴² European Commission, *Minutes of the Early Warning Systems (EWS) Expert Group meeting*, 2022.

⁹⁴³ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (22/30). Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (5); national authorities (2). EESC, *Consolidating the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

⁹⁴⁴ COWI, *Study on greening the Union Civil Protection Mechanism*, 2023. The recommendations included in the study on greening the UCPM are more extensive and detailed than those listed here.

procurement measures, the development of tailored EWS, and the adoption of national greening strategies or action plans.

Overall, the study recommended that DG ECHO establish a forum of stakeholders through the Knowledge Network to discuss green initiatives and possibly constitute a mechanism for producing methodologies, tools and data on making the 'right green decisions'. Other recommendations included cataloguing funding options available to Member and Participating States to support the purchase of greener vehicles, developing a shareable list of low-packaging products and suppliers, creating an environmental section within the ERCC, and developing a standardised lessons reporting sheet to encourage green feedback loops by response teams.

The last **Civil Protection Forum** incorporated a thinking lab on possibilities to foster greener civil protection⁹⁴⁵. Participants were encouraged to share their knowledge and propose concrete actions to reduce the environmental impact of response activities on the ground. Suggestions included the use of sustainable and recyclable materials, as well as energy-saving measures. While a shift towards a more sustainable response is needed, participants underlined the challenges of such a shift for safety and efficiency and stressed that these aspects should not be limited by a more sustainable response.

5.4.3.5 Environmental policy

The UCPM was generally coherent with several EU environmental policy instruments, such as the **Floods Directive**, the **Water Framework Directive**, and the **Seveso Directive**, although more can be done to ensure increased synergies.

The **Floods Directive** establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks across the EU⁹⁴⁶. Member States are required to carry out an initial flood risk assessment and develop flood risk maps for their river basins and coastal areas. Based on these assessments, they must then develop flood risk management plans that identify measures to prevent or reduce flood risks. The **Water Framework Directive** requires Member States to monitor and address some quantitative aspects of water management, and it complements the Floods Directive by promoting sustainable water management and ecosystem protection, which helps to reduce flood risks⁹⁴⁷. The Union Disaster Resilience Goals refer to the Floods Directive, and the fourth goal includes specific objectives for the UCPM response against flood-related disasters⁹⁴⁸.

Synergies and complementarities are established between the UCPM and the Floods Directive and Water Framework Directive through the following instruments and initiatives:

- **2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines refer to both the Floods Directive and the Water Framework Directive**, advising Member States to include the findings from the obligations stemming from these Directives into their DRM Summary Reports. The 2020 overview document of disaster risks in the EU provided that 'there is now more data on floods as the Floods Directive requires the collection of information on floods events'⁹⁴⁹;
- **EWS related to flood risks**, such as EFAS and Copernicus, managed by the JRC. This is in line with the Floods Directive, which provides that flood risk management plans 'shall address all

⁹⁴⁵ European Commission, *7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022. Final report*, 2022.

⁹⁴⁶ Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks.

⁹⁴⁷ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

⁹⁴⁸ European Commission, *Recommendation of 8 February 2023 on Union disaster resilience goals 2023/C 56/01*, 2022.

⁹⁴⁹ 'However, even for relatively well-accounted disasters such as floods, the EU lacks a defined and agreed methodology on how to record the adverse economic consequences resulting from those events' (European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face*, 2020).

aspects of flood risk management focusing on prevention, protection, preparedness, including flood forecasts and Early Warning Systems⁹⁵⁰;

- **In 2021, a UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting identified lessons from recent floods in Europe during UCPM activations** and beyond. This was also used as an occasion to present the Floods Directive requirements by DG ENV, and best practices at national level when it comes to the Directive's implementation. This initiative, as well as other workshops organised by DG ENV in which DG ECHO representatives are invited, contribute to strengthening synergies between the UCPM framework and the Floods Directive⁹⁵¹. Nevertheless, evidence shows that the UCPM is perceived more relevant for response activities in case of floods as opposed to prevention⁹⁵²;
- **DG ECHO works with the Floods Working Group** to establish synergies and improve cooperation between civil protection and flood risk management authorities, by organising workshops and other relevant initiatives⁹⁵³;
- **The Training and Exercises Programme and EU MODEX were regarded as essential tools** for enhancing Member and Participating States' preparedness for floods⁹⁵⁴.

On industrial accidents, the **Seveso-III Directive** requires stringent safety measures to be implemented to prevent major accidents from occurring and, in cases where they cannot be prevented, to effectively mitigate their consequences for human health and the environment⁹⁵⁵. Member States are obliged to report to the EU any accidents that fulfil certain criteria established in the Directive. Article 12 provides that, with regard to external emergency plans, Member States 'shall take into account the need to facilitate enhanced cooperation in civil protection assistance in major emergencies', although it does not refer to the UCPM. In turn, the annex to the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines refers to the Seveso Directive for industrial risks. The overview document of disaster risks in the EU confirms that many Member States reference and make use of the data gathered under the Seveso Directive when assessing the risk of industrial accidents, but it also reveals that data collection on industrial accidents faces particular challenges due to its decentralised nature, private ownership and varying obligations for different types of establishments. The overview document of disaster risks in the EU also uses data from the eMARS portal, the major accident reporting system for submitting accident reports to the Commission, according to Seveso III Directive criteria.

However, beyond the use within the EU overview of risks, there were no findings on whether the UCPM uses or is involved with the initiatives carried out by DG ENV. According to the EESC, sectors such as industrial risks and disasters on electricity should be better addressed by the UCPM⁹⁵⁶. Links between the Seveso Expert Group and the UCPM could be strengthened by ensuring DG ECHO participation in the Expert Group's regular meetings that inform responsible national authorities (including civil protection authorities) of DG ENV initiatives on the Seveso Directive⁹⁵⁷.

⁹⁵⁰ Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks.

⁹⁵¹ European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe*, 2022. Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1); DG ECHO (1).

⁹⁵² See Annex 7 for case study on floods.

⁹⁵³ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*.

⁹⁵⁴ See Annex 7 for case study on floods.

⁹⁵⁵ Directive 2012/18/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2012 on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directive 96/82/EC

⁹⁵⁶ EESC, *Consolidating the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

⁹⁵⁷ For instance, DG ECHO participated in the 7th meeting of the Commission Expert Group on the control of major accident hazards involving dangerous substances in 2019 but not in the 6th meeting in 2018 (European Commission, , 2019, https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/TEIA/190509_SEG-07_FINAL_Agenda-CLN-forAres.pdf; European Commission,

5.4.3.6 Migration and home affairs

The interim evaluation found that between 2017 and 2022, the UCPM established synergies and complementarities with the field of migration and home affairs⁹⁵⁸, notably by expanding its scope to (i) CBRN threats, and (ii) the protection of critical infrastructure.

2. CBRN threats

Article 1(2) of the UCPM Decision specifies that in the case of acts of terrorism or radiological disasters, the UCPM only covers preparedness and response actions. **It can also be activated for man-made disasters**, including acts of terrorism, technological or radiological disasters.

The 2017 Action Plan to enhance preparedness against CBRN security risks has three main objectives: i) to reduce the accessibility of CBRN materials, ii) to ensure a most robust preparedness for and response to CBRN security incidents, and iii) to enhance knowledge of CBRN risks⁹⁵⁹. Under the second objective, the Commission intends to strengthen training and exercises for first responders from law enforcement, civil protection and health authorities through the existing financial instruments and operational tools, including the UCPM.

Between 2017 and 2022, the UCPM framework strengthened its preparedness against CBRN threats. This was achieved through several preparedness and response activities:

- **When designing the new rescEU reserve, CBRN capacities were given a high level of priority.** Three implementing decisions were adopted to develop: CBRN decontamination capacities⁹⁶⁰, CBRN stockpiling⁹⁶¹, and mobile laboratory, CBRN detection, sampling, identification, and monitoring capacities⁹⁶². During the evaluation period, five grants were awarded for CBRN stockpiling, and CBRN decontamination team capacities;
- **Exercises on potential CBRN events** were carried out within the Training and Exercises Programme, as well as exchanges on CBRN within the EoE Programme⁹⁶³;
- **The introduction of HERA**, responsible to develop a strategy on EU level stockpiling of medical countermeasures, including stockpiling of CBRN and medical countermeasures, also aimed to build increase CBRN resilience in the EU.
- During the UCPM activations in the context of **Russian's war of aggression against Ukraine**, rescEU CBRN reserves were mobilised and dispatched to Ukraine. The coordination of the ERCC with other relevant sectors enabled an effective response and showed the need for further synergies with actors in different sectors, such as transport, CBRN and security⁹⁶⁴.

Stakeholders recognised that several steps were taken to foster synergies and complementarities within the CBRN portfolio, for example through increased cooperation and involvement of DG HOME. However, they recognised that it is too early to assess the extent to which these measures have been successful, as they only began in 2021⁹⁶⁵. As CBRN is relevant to several Commission services (e.g. DG HOME, HERA), there is a risk of fragmentation and stovepiping⁹⁶⁶ between existing initiatives in the field.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Seveso Expert Group, 2018, [https://epsc.be/Activity/EU+Activity+Seveso/_/Seveso Expert Group minutes - March 7 2018.pdf](https://epsc.be/Activity/EU+Activity+Seveso/_/Seveso%20Expert%20Group%20minutes%20-%20March%207%202018.pdf)

⁹⁵⁸ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (20/31). Interviews with: DG ECHO (5); EU stakeholders (6); national authorities (3).

⁹⁵⁹ European Commission, *Action Plan to enhance preparedness against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear security risks*, 2017.

⁹⁶⁰ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1886 of 27 October 2021.

⁹⁶¹ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1886 of 27 October 2021 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570.

⁹⁶² Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/465 of 21 March 2022 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570.

⁹⁶³ EU-CHEM-REACT-2, *Full Scale Field Exercise (FSX) Final Conduct Report*, 2021; CN APEL- RO – IGSU, *Programme of Exchange of Civil Protection Experts*, Final Report, 2020.

⁹⁶⁴ European Commission, *UCPM Lesson Learnt Programme Meeting. Preliminary lessons from Russia's war on Ukraine*, 2022.

⁹⁶⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (5); EU stakeholders (5); national authorities (3).

⁹⁶⁶ In intelligence gathering, stove piping is the presentation of information without proper context.

ii) Critical infrastructure

The 2019 revision of the UCPM first introduced the protection of critical infrastructure. Decision (EU) 2019/420 provided that ‘actions to reduce the vulnerability of the population, economic activities, including critical infrastructure, [...], are of the utmost importance’. The overall increase in the terrorist threat in the EU also applies to critical infrastructure, which may be targeted by threat actors. Such attacks would generate cascading effects and affect the delivery of essential services, including the provision of energy, transport, water, food, communications, and health services⁹⁶⁷.

Recently, the EU adopted Directive 2022/2557/EU on the resilience of critical entities (CER Directive) and repealed Directive 2008/114/EU on the identification and designation of European Critical Infrastructures. The CER Directive states that ‘when providing support to Member States and critical entities in the implementation of obligations under this Directive, the Commission should build on existing structures and tools, such as the UCPM’. Compared to the 2008 version, the Directive changed from an instrument that mainly identifies European critical infrastructure to a tool that also addresses resilience, protection and maintaining essential services.

Analysis of the synergies between the CER Directive and the UCPM reveal that:

- **In carrying out the risk assessments required by the CER Directive⁹⁶⁸, Member States must consider the general risk assessments carried out pursuant to Article 6(1) of the UCPM Decision 1313/2013/EU.** In turn, the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines advise Member States to report any measures in place to protect critical infrastructure and continue vital functions and refers to the 2008 Directive;
- **The two reporting obligations are thus designed as complementary and mutually informative.** However, in light of the update to the CER Directive, the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines might benefit from review. An update should consider the implications of the adoption of new definitions for key concepts included within the CER Directive, such as ‘critical entity’ and ‘critical infrastructure’. This might ensure further coherence and avoid inconsistency or double reporting;
- The CER Directive provides that when a Member State identifies a critical entity of particular European significance, the Commission should be able to organise an **advisory mission** to assess the measures put in place by that entity. Specific expertise required for such advisory missions could be requested through the ERCC⁹⁶⁹.

Stakeholders underlined the importance of ensuring increased complementarity between the UCPM and the field of critical infrastructures protection, with positive views on the UCPM’s synergies with the work of DG HOME⁹⁷⁰. Given that an attack on critical infrastructure would have consequences for a variety of sectors and services (health, energy, transport), stakeholders agreed that a well-functioning cross-sectoral approach to effectively respond and mitigate its impacts is necessary (see Section 5.3.2)⁹⁷¹.

iii) Asylum and migration

The UCPM initiatives were coherent with the field of migration and asylum, as evidenced by the following activities:

⁹⁶⁷ European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face*, 2020.

⁹⁶⁸ Member States are required to draft risk assessments, which shall account for relevant natural and man-made risks, including those of a cross-sectoral or cross-border nature, accidents, natural disasters, public health emergencies and hybrid threats or other antagonistic threats, including terrorist offences.

⁹⁶⁹ Recital 36 Directive (EU) 2022/2557 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on the resilience of critical entities and repealing Council Directive 2008/114/EC.

⁹⁷⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (4); EU stakeholders (6); international stakeholders (1).

⁹⁷¹ Interviews with: DG ECHO (11); EU stakeholders (12); national authorities (6).

- **In March 2021, DG ECHO expanded rescEU capacities to include a new capacity to provide emergency shelter to people affected by disasters and emergencies.** During the 2020 Annual Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting, participants highlighted the need to acquire a strategic number of temporary shelter assets under rescEU⁹⁷². These were regarded as versatile in supporting the immediate aftermath of a disaster, as well as longer-term crises such as pandemics or increased migration flows;
- **In the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the UCPM delivered shelter capacities under rescEU.** Moldova and Slovakia requested support from the UCPM to manage the migration flow from Ukraine. The request encompassed equipment, including shelter and non-food items, vehicles and communication devices⁹⁷³;
- **Stakeholders agreed that cooperation between relevant international organisations (IOM, the Red Cross, UN OCHA) and DG ECHO was effective** and that synergies were established with the migration and home affairs field⁹⁷⁴. For instance, the 2017 UCPM activation in Bangladesh for mass displacement was a good example of effective coordination between the IOM, UN OCHA and the ERCC, which allowed for swift mobilisation of assets⁹⁷⁵. Room for improvement was identified in DG ECHO-IOM cooperation on logistics⁹⁷⁶;
- **Beyond administrative agreements and SOPs,** informal communication channels smooth cooperation between relevant international organisations and DG ECHO⁹⁷⁷;
- **The UCPM complemented the ESI funding tool,** providing a framework for the coordination of response to emergencies (including large influxes of migrants).

5.4.3.7 European Neighbourhood Policy

Article 28(3) of the UCPM Decision provides that 'international or regional organisations, or countries that are part of the European Neighbourhood Policy may cooperate in activities under the Union Mechanism [...]'. The European Neighbourhood Policy governs the EU's relations with 16 of the EU's closest Eastern and Southern neighbours. In addition, the IPA is the means by which the EU supports reform in the enlargement region with financial and technical assistance. The IPA can also support the development of civil protection capacity in beneficiary countries.

Within this framework, key initiatives that are relevant for the UCPM include the **PPRD South II, PPRD East II and III, and the IPA**. These all aim to increase partner countries' resilience to natural and man-made disasters.

Overall, the evidence shows that partner countries had the opportunity to learn more about the UCPM, its framework and activities, and to align more closely with UCPM methodologies and tools⁹⁷⁸. This was achieved through a number of actions, including training on the UCPM and its tools⁹⁷⁹ and other types of training, similar to courses provided within the UCPM and delivered by experts with experience of teaching under the UCPM⁹⁸⁰. Other activities included organisation of regional workshops on the UCPM and international cooperation during major emergencies, including host nation support.

⁹⁷² European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learned Meeting on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in 2020*, 2021.

⁹⁷³ European Commission, *Daily Map: Ukraine: Assistance offered through the UCPM*, 2022.

⁹⁷⁴ Interviews with: DG ECHO (7); International organisations (4); experts in civil protection (2). Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (20/31) reported that the UCPM has been effective in creating synergies with EU interventions in the field of migration and home affairs.

⁹⁷⁵ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learned Meeting on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in 2017*, 2018.

⁹⁷⁶ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1).

⁹⁷⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); International organisations (2).

⁹⁷⁸ Expertise France, *Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural – man-made Disasters, region South. Phase III (PPRD South III)*, Final Report, 2021.

⁹⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁰ Stantec, *PPRD EAST II: Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters in the EaP countries*, Final Report, 2019; European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019.

Some stakeholders raised concerns about potential overlaps between the PPRD East Programmes and other UCPM activities, given that more neighbouring countries have joined (e.g. Ukraine) or are interested in joining (e.g. Moldova, Georgia) the UCPM as Participating States⁹⁸¹. The case study on the integration of UCPM preparedness activities found room for improvement in the alignment of the UCPM and PPRD training⁹⁸².

A 2019 study on the UCPM Training Programme found that participation of third-country experts in UCPM training courses is not well planned⁹⁸³. They are also eligible to take part in other civil protection training within the EU framework, namely under the IPA and PPRD. As part of PPRD East 2 and PPRD South 3, there are several civil protection training courses similar to the UCPM Training Programme. These courses also explore the UCPM Training Programme and try to adapt to it, and the study suggested that the PPRD could be used to boost participation of experts from third countries in the UCPM Training Programme.

While all EU Member States have access to CECIS, other Participating States do not (Montenegro, North Macedonia, Türkiye, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Albania). In the case of Albania, Ukraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, it reflects their recent joining of the UCPM and the longer connection process.

Finally, feedback from EU delegations in three IPA countries revealed that coordination with the ERCC worked well when responding to emergencies⁹⁸⁴. However, they noted room for improvement in national level issues and the lack of access to the CECIS platform by some IPA countries⁹⁸⁵.

5.4.3.8 Research and innovation

The UCPM ensured synergies with EU-level research and innovation initiatives.

Working relationships between DG ECHO and the JRC are well established on the development, improvement and use of EWS, including the production of daily maps and flash overviews that are used on the ERCC portal⁹⁸⁶. These systems ensure complementarities and strengthen not only the prevention and preparedness pillar, but also response, leading to better tools to face emergencies and better knowledge of risks among the civil protection community and beyond. The ERCC analytical cell ensures that data from the EU EWS are verified by experts from the European Scientific Partnership and translated into actionable information, specifically for the ERCC's early action.

Recent complex emergencies (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) have shown the importance of embedding specialised scientific expertise during crises, and the need to improve **operational links with the scientific community for response activities** (e.g. involvement of technical experts)⁹⁸⁷. In addition to the work with the JRC, stakeholders reported that **DG ECHO could work more closely with other DGs** (such as DG RTD or DG CLIMA) to promote relevant research, mobilise the academic sector, and fund specific or joint projects⁹⁸⁸.

⁹⁸¹ Focus group with: national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

⁹⁸² See Annex 7 for case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

⁹⁸³ European Commission, *Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme*, 2019.

⁹⁸⁴ Feedback from EU delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO on 9 December 2022.

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁶ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (16/29). Interviews with: EU stakeholders (5); DG ECHO (3); national authorities (1); international stakeholders (1).

⁹⁸⁷ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023. Interviews with: national authorities (20); DG ECHO (9); EU stakeholders (6); experts in civil protection (6).

⁹⁸⁸ Focus group: on cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023. Interviews with: national authorities (1); DG ECHO (1); experts in civil protection (1); EU stakeholders (2). European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023; EESC, *Consolidating the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

Evidence shows the need to **increase the dissemination of research products and knowledge** (e.g. from the PPP)⁹⁸⁹. DG ECHO is working on an **online hub** that will map the different funding opportunities and thereby increase coordination with other EU programmes supporting prevention and preparedness projects in the Member States⁹⁹⁰. It will also facilitate access for civil protection stakeholders to a number of EU funding programmes, such as the Technical Support Instrument (DG REFORM's main funding instrument), Horizon Europe, LIFE Programme, and INTERREG (DG REGIO-funded instrument supporting cross-border interregional cooperation).

Finally, the **science pillar of the Knowledge Network** aims to bring together academics, practitioners and decision makers for multidisciplinary, cross-sectoral and cross-border cooperation to apply scientific knowledge to disaster risk management. It will base its work on the achievements and activities of the DRMKC (managed by the JRC), as well as Aristotle. However, during the stakeholder consultation, the Knowledge Network was referred to as being still 'under construction' albeit with good potential to establish further synergies⁹⁹¹.

5.4.3.9 Consular support

Despite the fact that UCPM evacuation and repatriation efforts were largely effective, there is scope to streamline procedures and to enhance awareness of the UCPM among relevant actors in the consular support field.

Article 16(7) of Decision 1313/2013/EU provides that the **UCPM may be used to provide civil protection support to consular assistance to EU citizens** in disasters in third countries, if requested by the consular authorities of the Member States concerned. The EU confers EU citizens with the fundamental and citizen's right to consular protection when they travel or reside outside the EU⁹⁹². Council Directive (EU) 2015/637 regulates the coordination and cooperation measures to facilitate consular protection for unrepresented EU citizens in third countries. Directive (EU) 2015/637 provides that Member States may seek support from instruments such as the UCPM or the crisis management structures of the EEAS⁹⁹³.

Between 2017 and 2022, the UCPM received around 46 RfA for consular support. A large majority related to the **repatriation of EU citizens due to the COVID-19 pandemic**. The ERCC, in coordination with EU delegations and the EEAS central administration (particularly the Consular Affairs Division and the dedicated Consular Taskforce) supported Member States in repatriating more than 600,000 citizens, 90,000 of them benefiting from UCPM-sponsored flights⁹⁹⁴.

Overall, evidence on these operations found that:

- **There was a good level of cooperation between relevant authorities** (EEAS including EU delegations and ERCC), offering support and complementing each other's mandates⁹⁹⁵. In addition to national civil protection authorities, the ERCC interacted with national Ministries of Health and Foreign Affairs.

⁹⁸⁹ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on the 2018 Forest Fire Season*, 2019; European Commission, *Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014–2020)*, 2021.

⁹⁹⁰ European Commission, *Note to DG ECHO Management. Prevention and Preparedness Programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme*, 2022.

⁹⁹¹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (5); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (3); national authorities (6). EESC, *Consolidating the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in order to improve the EU's capacity to react in the face of extreme events, including those occurring outside its territory*, Opinion, 2022.

⁹⁹² Articles 20(2)(c) and 23 TFEU provide that every EU citizen is entitled, in the territory of a third country in which the Member State of which they are a national is not represented, to protection by the diplomatic and consular authorities of any Member State, under the same conditions as nationals of that Member State.

⁹⁹³ Article 13(4) Council Directive (EU) 2015/637 of 20 April 2015 on the coordination and cooperation measures to facilitate consular protection for unrepresented citizens of the Union in third countries and repealing Decision 95/553/EC.

⁹⁹⁴ European Commission, *Situational awareness sector. Overview of COVID-19 related UCPM Requests for Assistance in 2020, 2021*, https://ercportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ercmaps/20210113_UCPM_World_COVID_2020.pdf

⁹⁹⁵ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID–19 wave in Europe*, 2023.

- **The deployment of an ERCC Liaison Officer** alongside the UCPM response was considered a good practice⁹⁹⁶;
- Although repatriation efforts were largely effective, they showed **the need to increase the knowledge and awareness of the UCPM among these key players, particularly in third countries**⁹⁹⁷. This points to the importance of continuing the training for civil protection focal points in EU delegations, as well as the need to maintain long-term knowledge on the UCPM among their staff. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UCPM was rarely used for consular support⁹⁹⁸. However, the 2017 UCPM activations for consular support had already highlighted the need for enhanced cooperation between consular and civil protection authorities⁹⁹⁹;
- **Areas for improvement during consular support operations included the bureaucratic nature of the application process, unclear procedures**, or several cases where resources were not fully used (e.g. half-empty planes)¹⁰⁰⁰.

5.4.3.10 CAP and EU Forest Strategy

During the evaluation period, synergies were established between the UCPM and the CAP on the integration of disaster risk management in CAP Strategic Plans 2021–2027 and the EU Forest Strategy. The recent Wildfire Prevention Action Plan is expected to promote further mainstreaming of disaster risk management in agricultural and forestry policy and programmes and to ensure better coherence.

The EU does not have a common forestry policy, as this remains primarily a national competence. However, many EU measures have an impact on forests in EU and non-EU countries¹⁰⁰¹:

- **CAP, which is the main source of EU funds for protecting forests.** DG ECHO worked closely with DG AGRI to review the draft National Strategic Plans 2021–2027 to ensure integration of relevant disaster risk management measures. CAP provides financial support to rural areas: Member States can choose to fund forestry measures through their national Rural Development Programmes. In the forestry sector, these measures can support prevention of forest damage caused by fires, natural disasters and catastrophic events, as well as restoring damaged forests¹⁰⁰². CAP funding often supports drought and flood risk management measures;
- In 2021, the European Commission adopted the **EU Forest Strategy for 2030**, one of the flagship initiatives of the European Green Deal, which builds on the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Evidence suggests room for further synergies between UCPM activities and EU policy on areas with an impact of forest fires, particularly the CAP. Views on the degree of alignment between the UCPM and the CAP varied among DG ECHO stakeholders¹⁰⁰³, but some of those interviewed agreed that

⁹⁹⁶ Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018–2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020–2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID–19 repatriations/consular services.

⁹⁹⁷ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018–2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020–2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID–19 repatriations/consular services.

⁹⁹⁸ European Commission, *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation and application of Council Directive (EU) 2015/637*, 2022.

⁹⁹⁹ European Commission, *Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the UCPM operations in 2017*, 2018.

¹⁰⁰⁰ European Commission, *Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe*, 2023; Kantar, *Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018–2022 and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020–2022*, 2023. See Annex 7 for case study on COVID–19 repatriations/consular services.

¹⁰⁰¹ European Parliament, *The European Union and Forests*, n.d.

¹⁰⁰² European Commission, *Agriculture and rural development: EU forestry explained*, n.d.

¹⁰⁰³ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers: a minority of respondents agreed that the UCPM has been effective in creating synergies with EU interventions in the agricultural field (7/28), another minority disagreed with the statement (7/28), while the remainder neither agreed nor disagreed (14/28).

further synergies should be established and that a ‘siloed’ culture should be avoided¹⁰⁰⁴. While evidence shows that UCPM response activities were particularly relevant here, prevention initiatives could be further aligned with other EU level initiatives¹⁰⁰⁵. In practice, this proves challenging, given that competences on landscape planning and forest management are usually scattered among different organisations at national level¹⁰⁰⁶.

Looking ahead, DG ECHO proposed a **Wildfire Prevention Action Plan**, comprising 10 actions aimed at improving capacity, knowledge, and financing opportunities for wildfire prevention actions¹⁰⁰⁷. It intends to ‘make full use’ of the tools under the UCPM, including the Union Disaster Resilience Goals (which provide specific objectives for wildfire response)¹⁰⁰⁸. Although newly adopted, the Wildfire Prevention Action Plan demonstrates a commitment to enhancing coherence between the UCPM and relevant EU policies, including the EU Forest and Biodiversity Strategies.

See Annex 7 for the case study on forest fires, which details the UCPM activities to prevent, prepare, and respond to forest fires.

5.4.3.11 Cohesion Policy, Recovery and Resilience Funds

The EU has mobilised significant financial resources to support investment in disaster resilience¹⁰⁰⁹. Disaster risk management considerations are integrated into EU-level financial instruments. Most of the EU funds supporting disaster prevention and management activities are programmed through the **European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds**. These include specific funds contributing to prevention and preparedness efforts, including the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the Cohesion Fund, and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). For the 2021-2027 programming period, preconditions for the attribution of European Regional Development Funding are in place to ensure effective and efficient spending: national risk assessments must be adopted for investments in risk prevention, including climate change adaptation and management¹⁰¹⁰.

In addition to investing in better prevention and preparedness, the EU provides financial support to national emergency and recovery operations in the aftermath of major disasters, particularly through the **EU Solidarity Fund**. Additionally, **NextGenerationEU** was adopted to repair the immediate economic and social damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The centrepiece of NextGenerationEU is the Recovery and Resilience Facility, an instrument for providing grants and loans to support investments in Member States.

Article 26(2) of the UCPM Decision provides that synergies, complementarity and increased coordination must be developed with other EU instruments, such as those supporting cohesion and rural development, as well as the EU Solidarity Fund.

During 2017-2022, several UCPM activities and legislative amendments to the UCPM Decision were aligned and complemented efforts at EU level through financial instruments. Examples included:

¹⁰⁰⁴ Interviews with: national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (3). See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹⁰⁰⁵ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹⁰⁰⁶ European Commission, *Land-based wildfire prevention*, 2021.

¹⁰⁰⁷ European Commission, *Overview of the Wildfire Prevention Action Plan*, 2022.

¹⁰⁰⁸ European Commission, *Recommendation of 8 February 2023 on Union Disaster Resilience Goals*, 2023.

¹⁰⁰⁹ European Commission, *Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face*, 2020.

¹⁰¹⁰ European Commission, *Strengthening EU Disaster Management: rescEU Solidarity with Responsibility Solidarity with Responsibility*, COM/2017/0773 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1511770718312&uri=COM:2017:773:FIN>

- DG ECHO funded research on the economic case for strengthening financial resilience, investing in risk reduction, and improving institutional preparedness¹⁰¹¹;
- Union Disaster Resilience Goals' objective number 1 (Anticipate) provides that Member States should seize the support available under the UCPM and other EU funds to promote smart investments in disaster prevention, such as the Resilience and Recovery Facility, Cohesion Policy, EAFRD, ERFD, LIFE Programme, TSI, and the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change¹⁰¹²;
- The new Wildfire Prevention Action Plan has a dedicated theme on 'increased financing for wildfire prevention actions', including two actions: i) encouraging use of UCPM prevention and preparedness funding instruments for national, cross-border or pan-European projects to support wildfire prevention; and ii) encouraging further use of EU funds for investing in wildfire prevention and analysing the current uptake of EU funds for disaster risk management¹⁰¹³.

DG ECHO Desk Officers held conflicting views on the effectiveness of the UCPM in creating synergies with economic, social and territorial cohesion, public and sustainable finance¹⁰¹⁴. Some commented on the synergies between the UCPM and Cohesion Policy and Recovery and Resilience Funds, with positive views on their coherence and level of cooperation between DG ECHO, DG REGIO, DG ECFIN, and the European Investment Bank (EIB)¹⁰¹⁵. DG ECHO also engages with DG FISMA and European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) on financing instruments other than subsidies and funding (EU Taxonomy, the cornerstone of the EU's sustainable finance framework)¹⁰¹⁶. Finally, DG ECHO cooperates with DG TAXUD to ensure no double funding among programmes (e.g. the Customs Control Equipment Instrument, which may also be of interest to civil protection authorities)¹⁰¹⁷.

5.4.3.12 External coherence with international frameworks

This subsection assesses the extent to which the UCPM was coherent with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction adopted by the UN, and other interventions to guarantee international peace and security (e.g. the EADRCC within NATO, which coordinates RfA and offers of assistance for a wide range of natural and man-made disasters).

Overall, stakeholders believed that there were synergies between UCPM prevention, preparedness, cross-pillar activities, and international interventions related to civil protection¹⁰¹⁸. They also agreed that the UCPM was effective in coordinating its response with other international actors¹⁰¹⁹.

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction guides governments, communities and other stakeholders in reducing disaster risks and building resilience through a comprehensive and inclusive approach. The main priorities for action include: i) understanding disaster risk, ii) strengthening

¹⁰¹¹ World Bank, *Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness in Europe*, 2021, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2021/06/04/economics-for-disaster-prevention-and-preparedness-in-europe>

¹⁰¹² European Commission, *Recommendation on Union Disaster Resilience Goals*, 2023.

¹⁰¹³ European Commission, *Overview of the Wildfire Prevention Action Plan*, 2022, [https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/system/files/2022-12/Wildfire Prevention Action Plan.pdf](https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/system/files/2022-12/Wildfire%20Prevention%20Action%20Plan.pdf)

¹⁰¹⁴ Surveys of: DG ECHO - economic, social and territorial cohesion, 48% (14/29) neither agreed nor disagreed, 23% (7/29) agreed, and 28% (8/29) disagreed; public and sustainable finance - 61% (17/28) neither agreed nor disagreed, 18% (5/28) agreed, 22% (6/28) disagreed.

¹⁰¹⁵ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (2).

¹⁰¹⁶ Input was provided by DG ECHO; DG FISMA, DG REGIO and EIOPA did not take part in consultation activities for this evaluation (see Annex 5 for overview of stakeholders consulted).

¹⁰¹⁷ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1). European Commission, *Customs Control Equipment Instrument*, n.d., https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/eu-funding-customs-and-tax/customs-control-equipment-instrument_en

¹⁰¹⁸ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (20/28); national authorities (32/42).

¹⁰¹⁹ Surveys of: DG ECHO Desk Officers (22/27); national authorities (33/43). Interviews with: DG ECHO (7); experts in civil protection (2); international stakeholders (6); national authorities (4).

disaster risk governance, iii) investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and iv) enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to 'build back better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. It recognises that disaster risk reduction is a cross-cutting issue that requires collaboration and cooperation across sectors and levels of government, as well as with other stakeholders such as the private sector, civil society and academia.

Stakeholders agreed that **UCPM activities were aligned and complemented the UNDRR work on the Sendai Framework**, although there could be **scope for further synergies**¹⁰²⁰:

- **Action Plan on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction** for 2015-2030 describes how the UCPM contributes to the implementation of the Sendai Framework's four priorities through its different activities¹⁰²¹. The UCPM assists Member States in developing their risk management capabilities, provides cross-sectoral overview of risks at EU level, and enhances disaster preparedness through the development of the capacities committed under the ECPP;
- The Sendai Framework advises promoting mutual learning and exchange of good practices and information through voluntary and self-initiated peer reviews. The **Peer Review Programme** within the UCPM is a good example of synergies with the Sendai Framework. The PRAF provides that 'for the purpose of UCPM, the disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies developed under the Sendai Framework can be assessed by using the same methodology'¹⁰²². In addition, where the disaster risk reduction strategy has been previously assessed by UNDRR, UCPM reviewers have access to the main evaluation report and recommendations, so that the analysis of the peer reviews can complement and integrate the review made under the UN umbrella, providing updates or additional in-depth information¹⁰²³.

Unlike the Sendai Framework, the UCPM Decision does not refer to the **build back better** concept for the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, but the newly introduced Union Disaster Resilience Goals strengthen the coherence of the UCPM with the Sendai Framework by emphasising the importance of recovery as part of the full disaster management cycle.

Potential overlaps were also identified with respect to monitoring implementation of the Union Disaster Resilience Goals and the Sendai Framework. DG ECHO and UNDRR recently discussed how to avoid such overlaps, including using globally agreed indicators to avoid duplication of effort¹⁰²⁴.

International peace and security

Despite the UCPM effectively coordinating its activities with NATO and UN OCHA, evidence suggests some unexploited synergies.

During the evaluation period, the UCPM coordinated its response with the **EADRCC** within the framework of **NATO**. The EADRCC works as a system for coordinating requests for, and offers of, assistance in case of natural and man-made-disasters. In January 2023, the NATO Secretary-General and the EU signed a renewed joint declaration, stressing that NATO and the EU play complementary, coherent and mutually reinforcing roles in supporting international peace and security¹⁰²⁵. The UCPM also cooperates with relevant UN entities, such as **UN OCHA**, which also contributes to international peace and security by coordinating humanitarian responses in crisis around the world, including conflict situations, natural disasters and other emergencies.

¹⁰²⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (2); EU stakeholders (2); international stakeholders (1); national authorities (1).

¹⁰²¹ European Commission, *Action Plan on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2020. A disaster informed approach for all EU policies*, Staff Working Document, 2016.

¹⁰²² European Commission, *Peer Review Assessment Framework*, 2022.

¹⁰²³ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁴ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1).

¹⁰²⁵ NATO, *Joint Declaration on EU–NATO Cooperation*, 2023.

Overall, the UCPM effectively coordinated its response activities with international organisations:

- The **EADRCC complements the UCPM** through its ability to provide **military capability** in situations where the UCPM cannot provide further assistance, such as for medical evacuation purposes¹⁰²⁶;
- Stakeholders indicated that **cooperation between the UCPM and NATO improved dramatically after the COVID-19 pandemic**, but that more should be done to ensure further synergies and alignment¹⁰²⁷. For instance, the ERCC is involved in NATO exercises, but there is no link between UCPM training and exercises and NATO exercises. Increased sharing of knowledge on prevention and preparedness activities (e.g. EWS) was also highlighted as an element for improvement, as well as better alignment with the respective initiatives on resilience¹⁰²⁸;
- In 2020, updated **SOPs between DG ECHO and UN OCHA** were drafted and a new administrative agreement was signed in 2022¹⁰²⁹. These aim to reduce the uncertainty in logistics arrangements and ensure better cooperation and coordination both in the preparedness and response phases;
- Evidence shows that **cooperation between UCPM and OCHA functioned effectively** and was facilitated by informal exchanges among staff¹⁰³⁰. However, during UCPM missions, there is a need to enhance humanitarian actors' understanding of civil protection actors¹⁰³¹.

5.5 EU added value

This section assesses the EU added value of the UCPM in preventing, preparing for and responding to crises and natural and man-made disasters that occur within and outside the EU. The underlying question is whether Member States and Participating States and third countries would be able to achieve the same objectives satisfactorily had they acted alone rather than delegating competence at Union level.

5.5.1 EQ13: To what extent did the UCPM add value compared to what could have been achieved by Member States, Participating States and third countries acting at national or regional level?

Key findings

- The UCPM contributed to results that could not have been achieved solely at national, regional or local level. Examples included the UCPM response to forest fires and floods, as well as Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine;
- The elements of the UCPM that brought particular added value to national/regional civil protection activities included coordination of response through the ERCC, pooling of resources through rescEU, knowledge sharing through the establishment of the Knowledge Network, capacity development through the UCPM Training and Exercise Programme, raising awareness and disaster risk prevention (including risk assessment and mapping);

¹⁰²⁶ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1).

¹⁰²⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (3); EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (7); International stakeholders (1).

¹⁰²⁸ Interviews with: international stakeholders (1); national authorities (2); DG ECHO (1). European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2020 UCPM activations*, 2021.

¹⁰²⁹ European Commission, *Outcomes of the lessons learnt meeting on the 2020 UCPM activations*, 2021; UN OCHA and European Commission, *Administrative agreement to enhance the cooperation and coordination between DG ECHO and UN OCHA Response Support Branch in the field of disaster preparedness and response*, 2022.

¹⁰³⁰ Interviews with: DG ECHO (6); EU stakeholders (1); national authorities (3).

¹⁰³¹ European Commission, *Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023*. Interviews with: national authorities (3); experts in civil protection (3); international partners (2).

- Evidence suggests that national, regional and local interventions would be fragmented, less efficient and less effective should the UCPM cease to exist or be withdrawn;
- Evidence suggests that no other instruments or networks would be able to fully replace the UCPM and/or more suitable to improve cooperation on civil protection matters both within and outside the EU;
- There is limited evidence on ways in which the UCPM external dimension brings significant added value to Member and Participating States, e.g. through extended networks or more lessons in the field of civil protection.

Judgement criteria:

- JC13.1: The UCPM contributed to results that could not have been achieved solely at national level
- JC13.2: Elements of the UCPM that brought particular added value to national/regional CP activities (MS/PS/TC) were identified
- Judgement criteria JC13.1 and JC13.2 will be answered together due to the nature of the data collected

Throughout the evaluation period, the UCPM was instrumental in achieving results that could not have been achieved solely at national, regional or local level. Examples included the UCPM response to forest fires and floods between 2017 and 2022, and, most recently, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The UCPM offered a single point of contact for countries requesting and offering assistance, mobilised considerable resources and capacities within brief timeframes, and fostered collaboration, mutual learning and exchange of information between multiple stakeholder groups (including national authorities, international partners and civil protection experts).

The large majority of stakeholders believed that results achieved through UCPM activities could not have been attained by Member or Participating States on their own. Most national authorities¹⁰³² and civil protection experts¹⁰³³ agreed that the results achieved through the UCPM activities could not have been attained by their country acting alone, nor through bilateral cooperation between Member and Participating States¹⁰³⁴, nor multilateral cooperation through other networks or instruments¹⁰³⁵. For example, in the case of response to forest fires, national and regional stakeholders perceived the EU as 'the most efficient, effective and quick in response institution' to deal with major fire outbreaks¹⁰³⁶. Conversely, they believed that national instruments or bilateral agreements between neighbouring countries were suitable options to deal with forest fires at national level or in border areas, respectively. In the case of floods and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the UCPM achieved results no single member or Participating State could, by providing a single contact point to channel resources and coordinate multiple stakeholders, relieving national stakeholders of significant administrative burden¹⁰³⁷.

Most stakeholders agreed that the UCPM has a tangible and clear added value for Member States, Participating States, and third countries. The main elements of the UCPM that brought particular

¹⁰³² Surveys of: national authorities (36/49).

¹⁰³³ Surveys of: experts in civil protection (12/16).

¹⁰³⁴ Surveys of: national authorities (35/49); experts in civil protection (11/16).

¹⁰³⁵ Surveys of: national authorities (30/48); experts in civil protection (9/15).

¹⁰³⁶ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹⁰³⁷ See Annex 7 for case studies on floods and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

added value to civil protection activities at national and regional level included enhanced coordination, pooling of resources and cost savings, sharing of knowledge and expertise, risk assessment and awareness, as well as solidarity and international influence. These elements are discussed in greater detail below.

- **Enhanced coordination**

The majority of national and EU stakeholders agreed that a significant element of added value of the UCPM is its effective and efficient cooperation across disaster management phases¹⁰³⁸. The majority of national authorities generally regard the UCPM as a more effective and efficient coordination system to channel the resources of the different Member and Participating States, compared to individual action and/or bilateral or regional agreements¹⁰³⁹. Several noted the importance of maintaining a tiered approach to civil protection, including forms of bilateral and regional cooperation based on shared risk assessments that could be activated to provide faster responses under specific circumstances¹⁰⁴⁰. However, several agreed that the UCPM, particularly through the ERCC, provided effective coordination in the response phase and remains the most suitable option to address large-scale, complex cross-border emergencies¹⁰⁴¹. It also allowed Member and Participating States to streamline resources and minimise the risk of duplicating efforts¹⁰⁴². Collective action channelled through the UCPM (especially the ERCC) in response to forest fires, floods, COVID-19 and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine brought added value in the context of those emergencies compared to other forms of supranational interventions and/or individual action on the part of Member States, Participating States and third countries.

- **Pooling resources and cost savings**

The majority of stakeholders perceived the UCPM as a cost-effective solution: pooling resources helped to achieve cost savings and provided EU added value to civil protection activities at national and regional level¹⁰⁴³. For example, when national resources are insufficient to manage a crisis, Member and Participating States can benefit from access to a wider EU pool of capacities by requesting assistance from other Member and Participating States, the ECPP and rescEU. This is especially valuable for small countries with limited capacities, which are granted access to a wider pool of resources regardless of their individual contributions to the UCPM¹⁰⁴⁴. Access to resources and provision of support seem to be rooted in a principle of solidarity that transcends the boundaries of the EU. For example, Member States provided access to UCPM resources to third countries on several occasions, including response to floods in Pakistan, to earthquakes in Türkiye and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Several Member States' national authorities viewed the cost savings offered by the UCPM (e.g. grants to cover transport costs) as one of the greatest benefits of being part of the Mechanism¹⁰⁴⁵. This was illustrated with the availability of adaptation grants for Member and Participating States to repair and update grade capacities, as well as the possibility for national authorities to attend

¹⁰³⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (12); EU stakeholders (5); DG ECHO (1).

¹⁰³⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (12); EU stakeholders (5); DG ECHO (1).

¹⁰⁴⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (1); international partners (1); experts in civil protection (1).

¹⁰⁴¹ Interviews with: national authorities (5); EU stakeholders (4); international partners (1); DG ECHO (1).

¹⁰⁴² Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1).

¹⁰⁴³ Interviews with: national authorities (9); EU stakeholders (3); international partners (2); professional organisations (2); experts in civil protection (1). European Commission, *Combined Evaluation of DG ECHO's humanitarian response to epidemics, and DG ECHO's partnership with the World Health Organisation, 2017-2021, 2022*.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Interviews with: international partners (2); national authorities (2).

¹⁰⁴⁵ Interviews with: national authorities (5).

training and exercises. Several stakeholders agreed that the establishment of rescEU was a significant positive development in identifying and filling capacity gaps (especially for smaller countries), as well as an incentive for Member and Participating States to increase their involvement in the UCPM (see Section 5.1.1)¹⁰⁴⁶. Despite its relatively recent establishment, rescEU proved instrumental in providing life-saving assistance¹⁰⁴⁷.

- **Sharing of knowledge and expertise**

Civil protection national authorities and experts generally acknowledged that the UCPM offered a good platform for learning, sharing knowledge, networking and pooling expertise, without which Member and Participating States would be less effective, less coordinated and slower in responding to disasters¹⁰⁴⁸. The exchange of information and best practices was considered a critical enabler, benefitting Member and Participating States by maintaining a common degree of situational awareness and understanding of new and emerging threats, especially challenges and threats stemming from climate change¹⁰⁴⁹.

The added value of the **Knowledge Network** was underlined, as a space for practitioners, policy makers and researchers to connect¹⁰⁵⁰. It will allow Member and Participating States to learn good practices and lessons, while drawing on the experiences of a larger number of stakeholders than would be possible through bilateral agreements. Stakeholders noted a lack of visibility of the Network and a general lack of clarity about its functions and use (see Section 5.1)¹⁰⁵¹.

The **Training and Exercises Programme** provided opportunities to share knowledge and expertise at a level that could not be coordinated by Member and Participating States alone. Most stakeholders agreed that:

- The Programme was a necessary supplement to national training (i.e. expert training and required basic training for international deployments) provided to experts by their home country or organisation¹⁰⁵²;
- The Programme is a unique source for developing knowledge and capabilities in the field of civil protection at transnational level¹⁰⁵³;
- The value of the Programme is evident in the impacts on other policy areas, such as health, security, migration, social policy and environmental policy¹⁰⁵⁴.

Several stakeholders mentioned the **standardisation of operating procedures** and **common classification of competences** as an area of particular EU added value for Member and Participating States¹⁰⁵⁵.

- **Risk assessment and awareness**

The assessment of risks through the collection and aggregation of DRM Summary Reports brings added value for national and EU stakeholders. The representatives of three national authorities (including one of the Member States most involved in civil protection activities) agreed that the

¹⁰⁴⁶ Interviews with: international partners (2); national authorities (3); EU stakeholders (3); DG ECHO (3).

¹⁰⁴⁷ Interviews with: DG ECHO (1) illustrated the added value of rescEU through a concrete example: the 32 rescEU teams deployed in Turkey within 48 hours saved around 200 lives, which would not have been possible in the absence of the UCPM.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (5); experts in civil protection (6).

¹⁰⁴⁹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (3); DG ECHO (1).

¹⁰⁵⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (3); professional organisations (2); experts in civil protection (1). See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires and on floods.

¹⁰⁵¹ Interviews with: national authorities (1). See Annex 7 for case studies on integration of UCPM preparedness activities, on forest fires and on floods.

¹⁰⁵² Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (26/29).

¹⁰⁵³ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (30/30).

¹⁰⁵⁴ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (19/27).

¹⁰⁵⁵ Interviews with: professional organisations (3); international partners (1).

overview document of disaster risks in the EU is a particularly important output¹⁰⁵⁶ as an instrument that can foster a pan-European approach and thinking about risks and preparedness. These views were echoed by several EU stakeholders, who saw particular added value in the UCPM's activities promoting risk assessment and awareness, including the DRM Summary Reports¹⁰⁵⁷. Nevertheless, the heterogeneity of DRM Summary Reports submitted to DG ECHO continues to hamper their comparability, limiting their potential to feed effectively and efficiently into the overview document of disaster risks in the EUEU (see Section 5.1.1).

- **EU international influence and cross-EU solidarity**

Several stakeholders believed that strengthening solidarity and cooperation between Member and Participating States was one of the most notable results of the UCPM, bringing EU added value¹⁰⁵⁸. Two representatives of the EU institutions remarked that the unbiased and request-driven nature of the UCPM enables transparent functioning and greater satisfaction of Member and Participating States, while allowing them to expand cooperation and influence beyond EU borders¹⁰⁵⁹.

The analysis of the UCPM response to forest fires between 2017 and 2022 showed that UCPM operations are a highly visible and valuable EU diplomatic tool¹⁰⁶⁰. 'EU delegations and pre-existing relationships between the competent authorities of third countries and those of Member States can facilitate knowledge of and interest in the UCPM'¹⁰⁶¹. One stakeholder even saw added value in including the UCPM in the external policy 'toolbox' of the EU¹⁰⁶².

Judgement criterion:

- JC13.3: Without the UCPM, national, regional, and cross-border interventions would be fragmented and less efficient and effective

The absence or discontinuation of the UCPM would have detrimental consequences for Member States, Participating States and third countries, as well as the civil protection community at large. It could result in weakened cooperation among Member States, reduced capacity for disaster response, loss of shared knowledge and expertise, increased vulnerability to disasters, and loss of solidarity and international influence.

- **Weakened cooperation among Member States**

Stakeholders agreed that the absence or discontinuation of the UCPM could result in weakened cooperation. Several civil protection national authorities mentioned that the absence or discontinuation of the UCPM would reduce the ability of Member States to effectively respond to domestic and international disasters in a coordinated, coherent, and harmonised way¹⁰⁶³. Two representatives of EU institutions explained that Member States would have to invest more resources nationally to coordinate with other countries¹⁰⁶⁴, while another underlined that without the ERCC, it would be impossible to respond promptly to disasters and crises¹⁰⁶⁵. A lack of the coordination provided by the ERCC could present a challenge in the event of cross-border disasters,

¹⁰⁵⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (3).

¹⁰⁵⁷ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); DG ECHO (2).

¹⁰⁵⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (1).

¹⁰⁵⁹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2).

¹⁰⁶⁰ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

¹⁰⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶² Interviews with: DG ECHO (1).

¹⁰⁶³ Interviews with: national authorities (7).

¹⁰⁶⁴ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2).

¹⁰⁶⁵ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1).

but also in single country disasters where the receiving country would have to coordinate the assistance provided by other Member States while tackling an emergency within its own borders.

- **Reduced capacity for disaster response**

Without the UCPM, the capacity to respond to disasters in Europe and internationally would be reduced¹⁰⁶⁶. For small countries whose civil protection is highly reliant on the UCPM, its withdrawal could fundamentally undermine the ability to deploy civil protection capacities domestically¹⁰⁶⁷.

Stakeholders noted that a lack access to UCPM's pooling of financial resources would have an impact on the field of preparedness¹⁰⁶⁸. According to one EU stakeholder, Member States (particularly those subject to greater financial constraints) might not be able to invest in developing and maintaining CBRN capacities without the support of the UCPM, given the prohibitive cost of CBRN equipment and capabilities¹⁰⁶⁹. Essentially, in the event of a UCPM discontinuation, Member and Participating States would be required to make greater investments to retain a degraded level of capacity.

- **Loss of shared knowledge and expertise**

Another point of concern among stakeholders about a hypothetical discontinuation of the UCPM was the lost opportunities to share knowledge and learning (including through training) with other Member and Participating States¹⁰⁷⁰. They would no longer have access to the UCPM's platform for sharing information, best practices and lessons, potentially hindering their ability to learn from one another and adapt their approaches based on others' real-life experiences. This, in turn, could affect the collective ability of the EU and its Member States to respond to disasters in an effective and coordinated way.

Several stakeholders expressed particular concerns about the hypothetical discontinuation of the **Training and Exercises Programme**. Most believed that in its absence, national training activities would be more fragmented¹⁰⁷¹, duplicated in different countries¹⁰⁷², or even cease to exist¹⁰⁷³. Most disagreed that civil protection training activities across the Union would continue at the same scale with national funding¹⁰⁷⁴ or with regional funding¹⁰⁷⁵ in the event that the UCPM was discontinued.

- **Increased vulnerability to disasters**

Several national and EU stakeholders agreed that the absence or discontinuation of the UCPM would reduce (or cease) Member and Participating States' risk assessment and preparation of DRM Summary Reports¹⁰⁷⁶. Member States would lose the support to prepare DRM Summary Reports and develop strategies for disaster risk reduction and management¹⁰⁷⁷. This would result in an overall reduction of the preparedness of Member and Participating States for emerging needs in the field of civil protection (including climate change and health threats).

¹⁰⁶⁶ See Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires, on floods and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Interviews with: international stakeholders (2); national authorities (2).

¹⁰⁶⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (3); EU stakeholder (1).

¹⁰⁶⁹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1).

¹⁰⁷⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (5).

¹⁰⁷¹ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (29/31).

¹⁰⁷² Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (23/29).

¹⁰⁷³ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (17/29).

¹⁰⁷⁴ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (17/29).

¹⁰⁷⁵ Surveys of: Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (15/28).

¹⁰⁷⁶ Interviews with: national authorities (2); EU stakeholders (1).

¹⁰⁷⁷ Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, Art. 6 – Risk Management.

- **Decreased EU international influence and cross-EU solidarity**

Several stakeholders pointed out that the EU's capacity to respond to disasters and support other nations is somewhat tied to its ability to exert influence within and beyond its borders. One national authority mentioned that if the UCPM ceased to exist and/or was discontinued, the public would lose trust in their country's capacity to help other countries in times of need¹⁰⁷⁸. Another mentioned that its national legislative framework only allows the funding of international missions outside the EU in the context of humanitarian aid, limiting its ability to contribute to disaster response activities inside the EU in the absence of the UCPM¹⁰⁷⁹.

Judgement criterion:

- JC13.4: There are no other instruments/networks that would be more suitable to improve cooperation on civil protection matters

No other instruments or networks would be able to fully replace the UCPM and/or would be more suitable to improve cooperation on civil protection matters within and outside the EU.

Most stakeholders agreed that a **hypothetical absence or discontinuation of the UCPM would have detrimental consequences** for Member States, Participating States and third countries, as well as the civil protection community at large¹⁰⁸⁰. Although several agreed that civil protection activities would not stop entirely, negative consequences could be only partially offset by bilateral or regional agreements and/or multilateral cooperation¹⁰⁸¹. This situation would have a particularly negative impact on small countries that have limited prevention, preparedness and response capacities¹⁰⁸².

UCPM support complements bilateral support by Member and Participating States. Bilateral, regional agreements and multilateral networks co-exist with the UCPM to form a multi-tiered system of civil protection. Stakeholders agreed that the results achieved through UCPM activities could not have been attained through bilateral cooperation between Member and Participating States¹⁰⁸³ or through multilateral cooperation, other networks or instruments¹⁰⁸⁴. The limited data available shows mixed opinions on whether other networks/mechanisms would be better placed to improve cooperation on civil protection matters: most experts expressed no opinion¹⁰⁸⁵, while national authorities were almost equally split between those who agreed and disagreed¹⁰⁸⁶. None of the respondents who agreed specified another instrument and/or network that would be more suitable to improve cooperation on civil protection matters.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

¹⁰⁷⁹ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

¹⁰⁸⁰ All interviews (excluding those with DG ECHO) included a scenario question requiring stakeholders to elaborate on the consequences of a hypothetical discontinuation of the UCPM and the possible alternatives to compensate its absence. Several interviewees among national authorities (21), EU stakeholders (15), professional organisations (3), and experts in civil protection (4) regarded a hypothetical discontinuation of the UCPM as negative (with different levels of intensity). Only one international partner felt very strongly about the possible negative consequences for the civil protection system in the absence of the UCPM.

¹⁰⁸¹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (4); international partners (2).

¹⁰⁸² Interviews with: international partners (2); national authorities (2).

¹⁰⁸³ Surveys of: national authorities (35); civil protection experts (11).

¹⁰⁸⁴ Surveys of: national authorities (30); civil protection experts (9).

¹⁰⁸⁵ Surveys of: experts in civil protection (5/6 neither agreed nor disagreed).

¹⁰⁸⁶ Surveys of: national authorities (7/18 somewhat or strongly disagreed, 7/18 somewhat or strongly agreed).

- **Bilateral/regional agreements:** Member States typically have bilateral/multilateral agreements in place with neighbouring/nearby countries suffering from similar disasters¹⁰⁸⁷. For instance, Mediterranean Member States have intense bilateral cooperation with Southern Neighbourhood countries, while trilateral agreements between Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands ensure such cooperation. However, these instruments are unable to fully replace the UCPM in a systematic manner, instead complementing UCPM interventions¹⁰⁸⁸. There are also cases where countries activate both the UCPM and bilateral agreements. For example, in 2021, Türkiye submitted its first RfA for forest fires, receiving assistance from Croatia, Spain and Poland, alongside bilateral assistance from several non-UCPM countries (Azerbaijan, Kuwait, Iran, Russia, Qatar, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Israel, Turkmenistan). The interim evaluation found that only in the first instances of the COVID-19 response did Member and Participating States turn to bilateral/multilateral agreements (sometimes specifically established for that purpose) because of the UCPM's delay in responding¹⁰⁸⁹;
- **Multilateral instruments or networks:** Member States, Participating States and third countries use multilateral instruments or networks to request/offer civil protection assistance. These include UNDAC and NATO's EADRCC. UNDAC and the EADRCC collaborate closely and are tasked with coordinating international emergency responses within the UN system and NATO region. Several stakeholders stated that in the absence of the UCPM it would be challenging for other international or regional organisations to cover the entire scope and cost of civil protection related activities¹⁰⁹⁰. For example, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would not be able to replace the assistance channelled through the UCPM to Ukraine, given specific limitations to its mandate¹⁰⁹¹, and NATO would not be able to mobilise financial resources to the volume and scope of the UCPM, as co-financing instruments (e.g. to cover transport costs) are not foreseen under the EADRCC. Finally, the UN system would not be able to stretch its capacities and activities to compensate for the UCPM's absence¹⁰⁹².

Member and Participating States engage in bilateral or regional agreements prior/during to activating the UCPM for different reasons. Reasons why Member and Participating States rely on bilateral and regional agreements include complementarity of action, greater speed in response for that particular disaster type, strong historical ties or common geopolitical interests between countries, and previous instances of successful bilateral cooperation in the face of cross-border disasters¹⁰⁹³. In the case of forest fires, bilateral and regional agreements are triggered during smaller disasters, or those between two bordering countries with a well-established bilateral agreement¹⁰⁹⁴.

Judgement criterion:

- JC13.5: The UCPM's external dimension brings significant added value to Member States and Participating States, such as in the form of extended networks and more lessons in the field of civil protection

¹⁰⁸⁷ European Commission, *UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Forest Fire Season 2021, 2022*. Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (1). See Annex 7 for case studies on floods, on forest fires, on COVID-19 and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (2); national authorities (1).

¹⁰⁸⁹ See Annex 7 for case study on COVID-19.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Interviews with: national authorities (5); international partners (1); EU stakeholders (1).

¹⁰⁹¹ Interviews with: EU stakeholders (1).

¹⁰⁹² Interviews with: international partners (1); national authorities (4).

¹⁰⁹³ Interviews with: national authorities (4); EU stakeholders (1). See Annex 7 for case studies on floods, on forest fires, on COVID-19, and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

¹⁰⁹⁴ See Annex 7 for case study on forest fires.

The UCPM's external dimension brings added value to Member and Participating States through extended networks and more lessons in the field of civil protection. The external dimension of the UCPM refers to its involvement in civil protection activities beyond its borders. While the primary focus of the UCPM is to enhance cooperation among Member States in responding to disasters within the EU, the Mechanism increasingly extended its support and cooperation to countries outside the EU during the evaluation period.

The UCPM increasingly facilitated closer cooperation between EU Member States and third countries, giving countries the platform to build closer ties. The evaluation period saw a steep increase in activations, approximately two-thirds of which were from third countries (see Figure 8). In 2022 alone, the UCPM was activated 332 times, mostly outside the EU (72%). Notably, most external activations (132 out of 166) were RfA from Ukraine. Over the same period, the response rate to UCPM activations (within and outside the EU) fluctuated between 84% and 96% (see Figure 35; Section 5.1.1.3). This means that the UCPM did not deliver a response in only 10 of the 232 RfA in 2022. Benefits might have materialised for those third countries that received assistance through the UCPM, as well as for the Member and Participating States on the giving/receiving ends of civil protection assistance. However, there were insufficient data on whether/how UCPM external activations generated a return on investment for those Member and Participating States that solely delivered civil protection assistance.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the UCPM generally adds value to Member States, Participating States and third countries through activities such as capacity-building, knowledge sharing, pooling of experts, and coordinated disaster and emergency response. On its external dimension, it is possible to infer that the main benefits and opportunities for all stakeholders involved could derive from the following circumstances:

- The UCPM provides a single interface for third countries, simplifying and streamlining ways to request assistance and access resources. This was particularly evident in the UCPM response to floods in 2017-2022 and to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine¹⁰⁹⁵;
- The UCPM provides a consolidated and consistent framework for Member and Participating States to receive RfA and coordinate response, reducing the burden on national authorities, with the ERCC and rescEU repeatedly praised by stakeholders¹⁰⁹⁶;
- The UCPM external dimension provides an opportunity for Member and Participating States to contribute to developing new practices, advancing technology, and gaining experiential learning on disasters and crises that do not necessarily occur within their national borders (e.g. in the UCPM response to floods in 2017-2022, which included an external activation in Pakistan, and to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine)¹⁰⁹⁷.

One representative of a Member State (among those most involved in UCPM activities) underlined that involvement in the UCPM is directly proportional to return on investment for Member States¹⁰⁹⁸. For example, a Member State requesting assistance for forest fires might be able to develop specific expertise and, consequently, commit larger response capacities in the future. They believe that the UCPM provides opportunities for mutual learning and investing in each other's capacities (e.g. through financial support, training and involvement in response activities), including for those Member States that are more self-reliant in the field of civil protection.

¹⁰⁹⁵ See Annex 7 for case studies on floods and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

¹⁰⁹⁶ ERCC - interviews with: national authorities (6); EU stakeholders (8); international partners (1). rescEU - interviews with: national authorities (3); EU stakeholders (7). ERCC and rescEU: see Annex 7 for case studies on forest fires and floods.

¹⁰⁹⁷ See Annex 7 for case studies on floods and on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Interviews with: national authorities (1).

6 CONCLUSIONS

This section presents the conclusions of the interim evaluation on the basis of the findings presented in previous sections.

6.1 Effectiveness

Overall, the UCPM has progressed towards its general objectives of fostering cooperation and solidarity between the Union and Member and Participating States and, where applicable, third countries (Article 3(1) of the Decision). Projects and activities funded by the UCPM were effectively implemented and contributed to preventing and preparing for disasters, thus reducing their (potential or actual) effects, promoting a culture of prevention, and enhancing preparedness. The UCPM also contributed to supporting Member and Participating States, as well as third countries (where applicable), to respond rapidly and efficiently to disasters, mitigate their immediate consequences (e.g. removing bureaucratic obstacles) and raise awareness of disasters.

The UCPM prevention activities that contributed most to the achievement of specific objectives were (in order of impact):

1. The **UCPM's risk mapping**, achieved through **the overview document of disaster risks in the EU**, national risk assessment processes, and the collection and consolidation of **Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Summary Reports** from Member and Participating States, contributed significantly to fostering a culture of disaster prevention. DG ECHO made strides in improving the quality and harmonisation of DRM Summary Reports by introducing new reporting guidelines and amending Article 6 to emphasise cross-boundary considerations. Nevertheless, heterogeneous methodologies and the range of sectors consulted in DRM Summary Reports could be improved to ensure more effective risk mapping at UCPM level.
2. **Prevention projects** funded under the Prevention and Preparedness Programme (PPP) were an effective tool to enhance prevention activities in Member and Participating States and (to a lesser extent) eligible third countries. Implementing additional follow-up mechanisms to track and evaluate their results would be beneficial. The inclusion of all UCPM-funded project outputs in the Knowledge Network online platform is expected to have a significant influence in ensuring more lasting impacts.
3. Increasing awareness on disaster prevention through the **dissemination of scientific knowledge through the DRMKC**. Although a useful prevention initiative, it was not used to its full potential, due to a lack of data and limited applicability and accessibility of findings to the civil protection community.
4. **Advisory missions** in the field of prevention were effective to raise prevention awareness (mostly in third countries). Limited data show a lack of awareness and knowledge on the impact of advisory missions among key stakeholders.

Looking ahead, the **Union Disaster Resilience Goals** (adopted in February 2023) and the **Wildfire Prevention Action Plan** (adopted end-2022) are seen as tools with the potential to foster a higher level of prevention.

The UCPM's preparedness activities contributed most to enhancing preparedness by complementing and supporting the development of national capacity through rescEU and the ECPP:

- **rescEU and the ECPP were instrumental in supporting the development of national capacity.** rescEU was an important innovation that contributed to enhancing Member and Participating State preparedness. The redefinition of the ECPP (e.g. changes to adaptation grants' financing rates, extension to operational costs for deployments outside the Union) and (to a lesser extent) of the European Medical Corps (EMC) within positively enhanced preparedness. However, the EMC is underutilised and could be more visible;

- **There is room to improve the ECPP and rescEU.** The development of capacities in the ECPP and rescEU could be better linked with needs assessment (e.g. risk mapping, scenario building). Stakeholders noted that greater efforts should be made to ensure that rescEU remains a last resort tool when ECPP capacities are insufficient. Currently, following an RfA, the ERCC checks for spontaneous offers and ECPP capacity before turning to rescEU, with the only overlap between AFF capacities;
- **The ECPP saw a moderate expansion of capacity compared to the previous evaluation period and applied appropriate mitigation measures.** Despite the difficulties of COVID-19, DG ECHO applied suitable mitigation measures to ensure that more capacities were certified in 2021, such as introducing the possibility to conduct some certification steps online and the possibility to certify 'twin capacities' (when Member States develop and commit ECPP response capacities of the same type and with identical features, procedures, equipment and management). Nevertheless, the majority of ECPP capacities registered did not meet the capacity goals;
- **Under the ECPP, adaptation grants were a useful resource to help national authorities to upgrade and repair their response capacities.** The UCPM awarded 46 adaptation grants to 16 Member States, totalling EUR 24 million. A minority of Member State authorities claimed that the process to apply for/claim the grants was unclear or overly burdensome.

UCPM activities also contributed to enhancing preparedness by contributing to increased sharing, availability and use of (scientific) knowledge and best practices on disaster response through the following activities (in order of impact):

1. The **Training and Exercises Programme** enhanced preparedness by increasing the knowledge base and preparedness of key stakeholders participating in civil protection activities at both EU and national level. UCPM training and exercises had an impact on the development of resources and dissemination of knowledge and best practices at national level, as well as improving effectiveness of EU Civil Protection Team (EUCPT) deployments (their level of familiarity eased communication and cooperation). Training and exercises were successfully carried out, well-attended, at a high-quality level, with appropriate mitigation measures (e.g. online training during COVID-19). Nevertheless, while the number of experts trained is sufficient, the UCPM continued to train experts who are not subsequently deployed and to deploy experts who have not received all of the required training.
2. **EWS** effectively complemented national systems to enhance preparedness, mostly in Member and Participating States. They made continuous efforts to improve the accuracy of data and information, including incorporating more scientific expertise, building closer synergies between systems, and improving functionalities. In order to ensure that information is less fragmented across EU and domestic EWS, they could cover more hazards, quality control measures and innovative data sources.
3. **Preparedness projects** funded under the PPP were an effective tool to share (scientific) knowledge and best practice on disasters and to raise preparedness for Member and Participating States (and to a lesser extent third countries). There is room for improvement in their applicability and follow up.
4. **Guidelines on host nation support** were an increasingly useful tool for national authorities, with many using them to develop their own national guidelines for response efforts under UCPM activations and/or bilateral schemes. The guidelines could be improved through updates (planned in 2023) and more widely disseminated.
5. **Advisory missions** in the field of preparedness were effective (mostly in third countries), but limited data show a lack of awareness.

The following **UCPM activities adopted towards the end or beyond the evaluation period** are expected to have an impact: 1) introduction of a deployable training path and a new framework contract on ad hoc training in the new Training and Exercises Programme (from September 2023); 2)

Knowledge Network, by bringing science further into the fabric of UCPM preparedness activities; 3) scenario building, 4) Union Disaster Resilience Goals, 5) ERCC 2.0 initiative.

The UCPM progressed towards supporting Member and Participating States and, where applicable, third countries to respond rapidly and efficiently to disasters and to mitigate their immediate consequences (e.g. removing bureaucratic obstacles). It made significant contributions in the field of response, which stands out as its primary strength and the most visible aspect of its work, notwithstanding the changing nature of disasters (frequency, quantity and size). DG ECHO introduced mitigation measures and innovations to the response pillar, such as the use of logistical hubs in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

The activities that contributed most to achieving this specific objective were (in order of impact):

1. The **Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)** continued to make a crucial contribution to achieving a rapid and efficient response to disasters. ERCC Liaison Officers were crucial contact points facilitating communication between the ERCC and relevant stakeholders. Room for improvement for the ERCC includes: 1) considering the sustainability of its role in an evolving disaster risk landscape, 2) the accessibility of the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) platform.
2. The UCPM adapted to changing pressures and demands and consistently **delivered assistance**, maintaining a high response rate to RfA within and outside the Union. The significant increase in activations for more complex and large-scale emergencies had an impact on the speed of response, especially outside the Union. The vast gap between the response time and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) shows a need to adapt the targets on speed of response to the evolving disaster risk landscape.
3. The **financial support** provided by the UCPM for **transport and logistics** was increasingly significant, particularly from 2021 onwards and outside the Union. The UCPM's ability to provide standard logistics operations and to adapt to new logistical demands during complex, large-scale crises (e.g. repatriation of EU citizens worldwide during COVID-19) was a notable achievement.

On the **cross-pillar/horizontal dimension**, the UCPM progressed towards its specific objectives by raising awareness and preparedness for disasters, both within the civil protection community and with non-conventional stakeholders. The establishment of rescEU and UCPM involvement in high-profile disasters (e.g. COVID-19) contributed to increasing its visibility. The UCPM could help Member States to raise awareness of the Mechanism and disasters among the public and, to a lesser extent, other non-civil protection sectors. The Union Disaster Resilience Goals and Knowledge Network have the potential to be instrumental in increasing public risk awareness and developing cross-sector cooperation and awareness-raising. Although the adaptability and flexibility of the UCPM proved a key facilitating factors for its effectiveness, stakeholders experienced 'change fatigue' when keeping up with the changes to the UCPM and the rapidly evolving threat and EU crisis management landscape.

The cross-pillar/horizontal activities that contributed most to raising awareness and preparedness for disasters (in order of impact):

1. UCPM **training and exercises** were considered invaluable resource in disseminating high-level expertise to key stakeholders. Involving more non-civil protection stakeholders in these sessions could raise awareness across sectors.
2. The **EoE Programme** fostered fruitful discussions, producing multilingual, accessible outputs. It implemented the necessary mitigation measures, such as introducing digital sessions during COVID-19.
3. **Workshops and events organised by the UCPM** were effective in raising awareness. Workshops with the EU Presidency and Lessons Learnt Workshops introduced thematic sessions that were valued. The Civil Protection Forum adapted, increasing in size and taking a

hybrid approach. Looking ahead, the framework contract for ad hoc training will allow for more thematic sessions beyond the traditional elements, which could raise awareness.

4. The **PPP** raised awareness of an increasing breadth of hazards across a growing number of sectors.
5. The **Peer Review Programme** raised awareness of good practices and preparedness, and will do so increasingly through the new Peer Review Assessment Framework (PRAF) – which will standardise the process.
6. **Advisory missions** raised awareness of the functioning of the Mechanism and systems of civil protection, especially in third countries.

The UCPM progressed towards its general objective of contributing to strengthened cooperation and coordination between the Union and the Member States for civil protection in the areas of prevention, preparedness for and response to natural and man-made disasters (Article 3(1) of the Decision).

The UCPM facilitated **cross-border cooperation** and solidarity between Member States, Participating States, and (to a lesser extent) third countries. This improved during the evaluation period by applying the lessons from major disasters (COVID-19, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine). Efforts were made to streamline coordination within DG ECHO, with room to create better synergies between Directorates A and B and to ensure adequate cross-border cooperation arrangements between Member States, covering all phases of the disaster risk management cycle and relevant disaster risks in border areas. Cooperation with third countries has predominantly been operational, responding to immediate needs as they arise, rather than diplomatic, which involves long-term, strategic, and formalised cooperation. However, there is a planned increase in more strategic, diplomatic engagement with third countries in the coming years.

The UCPM facilitated **cross-sectoral cooperation**, primarily due to the nature of the large-scale and complex disasters. These efforts increased over time, with room to improve the depth and structure of links. This particularly applies to the area of prevention and preparedness, with scope to increase cross-sectoral cooperation on risk mapping, DRM Summary Reports and EWS. The UCPM particularly increased cross-sectoral cooperation with non-civil protection national actors (e.g. health, energy), the private sector, CSOs, EU delegations, and other European Commission DGs. Increased cooperation with the private sector, especially in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, was considered particularly successful, with potential to be better structured.

The UCPM activities that contributed most to fostering cooperation (in order of impact):

- In the field of **response**, the ERCC and EUCPT were crucial to fostering coordination with an increasing variety of stakeholders involved in emergencies. The UCPM exhibited smooth cooperation with between relevant national, EU and international actors involved in response efforts. It facilitated coordination by establishing a centralised EU system for transport and logistics;
- **Cross-pillar/horizontal activities**, such as UCPM training, exercises, the Knowledge Network and workshops brought together stakeholders from different fields and countries to identify good practices, lessons and ways forward. In UCPM training and exercises, participants learned to work together, while the Knowledge Network integrated scientific expertise more closely into the UCPM;
- **In the field of prevention and preparedness**, the PPP reinforced cooperation by financing diverse international, national and local consortia to work together. The ECPP and rescEU played a crucial role in promoting cooperation by facilitating the pooling of assets and identifying capacity gaps in Member and Participating States.

The UCPM's **effectiveness was facilitated by internal factors** such as increased responsiveness and adaptability in tailoring the legislative framework and organisational structure of DG ECHO. DG ECHO also demonstrated adaptability in introducing innovations to enhance the UCPM. The effectiveness

of the UCPM was supported by **external factors**, including enhanced cross-sectoral cooperation (including the private sector), trust and mutual understanding between DG ECHO and national counterparts (as well as within and between countries). Familiarity with the UCPM among Member and Participating States also played a role in its effectiveness.

The effectiveness of the UCPM was **hindered by external factors**, primarily the changing threat and risk landscape, and limitations to the scientific evidence base for disaster risk management. The complexity of national civil protection administrative procedures and governance, in addition to their resource constraints, played a significant role. Finally, a misalignment between the expectations of some stakeholders and UCPM capacity hindered its effectiveness. **Internal factors hindering effectiveness** including a lack of human and financial resources, complexity of administrative procedures, and focus on response, sometimes at the detriment of preparedness and prevention initiatives.

The **UCPM produced positive unintended effects**, including heightened awareness of civil protection issues and challenges at policy and operational levels, increased application of scientific tools and research in the field, and inspiring civil protection cooperation networks beyond the Union. The interim evaluation did not identify negative unintended effects of the UCPM.

6.2 Efficiency

During the evaluation period, the UCPM budget experienced a considerable increase driven by evolving needs and gap assessments. While in 2017 the MFF UCPM budget was about EUR 52 million and there were some absorption problems, at the end of the evaluation period, the MFF budget was significantly higher, reaching EUR 354 million (and the total budget, which included NextGenerationEU funds, EUR 1,061 million).

The UCPM underwent several modifications aimed to address concerns about the need for flexibility, while ensuring predictable support to Member and Participating States in preventing, preparing for, and responding to unforeseen events and evolving needs. The timeframe for revising the UCPM and implementing amendments varied, depending on the identification of these needs.

Overall, the UCPM's budgeting system demonstrated a good level of flexibility to assist Member and Participating States in addressing evolving needs on the ground and unforeseen events. While this flexibility was occasionally and temporarily achieved by reshuffling budget from prevention, it was mainly the result of budget reinforcements, frontloads and amendments made possible by the changes introduced by the revisions to the regulation and a budgetary authority that was reactive and supportive to the UCPM's requests reinforcements to respond to crises (approvals took place in a time range of three weeks to two months).

Nevertheless, in some instances, some elements limited the flexibility of the budgetary system during the evaluation period, for example the restricted applicability of NextGenerationEU fund to addressing health-related needs, DG ECHO's reliance on sometimes overwhelmed Member States for capacity development, rather than directly procuring certain capacities, and the presence of complex procedures and rules. . Going forward, the lack of certainty on whether and how quickly additional funds may arrive to deal with emerging needs was a concern of some DG ECHO staff, with a few mentioning that a less discretionary approach to budget adjustments in face of emerging needs would be of added value.

The anticipated benefits of UCPM activities were (to some extent) realised efficiently. However, stakeholders recognised the need for increased clarity on the costs associated with various UCPM activities. Opportunities for improvement include reducing administrative burden, addressing overlaps and unexplored synergies, addressing data and supporting systems that are not fit for purpose, and augmenting human resources.

Although it was **difficult to determine at macro-level whether the UCPM was the most cost-effective solution overall, the evaluation identified many examples where cost-effectiveness was**

taken into account during the planning, implementation, monitoring, and/or revision/expansion stages of UCPM components/elements. Most stakeholders stated that results were achieved in the most cost-effective way. Overall, the benefits of the UCPM outweighed the costs across the UCPM's activities in all pillars. However, DG ECHO staff had limited awareness and scrutiny of the cost-effectiveness of UCPM activities, with a notable exception being contract awarding. While some DG ECHO staff indicated that this is an area that should be improved, others considered it of limited relevance, given the nature of UCPM activities and resource constraints.

Recognising the potential cost-effectiveness of prevention and preparedness, the UCPM bolstered these pillars by revising the Decision. The limitations of the UCPM highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis prompted various changes, including the expansion of the scope of rescEU capacities, the introduction of indirect management of some operations, and the possibility of direct procurement. It also led to an increase in the budget for UCPM, including for rescEU capacities, through the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2021/836. An impact assessment of the adopted changes was not carried out due to the urgency in addressing the existing gaps in critical capacities at the time. However, concerns arose due to the lack of available information to assess whether the proposed budget was adequate to achieve the objectives in the long term due to the need to maintain the developed capacities.

Several **factors hindered, to some extent and varied degrees, the efficiency of the UCPM**, including:

- Instances of suboptimal coordination, overlaps, and unexplored synergies between the UCPM and DG ECHO humanitarian aid (in-kind assistance, specific crisis response), with other EU entities (e.g. epidemic response and consular support activities), and with national authorities on stocks, warehousing, and pre-positioning of essential items.
- Stakeholders' lack of sufficient awareness of the possibilities of the UCPM (e.g. how to request/access assistance.).
- Administrative burden associated with calls and financing of transport grants, as well as overlaps between procurement timelines and procedures for different calls.
- While contracts were awarded based on concrete criteria and their fulfilment was assessed accordingly by DG ECHO, at macro-level (i.e., between activities) there was a lack of data and cost-effectiveness analysis to support decision-making.
- Inadequate human resources and high staff turnover within DG ECHO resulting in a loss of institutional knowledge and memory.

The UCPM made progress in monitoring and evaluation by introducing two key strategic performance indicators (KPIs) and various result and output indicators. However, the existing indicators and processes were insufficient to assess and monitor its overall efficiency and cost-effectiveness during the evaluation period, as they did not cover quality, use of resources/costs and outcome/impact considerations. As a result, the influence of cost-effectiveness and efficiency considerations was limited in two aspects: 1) the allocation of funds per pillar and activity, and 2) the selection of alternative options such as the capacities to be developed and transport solutions (however, once the option was selected, cost-effectiveness and efficiency were selection criteria for contract awarding.).

The UCPM data collection and management systems and tools were not appropriate to support sound collection and analysis of the data, with the tracking of assistance particularly limited.

During the evaluation period, there were monitoring and controlling actions at various levels, including missions, collection of feedback by participants on activities, monitoring exercises, monitoring of contracts/grants, and audits (by the Internal Audit Service, European Court of Auditors, etc.). Furthermore, However, results were not consistently recorded or fully explored.

6.3 Relevance

UCPM activities in the prevention, preparedness and response pillars were appropriate to address EU and national needs, thus the UCPM's objectives were relevant to address EU and national needs.

- In the field of **prevention**, various activities demonstrated the UCPM's successful identification of EU and national needs in the civil protection domain. These include DG ECHO's funding of research projects on understanding the needs of civil protection authorities, the compilation of the overview document of disaster risks in the EU, as well as recent changes to the PPP. Although stakeholders agreed that there is a need for additional investment in prevention initiatives, given the overall relatively limited resources of the UCPM, further efforts could be dedicated to coordinating and mainstreaming disaster risk management in other relevant EU funding instruments;
- As regards **preparedness activities**, the development of capacities within rescEU was highly relevant to ensure increased preparedness to respond to disasters at both national and EU level. Although rescEU is intended to be a safety net when ECPP capacities cannot be deployed, some stakeholders raised concerns about the perceived prioritisation of rescEU over the ECPP. The Training and Exercises Programme, peer reviews, host nation support guidelines, advisory missions and EWS met the needs of national authorities. The new Training and Exercises Programme is anticipated to be even more closely aligned with participants expectations. Areas for improvement include the 75% co-financing rate of the transport and operations of ECPP modules, the absence of administrative costs covered by rescEU grants, the ratio between experts deployed and trained, the security set-up of missions in high-risk countries, CECIS, and the procedures to nominate civil protection experts;
- **Response** activities within the UCPM were relevant to address national and EU needs.

UCPM activities were relevant to the European Commission's priorities for 2023-2024, including the European Green Deal, the proposed Single Market Emergency Instrument, and the EU's enlargement priorities. However, the environmental sustainability of the UCPM should be strengthened.

The UCPM was flexible to adapt to the evolving needs on the ground (including unanticipated events). Its cooperation with the private sector, activations in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and to the COVID-19 pandemic proved its flexibility.

The UCPM effectively integrated emerging needs and developments (e.g. scientific and technological research and development). ERCC 2.0 initiative provided the ERCC with the tools and impetus to better anticipate events and act as a cross-sectoral hub. Its anticipatory and foresight capabilities increased situational awareness and helped to identify emerging gaps.

Beyond the evaluation period, the UCPM's flexibility might not be sufficient to adequately address new and emerging needs and developments, such as the consequences of climate change impact, or a surge in man-made disasters, given the increased complexity and frequency of disasters. Concerns were raised about the future sustainability of the UCPM's (and, more specifically, the ERCC's) ability to cope with future emergencies, given its increased workload. Concerns were also raised about the UCPM's increased role in third countries.

DG ECHO's organisational set-up was somewhat appropriate to support Member and Participating States and address new needs. However, given the expansion of UCPM activities during the evaluation period, the internal reorganisation of DG ECHO somewhat hindered coordination and coherence across UCPM activities.

DG ECHO made significant efforts to address recommendations and lessons identified from external evaluations. Nevertheless, there is scope for better communication of the justifications for UCPM modifications in light of these external evaluations. The UCPM made most progress in

addressing recommendations on cross-pillar activities, namely the PPP and the Training and Exercises Programme, which underwent separate evaluations. The UCPM also made progress in the field of response (delivery of assistance, CECIS), preparedness (ECPD) and prevention (risk assessment and mapping), but its overall progress towards strategic recommendations could improve.

The UCPM was able to capitalise and implement some of the lessons identified from the Lessons Learnt Programme and (to a lesser extent) Workshops with the EU Presidency. DG ECHO made considerable effort to identify and address lessons, including the establishment of focal points within units for lesson implementation and improved categorisation of lessons based on stakeholder types. There is still room for improvement in terms of systematically implementing lessons, enhancing the identification of lessons on preparedness and prevention, and providing more tailored quantity and attribution of lessons. The Knowledge Network may improve the uptake of lessons identified through the Lessons Learnt Programme.

6.4 Coherence

The UCPM Decision sufficiently defines the prevention, preparedness and response pillars, thereby fostering synergies and complementarities. The expansion of the UCPM activities between 2017 and 2022 did not affect its internal coherence.

- On **prevention**, although the 2019 Article 6 reporting guidelines aimed to enhance coherence of DRM Summary Reports, variability persists in the methodologies employed, risks addressed, and sectors involved;
- On **preparedness**, concerns were raised about the prioritisation of rescEU over the ECPD. More time is needed to evaluate the synergies between more recent activities, such as changes to the PPP and the Training and Exercises Programme.
- The coherence of **response** activities within the UCPM was largely ensured by the ERCC, which coordinated, monitored and supported real-time responses to emergencies within and outside the EU. The logistical portfolio of the UCPM was also found to be internally coherent, with each activity having a complementary role.

There was a good level of coherence among UCPM activities across its three pillars, but there is still potential for improvement. The Lessons Learnt Programme provided a good forum to exchange lessons and good practices on prevention, preparedness and response activities. However, the internal reorganisation of DG ECHO somewhat hindered coordination and coherence across UCPM activities. More specifically, the division between Directorate A (emergency management and rescEU) and Directorate B (disaster preparedness and prevention) was not perceived as conducive to coherence between response activities or prevention and preparedness. The process of developing capacities at UCPM level should be better informed by scientific evidence and adequate needs assessments that would allow a clear overview of capacities and gaps.

UCPM prevention and preparedness activities successfully established synergies and complementarities with national civil protection activities. Examples included the mutual reinforcement between the ECPD and rescEU, as well as the alignment between the Training and Exercises Programme and national training efforts. Additionally, EU EWS served as a valuable complement to existing national systems.

The UCPM effectively coordinated its response with national actors in the field of civil protection, as well as others, such as private sector actors. However, there is a need for a clearer framework regulating UCPM cooperation with the private sector. Important tools and practices that facilitated preparedness and response activities included the host nation support guidelines and the deployment of ERCC Liaison Officers during operations. EU delegations played a valuable role during deployments outside Europe, and raising awareness among EU delegation staff was considered best practice. However, national authorities beyond the civil protection field were not always aware of the UCPM and its supports. Unexploited synergies with the military remain, given the transport and logistical advantages it can offer to UCPM operations.

There were synergies and complementarities between UCPM activities and other EU and international interventions in civil protection and other policy fields, with room for improvement in several areas.

Within DG ECHO, several steps were taken to improve synergies between humanitarian aid and civil protection, with a need to ensure increased awareness of humanitarian actors among the UCPM team members deployed. There is also a need to better clarify the links between civil protection and humanitarian aid interventions.

The UCPM was coherent with **other EU-level policy fields**, such as the environmental policy (Floods Directive), migration and home affairs (especially in developing the CBRN rescEU reserve). Similarly, 2021 revision of the UCPM Decision significantly strengthened the UCPM's medical preparedness by including the rescEU reserve of medical items and medical evacuation capabilities. Deployment of liaison officers from different services to DG ECHO was a good way to foster cross-sectoral cooperation and ensure that available medical expertise was used during the COVID-19 crisis. Nevertheless, some stakeholders expressed a perceived lack of clarity in the allocation of responsibilities between UCPM and HERA. Cooperation with Ministries of Foreign Affairs in recent crises revealed the need to ensure better awareness of the UCPM in order to carry out repatriation requests effectively.

At international level, the UCPM was coherent with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, with DG ECHO and the UNDRR taking steps to avoid overlaps and duplication of efforts. Despite the UCPM effectively coordinating its response with other international actors (e.g. NATO, UN OCHA), **unexploited synergies remain**, such as the potential further involvement of these actors with UCPM preparedness and prevention initiatives, or better awareness among UCPM team members of UN OCHA operations during UCPM missions.

6.5 *EU added value*

The UCPM brought EU added value to Member States, Participating States and third countries. The UCPM was instrumental in achieving results that could not have been achieved solely at national, regional or local level. Benefits were tangible and clear for all countries involved in civil protection activities, on both the receiving and giving end. This was particularly true for small countries with limited prevention, preparedness and response capacities, which are granted access to a wider pool of resources regardless of their individual contributions to the Mechanism.

The **main elements of the UCPM that added particular value to national and regional civil protection activities** were enhanced coordination (e.g. through the ERCC), pooling of resources (through rescEU and ECPP), cost savings, sharing of knowledge and expertise, capacity development (e.g. through the Training and Exercises Programme), risk assessment and awareness, solidarity and international influence.

The recently established **Knowledge Network** and the periodic compilation of **DRM Summary Reports** into an **overview document of disaster risks in the EU** had an intrinsic EU added value for Member and Participating States, notwithstanding some shortcomings and potential to improve. For example, stakeholders noted that the Knowledge Network suffered from a lack of visibility and understanding of its scope and use, while DRM Summary Reports lacked sufficient buy-in and support from national authorities other than civil protection, as well as standard methodologies for data collection.

The absence or discontinuation of the UCPM would have negative consequences for Member States, Participating States and third countries, as well as for the civil protection community at large. National, regional and local interventions would likely continue, albeit in a fragmented, less efficient and less effective way. The absence of the UCPM could open a critical gap in the multi-tiered system of civil protection assistance currently in place. In addition, the absence of the UCPM would

be difficult to fill through national-level interventions or through initiatives established via bilateral/regional agreements or multilateral cooperation.

While it is possible to infer that benefits materialised for all countries involved in civil protection activities (on both the receiving or giving end), the concrete ways in which the UCPM's external dimension brought EU added value to Member and Participating States remains unclear. The limited evidence available suggests that **the UCPM offered opportunities for Member and Participating States to learn from one another and invest in each other's capacities**, including through the provision of support and cooperation to third countries.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented here outline measures that could facilitate, harmonise and improve the effectiveness, relevance, coherence and EU added value of the UCPM.

Table 12. Strategic and operational recommendations

1. The European Commission should strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation to prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters

The landscape of disaster risk is continuously evolving, characterised by an increasing number of complex and simultaneous natural and man-made disasters that encompass multiple sectors. This has led to a growing diversity of crisis management actors within the scope of the UCPM's area of action. The UCPM has needed and will continue to need to cooperate with an increasing variety and complex composition of EU, international and national actors. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine significantly expanded the breadth of stakeholders with which the UCPM interacted (e.g. health, agriculture, energy, private sector). While the UCPM has increased cooperation across borders and sectors, this expanding stakeholder and disaster risk landscape has strained its resources. During the evaluation period, the UCPM faced significant challenges, including complex national administrative procedures and governance structures, the additional workload to cooperate with a variety of actors, limited awareness of the UCPM among non-conventional civil protection authorities, and the lack of rules/procedures on cooperation with the private sector.

Operational recommendations:

- **Strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation (through the ERCC) with EU and international stakeholders:**
 - DG ECHO should continue to adopt relevant administrative agreements and SOPs with existing and new national, EU and international stakeholders;
 - DG ECHO should consider setting a regular timeline to check administrative agreements and SOPs for update/revision (e.g. every five years and/or after any relevant major emergency);
 - DG ECHO should consider developing SOPs for the establishment and implementation of logistical hubs, which are viewed as an innovative solution with the potential to be used effectively for other disasters.
 - The European Commission should consider introducing thematic Commission inter-service meetings, where relevant DGs (e.g. DG ECHO, DG SANTE, HERA) can deepen their understanding of other services' work close to their own area of action, and streamline their efforts. Sessions could cover topics spanning prevention, preparedness and response. For example, a session could be held on risk mapping, with the aim of enhancing links between risk mapping conducted across the Commission;
 - DG ECHO should further developing the ERCC 2.0 initiative to enable the ERCC to become the Commission's cross-sectoral crisis hub for joint situational awareness, early warning, anticipation, information exchange and operational coordination, including between civilian and military stakeholders. This should be done, to the extent possible, in close cooperation with other EU-level

crisis management instruments, including those under development (such as the Single Market Emergency Instrument).

- DG ECHO should encourage the regular deployment of liaison officers from other Commission DGs within DG ECHO. This could be scheduled in advance (irrespective of crises scenarios) and/or through a regular deployment scheme when specific disasters occur (e.g. deployment of ECDC experts during health emergencies).
- **Sustain efforts to raise awareness of the UCPM among national authorities beyond civil protection.**
DG ECHO should:
 - Compile (with the help of national civil protection contact points) a list of contact points by relevant sector for each Member and Participating State. While the CPC would remain the main contact point, DG ECHO could reach out to the sector-specific contact points (looping in the CPC) for relevant UCPM activities. The CPC would be responsible for facilitating that contact.
 - Develop documents delineating all the steps and actors involved (with their respective responsibilities) in different UCPM activities and encourage Member States to share it at national level. A document could be created per UCPM pillar, potentially with QR codes where interested individuals can explore the topic further (e.g. Knowledge Network online platform).
 - Support civil protection authorities to develop internal protocols/SOPs explaining the steps involved in a UCPM activation. This could be shared with other stakeholders and institutions that may be involved in UCPM response efforts. The protocols would define the roles and responsibilities of different actors when the UCPM is activated, depending on the disaster type.
 - Establish robust frameworks to enable the initiation of regular joint calls with relevant national stakeholders (e.g. civil protection authorities, health authorities, Ministries of Foreign Affairs), as well as EU and international stakeholders, when specific response efforts commence. This could entail maintaining lists of stakeholder contacts, by disaster type, to invite for joint calls through a recurring virtual/in-person meeting placeholder as soon as that disaster type is activated.
 - Organise ad hoc sessions to describe changes to the Mechanism when they are introduced. These sessions could include a wider breadth of national authorities across sectors, which would not only increase familiarity with the Mechanism and its changes, but also help national and EU stakeholders to build stronger connections. The European Commission could encourage CPC contact points to hold these sessions (ideally in their native language) in their national context.
 - Consider organising annual thematic Lessons Learnt Programme Meetings (similar to forest fire seasons). DG ECHO should continue to organise thematic Lessons Learnt Meetings after major events (e.g. COVID-19, forest fire seasons), and also consider annual thematic meetings for disaster types that frequently benefit from UCPM support (e.g. floods). During protracted crises, DG ECHO should consider establishing biannual Lessons Learnt Meetings, bringing together DG ECHO Desk Officers, other relevant Commission services, the EEAS including EU delegations and national authorities (including civil protection authorities). Where possible, these should be organised in different Member States to facilitate the participation of other national actors.
 - Consider developing a Communication Strategy on raising awareness of the UCPM with national authorities outside civil protection, including the activities above, their implementation, and distribution of responsibilities.
- **Establish and increase structural cooperation with the private sector to complement and alleviate national activities.**
DG ECHO should:
 - Organise a dedicated workshop with Member and Participating States on how to frame the cooperation with the private sector. This could be done at CPC level or through a tailored consultation (such as for the Knowledge Network and new Training and Exercises Programme), but with a more limited timeframe (e.g. maximum three months). This workshop should have a strategic forward-looking angle, framing how different private sector actors can contribute to

UCPM activities across the disaster management cycle (see recommendation 4 for more on DG ECHO increasing a role in driving innovation with key industry actors).

- Consider setting up and continuously update SOPs on UCPM cooperation with the private sector across pillars, on the basis of consultation with Member and Participating States, that:
 - a) **Clearly define the circumstances/conditions** in which the private sector can be involved in UCPM operations and activities (e.g. type of disasters);
 - b) **Specify the areas in which the private sector can enhance national capacities**, such as transport capabilities, logistics support, and/or provision of in-kind assistance;
 - c) **Define parameters for the donation process**, outlining the roles and responsibilities of donors, DG ECHO, and other national authorities, if applicable. Such parameters are already established for existing rescEU donations, which is a good practice that should continue. DG ECHO-wide parameters and templates would help to standardise cooperation with the private sector. In addition, a focal point of these discussions could be the possibility of DG ECHO handling the procurement of private sector services or exploring alternative approaches to the Belgian logistical hub model, which exhibited some inefficiencies and could benefit from increased climate considerations;
 - d) **Develop measures regulating potential reputational and liability risks** associated with donations (e.g. quality checks, authorisation for distribution and transports), including roles and responsibilities of DG ECHO and potential hubs involved.

Main benefits: Introducing channels to streamline and formalise cross-sectoral cooperation could ensure a more effective and efficient response to complex crises, which often require the involvement of a variety of actors. This could enable closer links between civil protection and other EU crisis management activities and decrease the risk of fragmentation and duplication of emergency and crisis management structures. Adopting and updating SOPs between DG ECHO and other EU and international level stakeholders would increase operational efficiency. Sustaining efforts to raise awareness among non-conventional civil protection would also contribute to a better understanding of the UCPM's role and capabilities, and, accordingly, a more efficient response. More structured involvement of the private sector in donations could alleviate the administrative burden on national authorities, ensure transparent and accountable processes, fill capacity gaps for particular disasters, and enhance operational coordination as more donations can be channelled through a single centre.

2. DG ECHO should simplify procedures and administrative requirements to enhance flexibility and reduce administrative burden

The current transport financing procedures for UCPM support are particularly lengthy and cumbersome, somewhat limiting the Mechanism's efficiency and effectiveness. Stakeholders perceived the 75% co-financing rate for the transport and operations of ECPP to be insufficient. Similarly, the 100% financing rate for rescEU was deemed inadequate in reflecting the actual costs involved, as it did not cover expenses such as administrative costs and back-office costs. Civil protection authorities raised concerns about the prioritisation of rescEU over the ECPP, linked to the financial attractiveness of rescEU. In the case of the UCPM's response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, speeding up the administrative procedures for more urgent requests was considered a useful lesson learnt.

Operational recommendations:

- **Simplify the procedures and administrative requirements for UCPM activations, particularly those related to transport and logistics in ECPP deployments.**
DG ECHO should:

- Introduce automated forms (e.g. using a single-entry point, Microsoft Forms) to handle transport requests and lessen the administrative burden on Member States, Participating States, and the ERCC.
 - Consider introducing the possibility to trigger an 'accelerated procedure' for large-scale, complex, transboundary emergencies. The accelerated procedure would allow DG ECHO to carry out certain administrative steps in parallel (instead of sequentially) in order to provide a more rapid response. The following parameters for an accelerated procedure could be determined with Member and Participating States: 1) clear and restricted criteria for triggering an accelerated procedure, and 2) the parameters for administrative steps that can be bypassed in the case of an accelerated procedure. The accelerated procedure can be triggered by the requesting State, with ERCC approval. Discussions with Member and Participating States on the parameters for this procedure should also consider whether and how it might apply to both ECPP and rescEU capacities (e.g. Article 12 of the Decision).
 - Consider adding a 'transport module' into CECIS 2.0 that will allow tracking and follow-up of the co-financing of transport and operations.
- **Consider increasing the co-financing rate to 100% for ECPP deployments.**
DG ECHO should:
 - Initiate discussions with Member States and Participating States within the CPC on the possibility to increase the co-financing rate to 100% for ECPP deployments.
 - Conduct a feasibility study on the potential (financial) impact on DG ECHO and (to a lesser extent) national authorities of increasing the co-financing rate to 100% for ECPP deployments. This study should also explore the feasibility of including back office costs in the 100% rescEU financing. The study should include a tailored consultation with Member and Participating States and consider whether the increase of the co-financing rate would apply for certain disasters or for all activations.

Main benefits: Streamlining/simplifying the procedures related to transport and logistics within the ECPP could reduce complexity and alleviate administrative burden on DG ECHO and national authorities. This would result in improved operational efficiency and facilitate faster and more effective responses to emergencies. By increasing the co-financing rate of the ECPP to 100%, the financial attractiveness of the ECPP could be improved, encouraging greater participation and support. By conducting administrative steps in parallel (rather than sequentially) through an 'accelerated procedure', the UCPM could improve its speed of response to urgent requests. The main benefit of conducting a feasibility study and tailored consultations is to ensure that any decision to increase the co-financing rate is justified and takes into account the perspectives and needs of all relevant stakeholders.

3. The European Commission should enhance monitoring systems and tools to track/evaluate the UCPM's performance across prevention, preparedness and response activities

The **current monitoring systems** to track and assess the UCPM's performance is limited, with KPIs primarily in the field of response. Despite the positive developments in monitoring and reporting progress (e.g. introduction of additional KPI for civil protection, more result indicators), the existing indicators and processes were not adequate to assess and monitor efficiency, cost-effectiveness and effectiveness in the evaluation period, as they focus on results without incorporating quality, use of resources/cost and outcomes/impact considerations. KPIs and result indicators do not have clear links to the UCPM's specific and general objectives. Nor do the current KPIs on response reflect how the evolution of different disasters requires different response times/rate. The KPI on the adequacy of response is not entirely fit for purpose because potential '**partial**' offers to larger requests for assistance are still counted as UCPM activations.

Finally, the high number of lessons within the Lessons Learnt Programme, with no indication of priority level, makes follow-up less systematic.

DG ECHO plans to develop performance measurement frameworks for specific UCPM activities (e.g. the Knowledge Network adopted its own KPIs; the Training and Exercises Programme lots each have their own monitoring and evaluation framework; the PPP has published plans to develop its own).

Additionally, **DG ECHO continues to rely on standard office tools** for its daily operations. For instance, the tracking and monitoring of available capacities/modules, as well as lessons from Lessons Learnt Programme Meetings, are managed and tracked in Excel spreadsheets. This causes internal inefficiencies, complex handovers, and increased workload. Although CECIS 2.0 is expected to include additional and improved functionalities, this tool is only a part of the solution to advance data and information management at UCPM level.

Operational recommendations:

- **Develop an UCPM-wide monitoring and evaluation policy** to establish a multiannual framework to measure performance and achievements that covers all UCPM activities. DG ECHO should introduce an monitoring and evaluation policy that establishes monitoring tools/systems to consistently and precisely measure the effectiveness and efficiency of UCPM activities. It should also consider designating resources to manage the monitoring function of the UCPM. Developing such a monitoring and evaluation policy should include:
 - An **intervention logic**, illustrating the logical relationship between the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts of the Mechanism. This would assess the causal relationship between the Mechanism's specific outputs and impacts to be expected. The theory of change developed by this interim evaluation could be used as a starting point, to be reviewed and updated on a yearly basis (when reporting).
 - An **indicator framework across all pillars**, outlining indicators at UCPM level and at pillar/activity level: 1) the UCPM-level indicators would constitute the higher level in the performance measurement framework, through which the planned outputs and impacts can be measured after the multiannual period. In parallel, indicators should be developed by all UCPM pillars/activity, in line with existing activity-level frameworks (Knowledge Network/PPP). The measurement of the latter indicators should happen annually (with monitoring milestones throughout the year) and inform the UCPM-level indicators over the multiannual period. When developing the indicator framework, DG ECHO should consider revising existing KPIs (e.g. in 2024 when revising DG ECHO's strategy) to reflect the different characteristics and requirements of different disasters. When revising the indicators, DG ECHO should pay particular attention to the specific difficulties in measuring impact and progress in the field of prevention, which is complicated by its cross-sectoral nature and long-term effects. Existing literature and expertise on measuring the impact of prevention should be reviewed. A new indicator framework should allow for a comparison between results, outcomes, impacts and costs, and then monitor the cost-effectiveness of the Mechanism's activities. The indicators should also consider the quality of the intervention and use of resources/costs (see Annex 8 for an example indicator framework structure).
 - A **monitoring and evaluation plan**, including guidelines and common principles, for all different UCPM activities to ensure that they all feed into a UCPM-level monitoring and evaluation process. This plan would define an approach to **reporting** on past and current performance of the Mechanism in DG ECHO's annual reports. This would provide clear guidance on how to collect, monitor and report data on each of the KPIs, how to assess the progress of the UCPM annually, and where room for improvement is identified.
 - To enhance understanding of the sustainability and impact of UCPM funding, DG ECHO could implement **monitoring practices for a duration of one to two years after the completion of funding for UCPM-funded projects**. DG ECHO should establish KPIs for each UCPM funding stream (see Annex 8).

- The establishment of a **monitoring and evaluation framework** will be particularly useful for the future interim evaluations of the UCPM, as it would automatically provide a large dataset which would: 1) facilitate the work of external evaluators, who would rely on progressive measurements of KPIs to formulate an assessment on the performance of the Mechanism towards achieving its objectives in a given timeframe; 2) reduce stakeholder fatigue, particularly among DG ECHO Desk Officers, as data on performance at all levels (e.g. UCPM/pillar/activity) could be automatically extracted and delivered to external evaluators.
- Improve reporting on budget per activity and per pillar to support decision-making and funding allocation, both Commission-wide and within DG ECHO specifically. While there is ongoing monitoring, there is a lack of awareness within DG ECHO and Member States of the allocation of budget per activity. Consistent reporting of the allocation of budget per activity (and pillar) could help to awareness and support discussions on sustainable distribution of funds across all three pillars (see recommendation 4).
- Where applicable, replace standard MS Office tools with more innovative and tailored IT and information management systems to collect and monitor data on UCPM activities. One DG ECHO staff member would be responsible for inputting information, by activity (e.g. on a monthly basis/ad hoc when new data are available), and for monitoring progress. Such a common database could be tailored to the set KPIs. This system should ensure:
 - **Common monitoring of ECPP and rescEU capacities** accessible to all relevant DGs. Shifting the monitoring process to a more innovative IT system could enhance user-friendly tracking of changes to capacity;
 - **Common tracking of the delivery of in-kind assistance**, also accessible to all relevant DGs and other Commission services (e.g. EU delegations). This tracking could cover the following elements [per type of in-kind assistance emergency]: 1) time to deliver assistance, 2) start/end point, 3) use of in-kind assistance, 4) action points/responsibilities once the in-kind assistance has been used (if applicable);
 - **Tracking the implementation of lessons learnt and recommendations identified internally and externally**. These should be mapped into a single database with a priority order. That priority order could also be reflected in the Lessons Learnt Programme outputs. For those outputs and for recommendations, a DG ECHO focal point would be assigned to follow implementation and tasked with updating progress on a yearly basis;
 - **Common database for experts**, accessible by DG ECHO staff working in relevant units. Currently, databases of experts trained and deployed are split between Directorate A and Directorate B. One single database accessible to all DG ECHO staff should be maintained (e.g. with a row per expert explaining the training experts have attended, their deployments). This database should be updated regularly (after each deployment/training/exercise).

Main benefits: Ensure a more accurate and comprehensive assessment of UCPM performance across its pillars (both in internal annual reports and external evaluations), as well as increased efficiency within DG ECHO, reducing complexities in handovers and stakeholder fatigue. UCPM activities are interconnected, thus data collected to monitor their progress should be in one single platform, accessible to all DG ECHO staff, with data and monitoring activities clearly attributed to a specific role (rather than person, due to staff turnover). Assigning a level of priority to lessons and recommendations could facilitate a more structured and organised approach to addressing and implementing those lessons. Assessing the sustainability of UCPM funding could help to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of funding streams and detect room to improve.

4. The European Commission should streamline and strengthen the UCPM's funding instruments to ensure a common European approach to crisis management

While the UCPM managed to respond effectively to the demands of the increasing quantity and complexity of disasters, its effectiveness was hampered by limited human and financial resources, especially for the ERCC's, which received a significant increase in RfA. This often resulted in funds being redirected from prevention and non-operational preparedness activities. The demands of the evolving disaster risk landscape were increasingly cross-sectoral, resulting in an increase in crisis management actors (see recommendation 1).

Disaster management activities have always involved multiple Commission and Member State sectors. In the case of prevention activities, while there was significant progress, its inherently cross-sectoral nature somewhat limited the UCPM's ability to stimulate further activities. The interim evaluation found that when Member States compile DRM Summary Reports, divergent risk assessment methodologies and the requirement to consult numerous sectors created a substantial administrative burden for some authorities, restricting their capacity to change the process significantly. The temporary nature of NextGenerationEU funding raised concerns about the feasibility of sustaining the rescEU capacities developing with the budget from the MFF alone.

Operational recommendations:

- **Strengthen links between EU budget instruments to introduce a more streamlined approach and alleviate resources strain.**
The European Commission should:
 - Map relevant EU budget instruments that could contribute to achieving the UCPM's objectives across the disaster management cycle, followed by sessions with counterparts to explore potential overlaps in funding (e.g. between PPP and Cohesion Fund projects) and scope for further synergies. This would not only enable the UCPM to build stronger links across relevant sectors, but strengthen a common European approach to crisis management and alleviate the resource strain of the increased workload for the UCPM.
 - These discussions should also focus on the European Commission budget lines that finance the development of different national risk assessments or strategies (e.g. DG CLIMA). They could explore the potential to improve harmonisation of data and reporting requirements across sectors and facilitate data collection and sharing (e.g. a single national risk assessment form from which all relevant national and Commission services could derive the relevant information). While Member States would remain responsible for cross-sector risk assessment, all pertinent sectors responsible for assessing national risks would then be more actively engaged in the process. This would be a departure from the current practice in some Member States, where civil protection authorities – often having less influence than other authorities – may struggle to consult all relevant sectors involved in risk assessment. By consolidating various services and budgetary instruments, this approach could elevate the importance of the task, reinforcing a preventive perspective throughout the European Commission. It would ensure that risk assessments and recommended preventive actions receive due consideration across different Commission services.
- **Establish a mechanism to ensure safeguards across all phases of the disaster risk management cycle in the case of emergencies of an unprecedented scale/ multitude.**
the European Commission should:
 - Consider establishing a mechanism to come into play when the allocated funding for emergency response falls short, either due to emergencies of an unprecedented scale, or when multiple large-scale emergencies take place at once. This would ensure that the practice of occasionally shifting funds from other areas (as has happened in the past with prevention and preparedness) becomes a last-resort measure. This mechanism could span across European Commission DGs, considering strategies to ensure that all phases of disaster risk management have sufficient funding to provide an appropriate response.

- **Hold discussions on the general funding of the UCPM in face of the evolving disaster risk landscape.**
The European Commission should:
 - Discuss the adequacy of the UCPM's current funding in the face of the evolving disaster risk landscape and extent of the UCPM's involvement. While the UCPM continued to maintain a high and rapid response rate in the face of the significant increase in activations of the Mechanism, it did so under significant resource strain. In particular, key stakeholders noted concerns about the sustainability of the ERCC to continue to operate with its current financing. DG ECHO needs to consider (influenced by the findings of the research suggested in recommendation 6) whether the UCPM will continue its current pace of work or draw tighter parameters. If the current trend of increasingly frequent activations continues, the existing human and financial resources will not be sufficient;
 - These discussions should consider the financial implications of ringfencing prevention and preparedness budgets to ensure that budget is not taken from prevention and preparedness in crises where response funding runs out. The assessment of the potential financial impact could be conducted within the research suggested in recommendation 6.
- **Establish sustainable funding for the further development and maintenance of rescEU capacities.**
The European Commission should:
 - Establish sustainable funding for the maintenance and potential further development of rescEU capacities. Currently, rescEU is financed under the NextGenerationEU, which is set to finish in 2026, one year before the current MFF. Accordingly, MFF discussions should consider how and in what capacity to integrate rescEU as a permanent fixture of the UCPM.

Main benefits: This recommendation aims to enhance the flexibility and sustainability of the UCPM's funding, enabling it to operate more efficiently and effectively in an increasingly complex crisis landscape. Leveraging various available budget sources to strengthen the UCPM and other crisis management efforts can help to foster a unified European approach to disaster management. This approach not only opens opportunities to secure funding for critical cross-sectoral UCPM activities, such as risk mapping and DRM Summary Reports, but establishes a mechanism that safeguards monies for prevention and preparedness activities. Exploring options for providing rescEU with more stable funding and assessing the need for an expansion of the UCPM's general budget are central considerations, as decisions will significantly impact the sustainability of the UCPM's ongoing operations.

5. The European Commission should promote the further integration of evidence-based knowledge (e.g. scientific findings) and technological innovation in civil protection activities

The UCPM should strive to increase access to and use of scientific knowledge and results, as well as enhancing EWS. EWSs could be improved to ensure that information is less fragmented across EU and domestic EWS, to cover more hazards, quality control measures and innovative data sources. Although DG ECHO's partnership with the JRC is well-established, there is a need to improve the operationalisation of scientific evidence in UCPM activities. For instance, the process of developing capacities at UCPM level should be better informed by scientific evidence, preparedness needs assessment and scenario building. While the quick development of capacities during the evaluation period showed the flexibility of the UCPM and its ability to adapt to emerging needs, the process was heavily influenced by existing crises rather than systematic gap analyses/need assessments. Other UCPM activities on scenario building and foresight might be better aligned to ensure that their outputs inform one another and result in a better overview of research needs and capacity gaps.

Operational recommendations:

- **Introduce structural links between UCPM strategic anticipation and foresight activities and the development of capacity through rescEU and ECPP.**

DG ECHO should:

- Compile a document every three years assessing how the outcomes from all UCPM strategic anticipation and foresight activities should influence national capacities developed in the ECPP and rescEU. It would consider findings from scenario building and horizon scanning exercises (e.g. those carried out within the ERCC 2.0 initiative), integrated in or triangulated with outcomes from the overview document of disaster risks in the EU;
- This outcome document could be discussed at CPC meetings to establish a priority order for capacities to be developed in the ECPP and rescEU. The main findings could also be presented at the Civil Protection Forum. CPC members could be encouraged to present the status quo in their respective Member/Participating State, highlighting new capacities developed/resources not typically managed by civil protection authorities.

- **Ensure that scientific expertise (generated through UCPM activities and beyond) influences the implementation of UCPM activities.**

DG ECHO should:

- Use the Knowledge Network (science pillar) as a forum of expertise. For instance, DG ECHO should bring together stakeholders within the science and capacity development pillars of the Knowledge Network in regular meetings to discuss the development of capacity (including the adequacy of capacity goals);
- This forum could be an opportunity for scientific experts to discuss potential areas to improve the quality and methodologies used by national authorities to compile (and DG ECHO to aggregate) DRM Summary Reports. It could also be used to discuss methods of scenario building and horizon scanning;
- Enhancing the implementation of ERCC 2 initiative including continuing to develop its anticipatory capacity. This includes creating the necessary tools to anticipate events and develop foresight capabilities for increased situational awareness, as well as tools to identify emerging capacity gaps (e.g. rescEU CBRN, shelter, energy).

- **Support the enhancement of EWS to ensure that information is less fragmented across EU and domestic EWS.**

DG ECHO should:

- Consider supporting the enhancement of existing EU-level EWS by covering more hazards and including additional quality control measures and innovative data sources.

- **Foster initiatives to support increased quality and harmonised methodologies in DRM Summary Reports, resulting in enhanced comparability for the purpose of the overview document of disaster risks in the EU.**

DG ECHO should:

- Consider a regular revision of the 2019 reporting guidelines to ensure that they continue to stimulate harmonised methods in compiling DRM Summary Reports. This regular revision should consider the most recent trends (climate change) and be up-to date on the EU-level policy and legislative landscape on relevant sectors (European Green Deal, critical infrastructure);
- Use the work strand 'Technical Assistance for Disaster Risk Management' under the Disaster Resilience Grants (ex-Track I) to fund initiatives at national level to improve the quality of National Risk Assessments;

- Make use of other EU-wide assessments and scientific outputs (e.g. future EUCRA, ECDC risk assessments) to inform the overview document of disaster risks in the EU.
- **Enable the identification of emerging technological innovation and foster cooperation with industry.**
The European Commission should:
 - Systematically gather intelligence on emerging technological developments and their potential implications for the civil protection community through scenario building and horizon scanning initiatives. These findings could be included in the document influencing capacity development, highlighting areas where DG ECHO could drive innovation in collaboration with private entities;
 - Explore ways to sustain engagement with companies developing innovative technologies applicable in the field of civil protection. Consider inviting private actors with expertise, products or innovative ideas that could contribute to civil protection activities (technology companies, manufacturers of disaster response equipment) to present hold a stall at the Civil Protection Forum and/or targeted Lessons Learnt Meetings.
- **Introduce innovative methodologies/tools within the Training and Exercises Programme.**
 - Introduce more practical methodologies (less reliance on PowerPoint) and encourage training on the use of civil protection tools (e.g. integrating guidance on how to use information from EWS) and outputs (results of PPP projects);
 - Encourage the use of virtual reality simulations in exercises (similar to the March 2023 discussion-based exercise on marine pollution);
 - Encourage the use of other platforms for online and in-person participant interaction (e.g. introducing social gamified learning through different online training software). Together with Training and Exercises Programme contractors, consider ways to stimulate informal online networking opportunities;
 - Standardise the communication tools (e.g. MS Teams) used between the EUCPT and ERCC and then communicate those tools during training to ensure that all parties are familiar with their use.

Main benefits: Fostering more informed and evidence-based capacity development through the involvement of technical experts and scientific evidence. Given the increasing quantity, size and frequency of disasters, regularly increasing the evidence base for capacity development could foster more flexible preparedness. Streamlining and aggregating scientific outputs from different risk assessments could improve coordination and provide a more comprehensive overview of potential disasters. In addition, the consistent monitoring of innovative technologies and their potential use within the UCPM will help DG ECHO to expand and potentially deepen its impact, remaining a leader in the area of disaster management.

6. The European Commission should ensure clarity of the UCPM's role in third countries and disasters not conventionally in the field of civil protection

Between 2017 and 2022, the UCPM experienced an unprecedented surge in activations (from 32 in 2017 to 232 in 2022). Due to the escalating impacts of climate change, which exacerbate the unpredictability of the disaster risk landscape, as well as the magnitude and intricacy of natural disasters and the occurrence of unforeseen disasters outside the typical remit of civil protection, the UCPM is expected to face a growing number of requests from within and outside the EU. Originally designed to address intra-EU solidarity in responding to natural disasters, the UCPM has now become a crucial player in handling disasters not conventionally within the remit of civil protection (e.g. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine), as well as disasters occurring in third countries (two-thirds of UCPM activations came from third countries during the evaluation period).

This evolving landscape of disaster risks raises concerns about the sustainability of the UCPM (and especially the ERCC) in its current role. The UCPM's expanding involvement in various areas is compounded by limited (human and financial) resources. This urgently requires a redrawing of the scope of the UCPM's intervention across types of disasters and geographically, in conjunction with the growing number of crisis management actors and mechanisms in the field. While changes are necessary to ensure that the UCPM maintains its relevance and effectiveness in crises, this process must have the buy-in of Member and Participating States.

Operational recommendations:

- Develop SOPs for situations where the UCPM is confronted with simultaneous RfA, so that third countries are aware of the functioning of the Mechanism and capacities available.
- Evaluate the feasibility, potential impact and benefits of revising the UCPM Decision:
 - An impact assessment should explore whether the UCPM mandate and resources can or should be expanded, and the potential implications for its governance, particularly the role of the ERCC. In particular, it should examine how the ERCC can maintain a sustainable role as a cross-sector hub, despite its limited human and financial resources. This challenge becomes even more significant given the rising number and complexity of disasters, which involve an increasing number of sectors. Expanding the UCPM mandate and/or substantially revising its governance structure (including the ERCC) would require consultation with national authorities and appropriate subsidiarity and proportionality checks;
 - This study should consider the interactions between the UCPM and other EU-level crisis management instruments in place (e.g. ARGUS, IPCR) and in development (Single Market Emergency Instrument) to understand how the UCPM's role complements the existing architecture of EU and international crisis management structures;
 - This study should consider the UCPM's external dimension, establishing a clear role for the UCPM as an international actor and setting clear parameters on its involvement outside the EU. Similarly, when defining the future role of the UCPM, clear parameters for areas of intervention should be defined (e.g. disaster types). These parameters should be considered while still maintaining flexibility for the Mechanism within its legislative framework.

Main benefits: Conducting an impact assessment to evaluate the feasibility, potential impact and benefits of revising the UCPM Decision would allow for a thorough analysis of the potential to reconsider its governance structure and mandate, given stakeholders' concerns about its sustainability in relation to complex emergencies. Evaluating the UCPM's governance structure, particularly the role of the ERCC, could improve coordination, decision-making and overall effectiveness. This assessment could identify areas where governance mechanisms can be streamlined, enhanced or adapted to better address complex emergencies and facilitate cooperation among Member and Participating States.

7. DG ECHO should strengthen coherence and leverage untapped synergies between the UCPM and humanitarian aid efforts

The 2017 interim evaluation of the UCPM found some concerns about the blurred links between civil protection and humanitarian aid interventions and identified a need to better define what civil protection interventions entailed. Although this interim evaluation found that the UCPM effectively coordinated its activities with its humanitarian aid counterparts, there are opportunities for closer, more effective and efficient cooperation. Challenges include the limited awareness of the humanitarian aid cluster among civil protection actors in the field and the perception of civil protection operations in extra-EU settings as less neutral than humanitarian aid relief efforts.

Operational recommendations:

- **Increase knowledge and understanding of the role, missions and responsibilities of humanitarian aid actors among the civil protection community within UCPM preparedness activities.**

DG ECHO should:

- Develop additional training modules within the new Training and Exercises Programme on humanitarian aid actors/clusters. These should cover the role played by international organisations (e.g. UN OCHA, WFP) during protracted crises, with practical examples from real humanitarian aid interventions;
- Increase the number of joint training and exercises between civil protection and relevant international organisations (UN OCHA, IOM) to enhance understanding of respective roles, modus operandi and coordination processes;
- Organise tailored/dedicated workshops and bring together civil protection and humanitarian aid professionals to discuss common challenges and lessons following response operations;
- Introduce 'humanitarian aid-civil protection collaboration' as a topic of exchange within the EoE Programme. This could be a forum to gather specific lessons that would complement the knowledge gained through training (including joint trainings) and exercises.

Main benefits: By increasing awareness and understanding of humanitarian aid actors and clusters within the civil protection community, and promoting joint training, exercises and workshops, the UCPM would facilitate better coordination and cooperation between the two fields. This will lead to improved synergies, increased efficiency, and better emergency response outcomes overall.

8. The European Commission should raise awareness of the UCPM and disasters with relevant stakeholders and with the public

Due to the numerous changes implemented in the UCPM since 2017, some national authorities experienced difficulties in keeping track and staying informed about all UCPM initiatives, leading to a sense of 'change fatigue'. Concerns were raised about awareness and ownership of the Knowledge Network: while it is expected that awareness and ownership of the Network will grow naturally over time, more systematic efforts to raise awareness could facilitate this process. Other UCPM activities, such as advisory missions in the field of prevention and preparedness and host nation support guidelines, would benefit from increased awareness-raising endeavours. Presently, information on various UCPM activities is scattered across different websites, including the ERCC portal, DG ECHO website, and the Knowledge Network online platform.

Operational recommendations:

- **Encourage systematic awareness raising on the Knowledge Network and other less well-known UCPM activities during UCPM events** (e.g. training, exercises, DRMKC conferences).
- To enhance awareness and understanding of the Knowledge Network, it would be beneficial to incorporate explanations of its role during relevant occasions (e.g., Civil Protection Forum, Lessons Learnt Programme Meetings);
- Awareness efforts could involve increased dissemination of Knowledge Network factsheets¹⁰⁹⁹, encouraging national authorities to disseminate them with non-conventional civil protection actors at national level. Similar factsheets could be created for other lesser-known UCPM activities (not necessarily under the umbrella of the Network), such as advisory missions and host nation support guidelines. Information pamphlets could be included in the Knowledge Network newsletter and distributed at events.

¹⁰⁹⁹ European Commission, UCPKN Factsheets, 2023, <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/ucpkn-factsheets>

- **Improve communication on changes and initiatives within the UCPM to Member and Participating States.**

DG ECHO could enhance the role of the Knowledge Network as a central hub for cooperation on UCPM initiatives:

- Leverage the Knowledge Network's newsletter and/or its online platform to send regular updates to Member/Participating States on UCPM changes and initiatives, and raise awareness of advisory missions, PPP project outputs and the DRMKC;
- In its reorganisation, DG ECHO could consider how to place the Knowledge Network unit so that it reflects its governance of the different activities and elements (or at least creates more structural links/communication channels between units);
- At the Civil Protection Forum, DG ECHO could consider introducing different stalls for different UCPM activities. These stalls could have designated staff members explaining the activities.

- **Step up activities to raise public awareness of the UCPM's activities and civil protection matters.**

- In alignment with Union Disaster Resilience Goal #2 and insights into public awareness regarding risks and the UCPM, the European Commission could intensify its endeavours to increase public awareness of disasters. This could be achieved, for instance, through the formulation of a comprehensive Commission Strategy, including DG ECHO public information campaigns on enhancing risk awareness and preparedness, along with the development of resources to assist Member and Participating States in implementing comparable campaigns. These campaigns could educate the general public on disaster preparedness in specific circumstances and provide guidance on where to access trustworthy national-level disaster information;
- DG ECHO could consider making better use of its social media accounts to share accessible information on its activities. A 2020 social media audit revealed that Facebook is DG ECHO's best-performing social media page (based on engagement rate, number of followers). Its accounts on Twitter (now X) and Instagram have good quality content but rate below other (EU and international) institutions' average engagement rate. DG ECHO's posting frequency on Twitter (now X) could be higher. Overall, DG ECHO shares high quality photos and stories but could use more video content across its social channels and include stronger quotes on its photos. To raise awareness of the UCPM, DG ECHO should consider producing and disseminating additional short videos (which typically gain most engagement) on UCPM activities and results. Following the example of the Council of the EU's YouTube account¹¹⁰⁰, it could produce short 'explainer' videos presenting the different components of the UCPM.

- **Consolidate information on the UCPM for key stakeholders under one main point of access, e.g. Knowledge Network online platform.**

- DG ECHO should continue to work towards making the Knowledge Network online platform a single point of entry to access information on the UCPM. For example, it already cross-references a selection of articles and maps from the DG ECHO website, which could be expanded to reference a broader range of information, from pages explaining different UCPM activities for people new to the Mechanism (e.g. DG ECHO pages on different UCPM activities, such as rescEU) to pages from the ERCC portal.

Main benefits: By consistently using communication channels and platforms, Member and Participating States (within and beyond the field of civil protection) could be better informed about UCPM changes and initiatives. This would ensure that they stay up to date with the latest developments, fostering better collaboration and coordination. By leveraging the Knowledge Network as a central hub and organising ad hoc meetings, DG ECHO could increase stakeholder engagement and strengthen understanding of the Network's

¹¹⁰⁰ Council of the EU, Youtube channel, n.d., <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLu62aebfdNtPDCET-qqfQcqvXXqSkUea>

structure, mandate and activities. This would promote an increased sense of ownership and commitment among stakeholders, leading to more effective collaboration and utilisation of the Network's resources.

ANNEX 1 LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
EU	European Union
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
EERC	European Emergency Response Capacity
CBRN	Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear
HERA	European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority
ERCC	European Response Coordination Centre
ECPP	European Civil Protection Pool
EFAS	European Flood Awareness System
NRA	National Risk Assessment
DRMKC	Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre
JRC	Joint Research Centre
CECIS	Common Emergency Communication and Information System
DPPI	Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for Southeast Europe
EWS	Early Warning Systems
EHRC	European Humanitarian Response Capacity
KAPP	Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness
TTX	Table-Top Exercises
CPX	Command Post Exercises
FSX	Full-Scale Exercises
MFF	Multiannual Financial Frameworks
ToC	Theory of Change
MS	Member State
PS	Participating State
TC	Third Country

Acronym	Definition
PPP	Prevention and Preparedness Projects
NHS	National Hydrological Services
EFFIS	European Forest Fire Information System
TAST	Technical Assistance and Support Teams
PMER	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
CBA	Cost-Benefit Analysis
HNS	Host Nation Support
EUCPT	European Union Civil Protection Team
CMI	Union Civil Protection Mechanism Introduction Course
OPM	Operational Management Course
TEC	Technical Expert Course
SMC	Staff Management Course
AMC	Assessment Mission Course
SME	Seminar for Mechanism Experts
HLC	High Level Coordination Course
SEC	Security Course
CND	Course on Negotiation and Decision-Making
BURN	Burns Assessment Team Training Course
OSIC	On-site Integration Course
EFAS	European Flood Awareness System
GDACS	Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System
GNSS	Global Navigation Satellite System
EAHSP	European Anthropogenic Hazard Scientific Partnership
STAF	Scientific and Technical Advisory Facility
EMC	European Medical Corps
ETC	Emergency Temporary Camp

Acronym	Definition
FHOS	Field hospital
MEVAC	Medical Aerial Evacuation of Disaster Victims
HUSAR	Heavy Urban Search and Rescue
CBRNDET	Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Detection and Sampling
FC	Flood Containment
FFFH	Aerial Forest firefighting module using helicopters
FFFP	Aerial Forest fire fighting module using planes
FRB	Flood Recue Using Boats
GFFF	Ground Forest Fire Fighting
GFFF-V	Ground Forest Fire Fighting Using Vehicles
HCP	High-Capacity Pumping
HUSAR	Heavy Urban Search and Rescue
MEVAC	Medical Aerial Evacuation of Disaster Victims
MUSAR	Medium Urban Search and Rescue - One For Cold Conditions
WP	Water Purification
WSAR	Teams For Water Search and Rescue
RPAS	Remoted Piloted Aircraft System
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
LO	Liaison Officers
EUCPT	European Union Civil Protection Team
EQ	Evaluation Question
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PRAF	Peer Review Assessment Framework
JC	Judgement Criteria

Acronym	Definition
EoE	Exchange of Experts
EWS	Early Warning System
MBC	Modules Basic Course
HLC	High Level Coordination Course
CND	Course on Negotiation and Decision-Making
NGEU	Next Generation European Union
RFA	Requests for Assistance
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
sTESTA	secured Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations
SMEI	Single Market Emergency Instrument
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
KAPP	Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness
DRG	Union Disaster Resilience Goal
AFF	Aerial Forest Fighting
GloFAS	Global Flood Awareness System
GEWS	Galileo Emergency Warning System
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organisation
ECDC	European Centre of Disease Prevention and Control
ESI	Emergency Support Instrument
EMSA	European Maritime Safety Agency
TEC MI	Technical Expert Course for Maritime Incidents
EUCRA	European Climate Risk Assessment
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy

Acronym	Definition
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
PPRD	Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
EADRCC	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
EADRCC	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre

ANNEX 2 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition	Source
Advisory mission in prevention and preparedness	Prevention and preparedness missions are one available tool that offers tailor-made support and advice on specific needs and problems in the area of disaster risk management. For these missions, experts from EU Member States and Participating States to the UCPM are deployed upon request by a national government or the United Nations to support authorities across the world.	https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/european-disaster-risk-management_en
ARTISTOTLE project	A project which aims to provide multi-hazard advice to ERCC, either in advance of or during activation of the UCPM, to increase preparedness and response levels of the EU and improving ERCC's assessment capacity	ARISTOTLE-eENHSP Project HomePage (ingv.it)
The Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS)	Set up by legislation 2001/792/EC, Euratom: Council Decision of 23 October 2001 a web-based alert and notification application which facilitates the real-time exchange of information and communications with civil protection authorities in Member States, establishing a community mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in civil protection assistance intervention.	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001D0792
Civil protection	The protection of people, the environment and property against all kinds of natural and man-made disasters. As well as the deployment of forces and equipment in response to an emergency, it also involves the planning and preparation for such events. This includes carrying out risk assessments and agreeing protection and rescue plans and procedures	EUR-Lex, Glossary of summaries https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/glossary/civil_protection.html
Civil Protection Exercises	Exercises that train and test teams and equipment, which provide learning opportunities for UCPM teams through highly	https://civil-protection-knowledge-

Term	Definition	Source
	realistic training exercise scenarios that closely mimics the real-life situations faced by disaster response teams. Different exercises exist:	network.europa.eu/disaster-preparedness/civil-protection-exercises#bcl-inpage-item-761
Civil Protection Forum	Bringing together representatives from the civil protection and disaster management communities such as civil protection authorities, EU institutions, the scientific community, and the private sector, it is a forum for raising awareness and preparedness among Member States across pillars and sectors	https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/partnerships/civil-protection-partners/7th-european-civil-protection-forum_en
Climate Change Adaption	Anticipating the adverse effects of climate change and taking appropriate action to prevent or minimise the damage they can cause, or taking advantage of opportunities that may arise	https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/adaptation_en
Co-financing rate	The Commission supports Member States and Participating States of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) by co-financing transport and operational costs	Article 22 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Copernicus Emergency Management Service	Provides all stakeholders involved in the management of disasters, humanitarian crises and man-made emergency situations with timely, accurate geospatial information derived from satellite remote sensing, complemented by in-situ or open data sources.	Copernicus Emergency Management Service
Disaster	Any situation which has or may have a severe impact on people, the environment, or property, including cultural heritage	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC)	A platform for Member States to exchange science and knowledge in a holistic and cross-sectoral way	https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/
Disaster management	The organisation, planning and application of measures preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
Disaster preparedness	A state of readiness and capability of human and material means, structures, communities and organisations enabling them to ensure an effective rapid response to a disaster, obtained as a result of action taken in advance	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Disaster prevention	Any action aimed at reducing risks or mitigating adverse consequences of a disaster for people, the environment and property, including cultural heritage	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Disaster-related risks	The potential loss of life, injury, or destroyed or damaged assets which could occur to a system, society or a community in a specific period of time, determined probabilistically as a function of hazard, exposure, vulnerability and capacity	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

Term	Definition	Source
Disaster resilience grants	<p>The Disaster Resilience Grants include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Technical Assistance for Disaster Risk Management funding opportunity responds to requests for technical support from civil protection authorities of individual Member States or Participating States, with the objective of assisting them in developing tailored investment plans and strategies for disaster risk management The Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness ('KAPP') calls seek to "identify and co-finance projects aimed at strengthening cooperation among EU Member States and Participating States on disaster prevention and preparedness, as well as providing a testing environment and a learning opportunity for all actors involved in civil protection assistance interventions, through full-scale field exercises". The KAPP calls merged the calls for proposals previously under the Prevention and Preparedness Programme, the Knowledge Network partnership projects and the full-scale exercises. The calls are now structured across the following 'topics': 1) KAPP-PV 'prevention', 2) KAPP-PP 'preparedness' and 3) KAPP-EX 'full-scale exercises'. 	<p>European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). 'Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) Call for proposals - Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness (KAPP)'.</p> <p>European Commission -DG ECHO.(2022). 'Note to DG ECHO Management: Prevention and Preparedness programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme</p>
Early warning	The timely and effective provision of information that allows action to be taken to avoid or reduce risks and the adverse impacts of a disaster, and to facilitate preparedness for an effective response	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Emergency management	It is often used interchangeably, with the term disaster management, particularly in the context of biological and technological hazards and for health emergencies. While there is a large degree of overlap, an emergency can also relate to hazardous events that do not result in the serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society.	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction ¹¹⁰¹
EU Civil Protection Team (EUCPT)	Deployable in response to a UCPM activation, primarily playing a coordinating role, having the role of overall leadership, coordination and management of the deployment	
EU Member States	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom ¹¹⁰²	https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries_en

¹¹⁰¹ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology>;

¹¹⁰²The UK was eligible as an EU Member State between 2017-2020 inclusive.

Term	Definition	Source
EU MODEX	Used for the certification of Modules and Other Response Capacities for the European Civil Protection Pool it has the capacity to support the INSARAG International re-classification of Urban Search and Rescue teams and a WHO certification for Emergency Medical Teams. They test coordination, interoperability, self-sufficiency, standard operating procedures, safety and security, reporting and communication as well as specific learning objectives of Modules, Other Response Capacities, TAST and EUCPT experts.	https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/disaster-preparedness/civil-protection-exercises
European Civil Protection Pool (ECP)	Previously named European Emergency Response Capacity and as states in Decision (EU) 2019/420 amending decisions No 1313/2013/EU, a pool of voluntarily pre-committed response capacities of the Member States and include modules, other response capacities and categories of experts.	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019D0420
European Flood Awareness System (EFAS)	The first operational European system monitoring and forecasting floods across Europe. It provides complementary, flood early warning information up to 10 days in advance to its partners: the National/Regional Hydrological Services and the European Response and Coordination Centre (ERCC)".	https://www.efas.eu/
European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS)	System established by the European Commission in collaboration with the national fire administrations "to support the fire management services in the EU and neighbour countries and to provide the EC services and the European Parliament with harmonised information on forest in Europe".	EFFIS - Welcome to EFFIS (europa.eu)
European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC)	A set of operational tools designed to fill gaps in the humanitarian response to sudden-onset natural hazards and human-induced disasters	https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/european-humanitarian-response-capacity-ehrc_en#:~:text=The%20European%20Humanitarian%20Response%20Capacity,hazards%20and%20human%2Dinduced%20disasters.
European Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)	Coordinates, monitors, and supports in real-time the response to emergencies at Union level	Article 7 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
European Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) 2.0 initiative	In an effort to achieve the aims set out by the EC president, DG ECHO subsequently launched the ERCC 2.0 initiative, which comprises several different work strands aimed at strengthening the Centre's role as the single European operational hub. Taken together, these activities aim to expand further the ERCC's ability to provide:	ICF and RAND Europe. (2022). 'Enhancing foresight capacity of the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and of the Emergency

Term	Definition	Source
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic anticipatory capacity, including foresight and contingency planning. • Full-spectrum horizon scanning and detection and early warning via, for instance, the creation of an integrated all-hazards 'dashboard' and more comprehensive media monitoring. • Analysis, including initial sense-making and crisis diagnostics, to better understand the nature and implications of crises by drawing on a combination of in-house and external expertise. • Continuous monitoring and information-sharing to ensure a more common EU-level operational picture of ongoing crises. • Cross-sectoral and cross-border coordination support, including coordination meetings involving the EC and other EU institutions and agencies, MS, third countries, international organisations, and other relevant partners. 	Response Coordination Centre'
Exchange of Experts	Provides additional opportunities for the exchange of specialist knowledge and allows civil protection experts from UCPM Member or Partner States (or eligible third countries) to be seconded on short-term exchanges. It aims to share experiences and gain in-depth technical skills.	https://www.exchangeofexperts.eu/
Experienced volunteer	A person that actively volunteers in an organisation/capacity or initiative in the field of civil protection and disaster or emergency management and has a certain experience in national and/or UCPM missions, trainings and/or exercises.	European Commission - Orientation Paper on the Establishment of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge network
Full-scale exercises	The most complex and resource-intensive operations-based exercise, involving multiple agencies, organisations, and jurisdictions to test and validate many different elements of preparedness. They also include all of the preparatory actions and activities after the exercise to build on the learning.	https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/knowledge-action-prevention-preparedness/kapp-call-proposals-ucpm-full-scale-exercises#:~:text=UCPM%20of%20full-scale%20exercises%20are,many%20different%20elements%20of%20preparedness.
Host nation support	Any action undertaken in the preparedness and response phases by the country receiving or sending assistance, or by the Commission, to remove foreseeable obstacles to international assistance offered through the Union	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU

Term	Definition	Source
	Mechanism. It includes support from Participating States to facilitate the transiting of this assistance through their territory	
Host nation support (HNS) guidelines	Developed to assist affected States to receive international assistance in the most effective and efficient manner. The guidelines include provisions on the legal framework for HNS; communication channels; logistics and infrastructures; security and safety; as well as costs and reimbursement	European Commission (2012) 'Commission Staff Working Document: EU Host Nation Support Guidelines'
Knowledge Network	Introduced in 2021 through Implementing Decision 2021/1956 it aims to enhance the coherence between activities and build up the EU's overall ability and capacity to deal with disasters. It brings together civil protection and disaster risk management experts and organisations (partnership facilitator); makes relevant knowledge on civil protection and disaster risk management accessible to all (knowledge broker); and fosters innovation for more efficient and effective civil protection systems (innovation catalyst).	European Commission - DG ECHO. (2023). 'UCPM – STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026'
Lessons Learnt Programme	Identifies and shares lessons and good practices from UCPM deployments and horizontal, cross-cutting activities to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the UCPM	https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/eu-civil-protection-mechanism/ucpm-lessons-learnt-programme
Logistical support	The essential equipment or services required for expert teams referred to in Article 17(1) to perform their tasks, inter alia communication, temporary accommodation, food or in-country transport.	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Module	A self-sufficient and autonomous predefined task- and needs-driven arrangement of Participating States' capabilities or a mobile operational team of the Participating States, representing a combination of human and material means that can be described in terms of its capacity for intervention or by the task(s) it is able to undertake;	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
National Risk Assessments	An established practice in all EU Member States, in most cases embedded in their national legislative or policy frameworks they are regular assessments of disaster risks, capabilities to address them, and sharing risk information at EU level are crucial elements of the disaster risk management work carried out under the UCPM.	https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/knowledge/science-for-drm/nra#:~:text=Decision%20No%201313%2F2013%2FEU%20on%20a%20Union%20Civil%20Protection,prevent%20disaster%20risk%20in%20Europe.

Term	Definition	Source
Participating State	Albania, ¹¹⁰³ Bosnia and Herzegovina, ¹¹⁰⁴ Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine ¹¹⁰⁵	http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/mechanism_en
Peer review programme	Facilitates the sharing of good practices in disaster risk management through an independent analysis, which is carried out by a team of experts (the “peers”) selected from different UCPM countries	https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/peer-review-programme_en#:~:text=The%20peer%20review%20programme%20is,Protection%20and%20Humanitarian%20Aid%20department.
Peer reviews	Short, medium, and long-term tailored recommendations to improve the country's disaster risk management and civil protection systems.	
Plug-in exercises	Creating the true nature of a real deployment outside the EU in a different emergency environment in terms of structure, systems, culture and weather conditions, they provide an opportunity to join, plug in to, planned large-scale exercises involving a multi-organisation response by providing a EUCPT, Modules and/or other Response Capacities.	https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/UCPKN-Civil-Protection-Exercise-Factsheet_final.pdf
Preparedness	A state of readiness and capability of human and material means, structures, communities and organisations enabling them to ensure an effective rapid response to a disaster, obtained as a result of action taken in advance;	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Prevention	Any action aimed at reducing risks or mitigating adverse consequences of a disaster for people, the environment and property, including cultural heritage.	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Prevention and Preparedness Programme	Funding opportunities available through annual calls for proposals helping civil protection authorities and other relevant actors to develop actions for disaster risk management	ICF. (2021). Evaluation of the UCPM Prevention and Preparedness Programme.
rescEU	Strengthened by Regulation (EU) 2021/836 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU, an additional safety net, to be mobilised in worst-case disaster scenarios, when emergency assistance from the Pool or voluntary contributions from Member States cannot be mobilised or is not sufficient. It has the objective of enhancing both the protection of citizens from disasters and the management of emerging risks, strengthening European preparedness for disasters.	https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/resceu_en#:~:text=This%20is%20the%20largest%20and,the%20EU%20Civil%20Protection%20Mechanism.

¹¹⁰³ Participating State as of December 2022

¹¹⁰⁴ Participating State as of September 2022

¹¹⁰⁵ Participating State as of April 2023




Term	Definition	Source
Response	Any action taken upon request for assistance under the Union Mechanism in the event of an imminent disaster, or during or after a disaster, to address its immediate adverse consequences.	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Response capacity	Assistance that may be provided through the Union Mechanism upon request.	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Risk assessment	The overall cross-sectoral process of risk identification, risk analysis, and risk evaluation undertaken at national or appropriate sub-national level.	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Risk Data Hub	A risk data database designed to collect risk and loss data from natural and technological hazards	https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/risk-data-hub/#/
Risk management capability	The ability of a Participating State or its regions to reduce, adapt to or mitigate risks (impacts and likelihood of a disaster), identified in its risk assessments to levels that are acceptable in that Participating State. Risk management capability is assessed in terms of the technical, financial and administrative capacity to carry out adequate: (a) risk assessments; (b) risk management planning for prevention and preparedness; and (c) risk prevention and preparedness measures.	Article 4 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU
Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine	The war of aggression started by Russia on Ukraine on 24 th February 2022 and the illegal annexation of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions	https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/
Scenario building	A form of storytelling involving creating narratives about what different futures may hold, closely linked with disaster management planning	
Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction	15-year, voluntary, non-binding agreement which recognises that the State has the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders".	http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework
The Lisbon Treaty	Clarifies the powers of the European Union, through which civil protection became a self-standing policy area with its own legal basis.	The Treaty of Lisbon Fact Sheets on the European Union European Parliament (europa.eu)
Training and Exercises Programme	For civil protection and emergency management personnel, it is a supplement to the national training offered to experts and intervention teams by their home country to better prepare them for international deployments under the UCPM. The new training programme (to be implemented from September 2023) for civil protection and emergency management personnel supplement the national training offered to experts	European Commission – DG ECHO. (2021). 'The Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Programme - Brochure'.




Term	Definition	Source
	and intervention teams by their home country to better prepare them for international deployments under the UCPM. Civil Protection Exercises train and test teams and equipment, provide learning opportunities for UCPM teams through highly realistic training exercise scenarios that closely mimic the real-life situations faced by disaster response teams. These include field and table-top exercises (EU MODEX), full-scale exercises, and other exercises, such as plug-in exercises.	
Transport grant	The provision of grant agreements for transportation services by the UCPM	http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/logistics_en
UCPM transport and logistics	Providing transport and logistics support across the EU and in third countries to respond to disasters	https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection/transport-and-operations-co-financing-procedures-under-union-civil-protection-mechanism_en
Union Disaster Resilience Goals	Non-binding objectives established in the area of civil protection to support prevention and preparedness actions for the purposes of improving the capacity of the Union and its Member States to withstand the effects of a disaster which causes or is capable of causing multicounty transboundary effects.	https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_599
Workshops with EU Presidency	Held with the rotating EU Presidency to discuss the UCPM and relevant matters/issues	






ANNEX 3 REVISED EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



Table 13. Evaluation framework

 Prevention  Preparedness  Cross-pillar / horizontal  Response






	UCPM Pillar	Evaluation (sub-)question	Judgement criteria	Examples of Indicators	Data collection tools
EFFECTIVENESS	EQ1: To what extent did the UCPM achieve its <u>specific objectives</u> (Article 3(1) of the Decision) further supporting, complementing and facilitating Member States' action for civil protection in the areas of prevention, preparedness for and response to natural and man-made disasters?				
		EQ1.1 To what extent did the UCPM achieve its specific objectives in the field of prevention within the timeframes set by the Decision? To what extent are suitable mitigation measures in place in the case objectives will not be met in the set time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC1.1: UCPM funded projects and other activities aiming to increase awareness of disasters were overall implemented as planned;JC1.2: Increased civilian and institutional awareness of disaster prevention at EU, MS, PS and TC level can at least be partly attributed to UCPM activities;JC1.4: The (prevention) mitigation measures in place were effective and suitable.	<p>Quantitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of MS/PS that have sent the Commission a summary of risk assessments and assessment of risk management capability;Number and type of mitigation measures put in place if the UCPM's prevention objectives will not be achieved in the targeted time (accounting for elements beyond the UCPM's control);Number of projects financed for prevention (by type of disaster);Number and type of outputs (e.g. scientific outputs) developed as a result of funded prevention projects/activities (per country, by type of disaster);Number that have accessed or were exposed to the results of prevention projects (e.g. prevention events). <p>Qualitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Degree of alignment between number of end users reached/ outputs produced with targets set for prevention projects/activities;Typology if risks and disasters covered in the risk assessments and assessments of risk management capability. <p>Opinion-based indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders agreeing that the UCPM contributed to fostering a culture of prevention and increasing public awareness of disasters (by type of activity/disaster);Stakeholder views on challenges faced and improvements identified for UCPM prevention projects/activities;	Desk review; Interviews; Public Consultation; Surveys; E-focus groups; Case studies.
		EQ1.2 To what extent did the UCPM achieve its specific objectives in the field of preparedness within the timeframes set by the Decision? To what extent are suitable mitigation measures in place in the case objectives will not be met in the set time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC1.5: UCPM preparedness activities contributed to an increased sharing, availability and use of (scientific) knowledge and best practices on disaster response (at EU/MS/PS/TC level);JC1.6: MS, PS and TC have achieved a higher level of preparedness;JC1.7: The (preparedness) mitigation measures in place were effective and suitable.	<p>Quantitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of committed and certified capacities included in the ECPP;Number and type of mitigation measures put in place if the UCPM's preparedness objectives will not be achieved in the targeted time (accounting for elements beyond the UCPM's control);Number of standard response units (modules) registered in the EU's CECIS;Number of projects financed for preparedness (by type of disaster);Number of capacities available through rescEU (by type of resource (e.g. plane, shelter, medical supply) and type of disaster)Number and type of outputs (e.g. EWS) developed as a result of funded preparedness projects (per country, by type of disaster);Number and type of end-users that have accessed or were exposed to the results of preparedness projects/ activities (e.g. guidelines). <p>Qualitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Degree of alignment between number of end users reached/ outputs produced with targets set; <p>Opinion-based indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholder considering that MS, PS, TCs have improved capacity to respond in a rapid an efficient way to (imminent) disasters;Stakeholder views on the extent to which the level of preparedness is attributable to the UCPM;	
		EQ1.3 To what extent did the UCPM achieve its specific objectives in the field of response within the timeframes set by the Decision? To what extent are suitable mitigation measures in place in the case	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC1.8: MS and PS were able to respond rapidly and efficiently to disasters and to mitigate their immediate consequences (incl. removing bureaucratic obstacles) thanks to the pooling and mobilisation of resources	<p>Quantitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number and type of mitigation measures put in place if the UCPM's response objectives will not be achieved in the targeted time (accounting for elements beyond the UCPM's control);Number of UCPM activations (2017-2022) (by type of disaster);	











	UCPM Pillar	Evaluation (sub-)question	Judgement criteria	Examples of Indicators	Data collection tools
		objectives will not be met in the set time?	<div>and support through the activation of the UCPM, and/or through the timely mobilisation of rescEU capacities;</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">JC1.9: The (response) mitigation measures in place were effective and suitable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of times MS and PS opted for bilateral/multilateral approaches to civil protection emergencies;Number of actions (by type of disaster)Number of capacities and experts deployed (by type of disaster)Number of resources pooled in response to a crisis (e.g. COVID-19) and typology of resources mobilised (by type of disaster);Average cost of resources pooled per disaster type and cost type. <div>Qualitative indicators:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Degree of alignment between targets set and average response time between UCPM activation and on-site deployment;Degree of alignment between number of resources requested and resources provided, either directly by MS/PS and or by ECPP, in UCPM activations. <div>Opinion-based indicators:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stakeholder views on dealing with civil protection emergencies through the UCPM or bilaterally/multilaterally;Stakeholder views on the adequacy of response of the UCPM (inside and outside the EU).	
		EQ1.4 To what extent did the UCPM achieve its objectives across pillars/horizontal activities within the timeframes set by the Decision? To what extent are suitable mitigation measures in place in the case objectives will not be met in the set time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC1.10: UCPM funded projects and other horizontal activities contributed to the achievement of cross-pillar objectives (e.g. increasing public awareness and preparedness for disasters);JC1.11: The (cross-pillar/horizontal) mitigation measures in place were effective and suitable.	<div>Quantitative indicators:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number and type of mitigation measures put in place if the UCPM’s cross-pillar objectives will not be achieved in the targeted time (accounting for elements beyond the UCPM’s control);Number of new partnerships or networks established thanks to participation in UCPM activities or projects;Number and type of outputs (e.g. full-scale/tabletop exercise) developed as a result of funded cross-pillar/horizontal activities (per country);Number and type of end-users that have accessed or were exposed to the results of cross-pillar/horizontal activities/projects (e.g. Civil Protection Forum attendance);Number and type of awareness-raising activities and projects conducted/ planned (by type of activity/ disaster);Number of training activities conducted/planned. <div>Qualitative indicators:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Degree of alignment between number of end users reached/ outputs produced with targets set; <div>Opinion-based indicators:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stakeholder views on the effectiveness of cooperation with other MS/PS in UCPM activities/projects.	
	EQ2: To what extent did the UCPM achieve its <u>general objective</u> (Article 3(1) of the Decision) of contributing to strengthened cooperation and coordination between the Union and the Member States for civil protection in the areas of prevention, preparedness for and response to natural and man-made disasters?				
		EQ2.1 To what extent did the effectiveness/results differ by pillar/ type of disaster?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC2.1: UCPM led to improved communication, cooperation and coordination both cross-borders (i.e. between the Union, MS, PS and TC) and across sectors in relation to prevention, preparedness for and response to natural and man-made disasters	<div>Quantitative indicators:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of UCPM activities (per pillar) involving stakeholders in other policy areasNumber of UCPM activations (per type of disaster/ involving stakeholders from other policy areas);Average number of countries involved in the response to a UCPM activation (per type of disaster);Number of times MS/PS opted for unilateral/bilateral/multilateral approaches to civil protection (CP) emergencies;Share of UCPM projects and activities (per pillar) that achieved totality or great majority of the objectives. <div>Qualitative indicators:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Typology of challenges faced and improvements identified in terms of cross-sectoral/cross-border cooperation. <div>Opinion-based indicators:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders agreeing that the UCPM strengthened communication, cooperation and coordination (also across sectors) between MS, PS and TC (per pillar/activities/disaster type);Stakeholder views on the extent of UCPM success per pillar/per type of disaster;	Desk review; Interviews; Surveys; E-focus groups; Case studies.
	EQ2.2 To what extent did the UCPM contribute to increased cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination , by pillar / type of disaster?				

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder views on when to deal with CP emergencies through the UCPM or bilaterally/multilaterally; Stakeholder views on type of project/activity which has been most/least successful in promoting cooperation and coordination between MS, PS and TC per pillar. 	
	EQ3: What factors have driven/hindered the effectiveness towards achieving the UCPM's general and specific objectives?				
		EQ3.1 What were the main factors driving/hindering the successful achievement of the UCPM's general and specific objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC3.1: There were some internal/ external factors that drove/hindered the effectiveness of the UCPM; JC3.2: Cooperation and coordination were sometimes hampered by factors internal and/or external to the UCPM JC3.3: Legislative amendments of the UCPM since 2017 (e.g. introduction of rescEU) as well as structural changes in the Commission and DG ECHO (e.g. new European Commission, DG ECHO Commissioner, etc.) have aided the achievement of general and specific objectives in the field of preparedness and response; JC3.4 UCPM activities across the pillars had some positive effects and limited negative repercussions beyond what was planned. 	Qualitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typology of factors driving/hindering UCPM efforts towards achieving its general and specific objectives (e.g. fostering a culture of prevention); Typology of factors driving/ hindering the achievement of strengthened cooperation between MS, PS; Typology of factors hindering or facilitating a rapid and efficient response; Typology of negative/positive unintended effects of the UCPM's activities (per type of disaster). Opinion-based indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder views on the adequacy of the capacities developed and being developed (per pillar, per type of disaster, per type of capacity); Stakeholder views on challenges faced / areas for improvement identified on UCPM efforts towards objectives (per pillar); Share of stakeholders agreeing that legislative amendments of the UCPM since 2017 (primarily Decision 2019/1310 and rescEU, Regulation 2021/88, as well as the introduction of the UCPM Knowledge Network) had a positive impact on the UCPM's achievement of its objectives; Stakeholder views on impact of legislative developments to the UCPM since 2017; Stakeholder views on gaps in the legal framework that reduce the effectiveness of the UCPM Stakeholder views on the impact of the new European Commission and structural changes within DG ECHO on the achievement of general and specific objectives; Stakeholder views on the (positive/negative) unintended effects of UCPM activities (per type of disaster). 	Desk review; Interviews; Public Consultation; Surveys; E-focus groups; Case studies
		EQ3.2 To what extent did legislative amendments of the UCPM since 2017 contribute to the achievement of objectives?			
EQ4: To what extent were the costs of the UCPM's activities across the three pillars justified compared to their benefits?					
EFFICIENCY		EQ 4.1 To what extent were the UCPM activities carried out in the most cost-effective manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC4.1: The UCPM activities generated the expected benefits within the planned budget JC 4.2: The UCPM was the most cost-effective solution 	Quantitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total amount (EUR) contributed by MS/PS; Total amount (EUR) pooled by disaster type and cost type; Total amount (EUR) of additional (matched) contributions by disaster type and MS/PS; Progress across UCPM key performance indicators (e.g. targets for response time of the UCPM to a request of assistance in the EU/outside the EU; 	Desk review; Interviews; Surveys; E-focus groups; Case studies; Cost-benefit analysis.
		EQ4.2: What were the main factors that have driven/hindered the cost-effectiveness of UCPM activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC4.3: The main factors hindering the cost-efficiency of UCPM are known and being addressed JC4.4: The allocation of the budget per pillar is balanced when considering the expected achievements 	Qualitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of alignment between forecasted budget and actual expenditure (2017-2022) (per pillar); Degree of alignment between adaptation cost of EU funded rescue capacities in of the ECPP and rescEU and their actual use/deployment; Typology of factors driving/hindering the cost-effectiveness of UCPM activities; Typology of expected benefits/achievements of the UCPM per pillar. Opinion-based indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share of stakeholders identifying inefficiencies; 	
		EQ4.3 To what extent is the size of the budget allocated per pillar appropriate and proportionate to the actions it is meant to achieve?			

UCPM Pillar	Evaluation (sub-)question	Judgement criteria	Examples of Indicators	Data collection tools
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder views on the extent to which any inefficiencies have been, or are being, addressed; Share of stakeholders (DG ECHO) considering that results were achieved in the most cost-effective way; Share of stakeholders claiming inefficiencies could have been anticipated and reduced; Stakeholder views on the extent to which the expected benefits/achievements for the UCPM's performance were realistic; Stakeholder perceptions of adequacy of the process to determine the budget; Stakeholder views on whether more cost-effective solutions could have been found; Stakeholder views on whether UCPM activities generated expected benefits; Stakeholder views on type of inefficiencies identified; Stakeholder views on where cross-sectoral cooperation could be enhanced to improve efficiency; Share of stakeholders considering that a lack of budget hindered the achievement of results (per pillar); Stakeholder views on impact of legislative developments (Decision 2019/1310, Regulation 2021/88) to the UCPM since 2017; Stakeholder views on the adequacy of budget allocated to the UCPM 2021-2027. 	
EQ5: To what extent was the UCPM budgeting system flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events?				
	EQ5.1 To what extent did Decision 2019/1310 and Regulation 2021/88 have an impact on the use of the UCPM's resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC5.1: The budgeting system has been sufficiently flexible for the UCPM to sustainably support Member and Participating States to prevent, prepare and respond to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events (e.g. COVID-19 response); JC5.2: Legislative developments since 2017 (Decision 2019/1310) triggered additional costs which were compensated by efficiency savings; JC5.3: Legislative developments since 2017 (e.g. Regulation 2021/88) reinforced the UCPM's budget flexibility to adapt to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events. 	<p>Quantitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human and financial resources necessary for the implementation of Decision 2019/1310 and for the UCPM's COVID-19 response; Number of amendments/new elements introduced since 2017; Number of initiatives/elements (e.g. HR plans, staff guidelines) introduced to lessen the impact of the implementation of the new developments (i.e. Decision 2019/1310, UCPM COVID-19 response, Regulation 2021/88); Number of efficiency savings triggered by Decision 2019/1310 (rescEU). <p>Qualitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typology of efficiency savings triggered by Decision 2019/1310 (rescEU); <p>Opinion-based indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share of stakeholders agreeing that the UCPM budgeting system was sufficiently flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events inside/outside the EU; Stakeholder views on typologies of challenges faced and improvements to be made regarding the flexibility of the UCPM budgeting system (e.g. re carried-over appropriations only for response); Stakeholder views on the extent to which amendments to the budget flexibility (e.g. shift from annual to multi-annual programme and use of annual instalments under rescEU capacities) helped the UCPM budget adapt to changing and unanticipated events; Stakeholder views on the extent to which efficiency savings were achieved. 	Desk review; Interviews; Case studies; Cost-benefit analysis.
	EQ 5.2 To what extent is the external angle of the UCPM sufficiently covered by the current budget?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC5.4: The distinction between internal and external spend is sufficiently clear to allow accurate tracking of UCPM expenditure under the current structure of the UCPM work programme 	<p>Quantitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total budget allocation by MS, PC, TC <p>Opinion-based indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder views on the budget that is allocated internally versus externally, for the current and next financial cycles Share of stakeholders agreeing that the share of the budget for new PS should be increased/reduced Stakeholder views on whether the distinction between internal and external spend is sufficiently clear to allow accurate tracking of UCPM expenditure under the current structure of the UCPM work programme 	
EQ6: To what extent do the measures in place for the internal monitoring and evaluation of the UCPM contribute to the efficient and effective implementation of the intervention?				

	UCPM Pillar	Evaluation (sub-)question	Judgement criteria	Examples of Indicators	Data collection tools
		EQ6.1 To what extent are the indicators currently set by the Decision adequate and sufficient to monitor a successful implementation of the Decision and has data been properly collected and monitored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC6.1: The indicators selected allowed the UCPM to identify and correct inefficiencies, or any other issues associated with the implementation of the Decision;JC6.2: Monitoring and evaluation data has been properly collected and analysed;	Quantitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Progress across UCPM key performance indicators;Number of monitoring exercises (per pillar/activity);Number of measures taken regarding the UCPM budget as a result of monitoring and evaluation activities;Number of existing instruments allowing effective assessment of the UCPM’s budget execution. Qualitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Typology of monitoring exercises (per pillar/activity);Typology of challenges faced and room for improvement to collect and monitor data adequate data to improve the efficiency of the UCPM; Opinion-based indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders agreeing on the effectiveness of the indicators, benchmarks, KPIs used to assess progress in monitoring the implementation of the Decision;Stakeholder views on the quality of monitoring and evaluation system (e.g. processing of identifying KPIs and targets) for assessing the implementation of the Decision;Stakeholder views on potential simplification or burden reduction of the UCPM activities inside/outside Europe.	Desk review; Interviews; Case studies; Cost-benefit analysis.
		EQ6.2 To what extent is there scope for simplification or of burden reduction in the activities carried out by the UCPM?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC6.3: There is scope for some simplification or burden reduction in the activities carried out by the UCPM.		
RELEVANCE	EQ7: To what extent were the UCPM activities and objectives relevant to the civil protection needs of the EU and to the European Commission’s priorities for 2023-2024, as well as to the needs of Member and Participating States and third countries?				
		EQ7.1 What were the main needs within the scope of the UCPM’s work across the evaluation period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC7.1: Main EU and national (MS/PS/TC) needs addressed by the UCPM in the evaluation period were identified;	Quantitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of needs (per pillar/ type of disaster) identified by type of stakeholder (i.e. EU, national – MS/PS/TC) (un)addressed by the UCPM. Qualitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Typology of needs (per pillar/ type of disaster) identified by type of stakeholder (i.e. EU, national – MS/PS/TC);Degree of alignment between UCPM Decision general and specific objectives and identified EU needs;Degree of alignment between UCPM objectives and activities to EU Commission priorities 2021-2027;Degree of alignment between UCPM objectives and activities and identified national CP strategies; Opinion-based indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders agreeing that the UCPM’s needs assessment is suitable to their requirements (per pillar);Share of stakeholders agreeing that UCPM objectives were relevant to their needs by type of stakeholder (i.e. EU, national – MS/PS/TC);Share of stakeholders agreeing that UCPM activities were relevant to their needs by type of stakeholder (i.e. EU, national – MS/PS/TC);Stakeholder views on needs unaddressed by the UCPM by type of stakeholder (i.e. EU, national – MS/PS/TC);Stakeholder views on the extent to which the UCPM was successful in meeting their needs;Stakeholder views on challenges faced and improvements needed to meet their needs, by type of stakeholder (i.e. EU, national – MS/PS/TC).	Desk review; Surveys; E-focus groups ; Case studies.
		EQ7.2 To what extent were the Decision’s objectives still relevant to the EU / national needs ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC7.2: The UCPM’s general/specific objectives were appropriate to address identified EU and national needs;JC7.3: The UCPM’s activities were suitable to address identified EU and national needs;		
		EQ7.3 To what extent were the UCPM’s activities still relevant to EU / national needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC7.4: All current and expected future needs within the scope of the UCPM are adequately addressed.		
		EQ7.4 Did any need(s) within the scope of the UCPM’s work remain unaddressed?			
	EQ8: Is the UCPM sufficiently flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground (including unanticipated events) and emerging developments in the field of civil protection?				
		EQ8.1 What are the evolving needs and emerging developments within the scope of the UCPM’s activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC8.1: New and emerging needs (including: developments in drivers (e.g. climate breakdown), (un)anticipated needs, high impact low probability events (e.g. COVID-19 crisis, Russia’s war against Ukraine)) and	Quantitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of new and emerging needs and developments (across the evaluation period/ in the near future) identified by stakeholder group and type;	Desk review; Interviews; Public Consultation;

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8		EQ8.2 To what extent are UCPM objectives and activities suitable in dealing with unanticipated needs and adapt to evolving needs and emerging developments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">emerging developments (e.g. scientific and technological research) in the field of civil protection had, and may have in the future, an impact on the UCPM;JC8.2: The UCPM’ objectives and activities are appropriate to address new and emerging needs;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of UCPM projects addressing identified new and emerging needs and developments;Number of new measures/changes introduced to meet/cover new topics. <p>Qualitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Typology of new and emerging needs and developments identified by stakeholder group and type;Typology of measures introduced to meet/cover new topics;Degree of alignment between identified new and emerging needs and developments and UCPM Decision general and specific objectives (per pillar);Degree of alignment between identified new and emerging needs and developments and UCPM activities (per pillar);Typology of scientific and technological research and development that has been integrated into the UCPM	Surveys; E-focus groups; Case studies.	
		EQ8.3 To what extent is the UCPM’s organisational set-up and capacity sufficiently flexible to deal with unanticipated and evolving needs and emerging developments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC8.3: Emerging developments (e.g. scientific and technological research and development that has become available since the creation of the UCPM) were taken on board and integrated into its functioning and activities	<p>Opinion-based indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders finding UCPM objectives are suited to new and emerging needs and developments;Share of stakeholders finding UCPM capacity and activities flexible to adapt to unanticipated needs and emerging developments;Share of (especially national) stakeholders finding DG ECHO organisational set-up (both governance and available human and financial resources) dealing with the UCPM sufficiently flexible to adapt to new and emerging needs and developments;Stakeholder views (especially national) on the UCPM’s role in addressing new and emerging needs and developments in the field of civil protection;Stakeholder views (especially national) on their expectations for UCPM’s organisational set-up/capacity/role in addressing evolving needs in the field of civil protection;Stakeholder views on challenges faced and improvements identified regarding the UCPM’s flexibility;Stakeholder views on factors driving and hindering the UCPM’s flexibility to adapt to new and emerging needs and developments.		
		EQ8.4 What factors contributed to driving and/or hindering the UCPM’s ability to adapt?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC8.4: DG ECHO’s organisational set up and capacity in the field of the UCPM is appropriate to support Member and Participating States to address the new and emerging needs and developments identified;JC8.5: Internal/ external factors enabling/inhibiting the UCPM’s ability adapt to new needs and developments were identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders agreeing that scientific and technological research and development that has become available since the creation of the UCPM has been integrated into its functioning and activities.		
	EQ9: To what extent was the UCPM able to incorporate recommendations and lessons learnt?					
		EQ 9.1 To what extent did the UCPM’s design and its activities incorporate lessons learnt and recommendations from external evaluations ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC9.1: Recommendations and issues identified in external evaluations and studies of the UCPM (e.g. the interim evaluation of the UCPM (2014-2016), Study on the UCPM Training Programme) were addressed;	<p>Quantitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of recommendations and issues identified from external evaluations and studies addressed by the UCPM since 2017;Number of lessons learnt identified through the Lessons Learnt Programme addressed since 2016;Proportion of recommendations and issues identified addressed from external evaluations and studies since 2017;Proportion of lessons learnt and improvements addressed from UCPM’s cross-pillar/horizontal activities. <p>Qualitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Typology of recommendations and issues identified from external evaluations and studies since 2017 and through cross-pillar/horizontal activities;Improvements introduced, or suggested for approval, documented by DG ECHO for the incorporation of recommendations and lessons learnt;. <p>Opinion-based indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders agreeing that the UCPM incorporated recommendations and lessons learnt from internal (e.g. lesson learnt programme, workshops with EU presidencies) and external (e.g. interim evaluation of the UCPM) initiatives;Stakeholder views on main obstacles and potential improvements for the incorporation of recommendations and lessons learnt;.	Desk review; Interviews; E-focus groups.	
	EQ 9.2 To what extent did the UCPM’s design and its activities incorporate lessons learnt and recommendations from its cross-pillar/horizontal activities ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC9.2: Recommendations and lessons learnt identified within UCPM initiatives (e.g. lessons learnt programme, workshops with EU presidencies) were taken on board;				
EQ10: To what extent are the UCPM activities across the three pillars internally coherent and complementary to one another?						

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		EQ10.1 To what extent do synergies exist between UCPM activities within the three pillars?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC10.1: The Decision sufficiently defines the pillars to allow for a balance within and between activities;	Quantitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of UCPM activities that incorporated aspects from activities conducted in other pillars (e.g. overview of risks developed under prevention considered in preparedness activities);Number of UCPM activities that incorporated aspects from other activities within the same pillar; Qualitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Typology of measures in place to improve coherence and complementarity;Typologies of gaps and overlaps identified within and across pillars;Typology of factors driving/hindering synergies within and between pillars;Degree to which DG ECHO desk officers are aware/ informed of activities in conducted in different pillars; Opinion-based indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders considering that there are (unexploited) synergies between activities within and across UCPM pillars;Stakeholder views of existing (unexploited) synergies within and between activities across UCPM pillars;Stakeholder views of any gaps and/or overlaps between UCPM activities within and across pillars;Stakeholder views on factors driving/hindering coherence within and between pillars.	Desk review; Interviews; E-focus groups; Case studies.
		EQ10.2 To what extent do synergies exist between UCPM activities across the three pillars?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC10.2: No significant gaps or overlaps between UCPM activities within and across pillars can be detected;		
		EQ10.3 To what extent are cross-pillar/horizontal activities coherent and complementary with each other and with UCPM activities across the three pillars?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC10.3: Synergies and complementarities within and between activities organised under the three pillars of the UCPM were identified and created, where possible;		
		EQ10.4 Are there any unexploited synergies within and across UCPM pillar?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC10.4: Synergies and complementarities with UCPM cross-pillar/horizontal activities and activities across the three pillars of the UCPM were identified and created, where possible;		
	EQ11: To what extent do UCPM activities complement <u>national</u> interventions in the field of civil protection and other policy fields?				
		EQ11.1 To what extent do synergies exist between national activities and UCPM activities on prevention and preparedness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC11.1: Synergies and complementarities were created between UCPM prevention and preparedness activities and national (MS, PS, TC) activities in the field of CP and other policy fields;	Quantitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of measures in place to ensure synergies with national activities (by MS/PS/TC and per pillar);Number of UCPM activities and projects involving national representatives outside the field of CP;Number of cooperation mechanisms involving the UCPM and national CP/non-CP actors identified; Qualitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Typology of obstacles faced and potential improvements on national synergies and complementarities by type of stakeholder (by MS/PS/TC and per pillar);Number of existing instruments allowing effective assessment of the UCPM’s budget execution. Opinion-based indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of (DG ECHO/national) stakeholders agreeing that response cooperation is effective;Stakeholder views on degree of synergies created between UCPM and national level activities.	Desk review; Interviews; Public Consultation; Surveys; E-focus groups; Case studies.
		EQ11.2 How effective was the UCPM in coordinating its response with other national actors from MS/PS and with third countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC11.2: The UCPM effectively coordinated its response with national actors (MS, PS, TC), with other activities in the field and with other actors / policy fields;		
		EQ11.3 Are there any unexploited synergies with relevant national interventions in the field of CP and other policy fields?			
	EQ12: To what extent are UCPM activities coherent and complementary to other <u>EU and international interventions</u> in the field of civil protection?				
		EQ12.1 To what extent are UCPM activities in the field of prevention, preparedness and cross-pillar/horizontal activities coherent and complementary to relevant EU/international interventions ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JC12.1: There are synergies and complementarities between UCPM activities and other EU interventions related to civil protection (e.g. HERA) and other policy fields (e.g. AMIF, DG NEAR, ECFIN), as well as relevant international frameworks and initiatives (e.g. the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, UN OCHA);	Quantitative indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number and typology of activities relevant to the UCPM’s scope developed by EU activities in the field of CP (e.g. HERA, EMSA) and other EU areas (e.g. DG NEAR, AMIF, ECFIN)Number of UCPM activities and projects (per pillar) involving EU/international actors/programmes;Number of EU programmes and international frameworks mentioning the UCPM in their work plans;Number of notifications to the European External Action Service;Number of measures in place to ensure synergies with EU/international activities; Opinion-based indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share of stakeholders agreeing that there are synergies and complementarities between UCPM prevention, preparedness and cross-pillar/horizontal activities and EU/international activities in the field of CP and other policy areas (per pillar);	Desk review; Interviews; Case studies.
	EQ12.2 To what extent was the UCPM successful in coordinating its response with other EU and international actors/donors ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">			
	EQ12.3 Are there any unexploited synergies with EU/international interventions in the field of CP and other policv fields?				

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share of stakeholders agreeing that there are synergies and complementarities between UCPM response activities and EU/international actors in the field of CP and other policy areas (per pillar); Stakeholder (EU/international) perceptions on the effectiveness of synergies and complementarities; Stakeholder views of challenges faced and improvements identified on synergies and complementarities at EU and international level (per pillar) Stakeholder views of factors driving and hindering the level of coherence between UCPM and EU/international activities and frameworks. 	
EQ13: To what extent did the UCPM add value compared to what could have been achieved by MS, PS and TC acting at national or regional level?					
EU ADDED VALUE		EQ13.1 What (and for whom) is the greatest added value that the UCPM brings to national and regional CP activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC13.1: The UCPM contributed to results that could not have been achieved solely at national level; 	<p>Quantitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of UCPM activities with an external dimension (e.g. with TC and international partners) by pillar; Number of times MS and/or PS opted for bilateral/multilateral approaches to civil protection emergencies; Number of UCPM activations (2017-2022) and Requests for Assistance (2017-2020); <p>Qualitative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typology of added value of the UCPM (by pillar/ type of stakeholder); Typology of reasons for not activating the UCPM when dealing with civil protection emergencies; <p>Opinion-based indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder perceptions on dealing with civil protection emergencies through the UCPM or bilaterally/multilaterally (e.g. typology of reasons to opt for one or the other); Stakeholder views on the UCPM's value to their work in comparison with national/ EU/international/multilateral interventions; Share of stakeholders – from countries that have / have not activated the UCPM to respond to emergencies - agreeing that some results achieved at national and/or regional could not have been achieved without the UCPM's intervention; Share of stakeholders agreeing that the UCPM's external dimension brings significant added value. 	<p>Desk review;</p> <p>Interviews;</p> <p>Public Consultation;</p> <p>Surveys;</p> <p>E-focus groups;</p> <p>Case studies</p> <p>Counter-factual analysis</p>
		EQ13.2 Are other instruments and/or networks more suitable to improve cooperation on CP matters?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC13.2: Elements of the UCPM that brought particular added value to national/regional CP activities (MS/PS/TC) were identified; 		
		EQ13.3 To what extent did the UCPM contribute to the achievement of results that could not have been attained by MS and PS themselves within and outside the EU?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JC13.3: Without the UCPM, national, regional and cross-border interventions would be fragmented and less efficient and effective; JC13.4: There are no other instruments/networks that would be more suitable to improve cooperation on CP matters; JC13.5: The UCPM's external dimension brings significant added value to MS and PS, such as in the form of extended networks and more lessons learnt in the field of civil protection. 		

ANNEX 4 LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Author	Document	Year
EU Secondary Legislation		
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy	2000
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy	2000
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy	2000
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2002 establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency	2002
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks	2007
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks	2007
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks	2007
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Directive 2012/18/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2012 on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directive 96/82/EC (Seveso III)	2012
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (Consolidated Text)	2013

Author	Document	Year
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	2019
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Council Regulation (EU) 2020/2094 of 14 December 2020 establishing a European Union Recovery Instrument to support the recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis	2020
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (Text with EEA relevance)	2021
European Parliament and Council of the EU	Directive (EU) 2022/2557 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 on the resilience of critical entities and repealing Council Directive 2008/114/EC	2022
EU Tertiary Legislation		
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision of 16 October 2014 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and repealing Commission Decisions 2004/277/EC, Euratom and 2007/606/EC, Euratom (consolidated version)	2014
European Commission	Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management, Art. 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU and Annex (non-exhaustive list of risks relevant under EU legislation and/or policies)	2019
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 of 8 April 2019 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards rescEU capacities and amending Commission Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU (consolidated version)	2019
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1310 of 31 July 2019 laying down rules on the operation of the European Civil Protection Pool and rescEU (notified under document C(2019) 5614)	2019
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1930 of 18 November 2019 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU capacities (notified under document C(2019) 8130)	2019
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/414 of 19 March 2020 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards medical stockpiling rescEU capacities (notified under document C(2020) 1827)	2020

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/452 of 26 March 2020 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards capacities established to respond to low probability risks with a high impact	2020
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/88 of 26 January 2021 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents	2021
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1886 of 27 October 2021 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards stockpiling rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents	2021
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1956 of 10 November 2021 on the establishment and organisation of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network	2021
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/288 of 22 February 2022 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU shelter capacities and the modification of quality requirements for Emergency Medical Teams Type 3 capacities	2022
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/465 of 21 March 2022 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU mobile laboratory capacities and rescEU CBRN detection, sampling, identification and monitoring capacities (notified under document C(2022) 1831)	2022
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/465 of 21 March 2022 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU mobile laboratory capacities and rescEU CBRN detection, sampling, identification and monitoring capacities (notified under document C(2022) 1831)	2023
DG ECHO Call for Proposals		
European Commission	Call for tenders. Exercises on civil protection modules, technical assistance and support teams and European Union civil protection teams (4 lots)	2016
European Commission	Call for proposals. UCPM Exercises	2017

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	Call for tenders. Exercises on civil protection modules, technical assistance and support teams and European Union civil protection teams (4 lots)	2017
European Commission	Call for tenders. Exercises on civil protection modules, technical assistance and support teams, other response capacities and European Union Civil Protection teams – Cycle 10 (5 lots)	2018
European Commission	Call for proposals. UCPM Full-scale exercises	2018
European Commission	Call for tenders. European Disaster Response Exercises. EDREX II. Plug-in Field exercises. Host Nation Support Table Top Exercises. 3 lots.	2018
European Commission	Union Civil Protection Mechanism Exercises, Call for proposals document [Call ID UCPM-2018-EX-AG]	2018
European Commission	Call for proposals. UCPM Full-scale exercises	2019
European Commission	Call for Tender. Exercises on Civil Protection Modules, technical assistance and support teams, other response capacities and European Union Civil Protection Teams – Cycle 11 (5 lots)	2019
European Commission	Terms of reference for Member States and Participating States experts supporting the certification and recertification of capacities in the European Civil Protection Pool	2020
European Commission	Call for proposals. UCPM Full-scale exercises	2020
European Commission	Call for proposals. UCPM Full-scale exercises	2021
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. Development of a rescEU Aerial Forest Firefighting Capacity (UCPM-2021-rescEU-Capacities-AFFF-IBA)	2021
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. RescEU CBRN decontamination capacities (UCPM-2021-rescEU-Capacities-IBA)	2021
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. Operationalisation of a rescEU aerial medical evacuation capacity for patients with highly infectious diseases	2021

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU Stockpiling of medical countermeasures and/or personal protective equipment, aimed at combatting serious cross-border threats to health (UCPM-2021-rescEU-Capacities-IBA)	2021
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU Transition Aerial Forest Firefighting Capacities (UCPM-2021-rescEU-TR)	2021
European Commission	Call for tenders. International UCPM Exercises Plug-in and NHS outside EU. Open procedure	2021
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. Development of a rescEU Aerial Forest Firefighting Capacity (UCPM-2022-rescEU-AFFF-IBA)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU emergency monkeypox antivirals stockpile (UCPM-2022-rescEU-CBRN Stockpile)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. Development and maintenance of rescEU CBRN stockpiles (UCPM-2022-rescEU-CBRN-IBA)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU Emergency medical team type 2 (UCPM-2022-rescEU-Medical-IBA)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. Development and maintenance of rescEU transport and logistics capacities (UCPM-2022-rescEU-Logistics-IBA)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. Development and maintenance of rescEU shelter capacities (UCPM-2022-rescEU-Shelters-IBA)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU donations stockpile (UCPM-2022-rescEU-Stockpile)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU Transition Aerial Forest Firefighting Capacities. (UCPM-2022-rescEU-Transition-IBA)	2022

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU emergency energy supply capacity (UCPM-2022-rescEU-UA Response Emergency Energy Supply DE)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU temporary shelter capacity (UCPM-2022-rescEU-UA Response Shelter RO and SE)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. rescEU winterisation of temporary shelter capacity. (UCPM-2022-rescEU-UA Response Winter Shelter SE)	2022
European Commission	UCPM Call for proposals. Invitation to submit a proposal. Programme Statement. Heading 2B: Resilience and Values. Union Civil Protection Mechanism (rescEU)	2022
DG ECHO Lessons Learnt Programme		
European Commission	Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the UCPM operations in 2017	2018
European Commission	Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2018 Forest Fire Season	2018
European Commission	Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the UCPM operations in 2018	2019
European Commission	Lessons from the Deployment of the Danish Water Purification Module in Mozambique in the Context of the European Civil Protection Pool Certification Process	2019
European Commission	Lessons Learnt on the 2019 UCPM Deployment in Mozambique	2019
European Commission	Lessons and good practices identified from TAST deployments	2019
European Commission	Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the UCPM operations in 2019	2020
European Commission	Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the UCPM operations in 2020	2021
European Commission	UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons identified from recent floods in Europe	2021
European Commission	UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe	2022

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the UCPM operations in 2021	2022
European Commission	UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme. Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe	2022
European Commission	UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Lessons Identified From 2022 Wildfire Season 10-11 January 2023	2023
European Commission	UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Lessons Identified From 2022 Wildfire Season 10-11 January 2023	2023
Studies, evaluations and other research outputs		
European Commission	Commission Staff Working Document. Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks in the EU	2014
ICF	Annex VII - Estimated average cost of developing a capacity overview of the range of capacities development costs (Draft report on the costs of developing Participating States' response capacities, 29 June 2015)	2015
European Commission	Commission Staff Working Document. Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face	2017
ICF	Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism 2014-2016	2017
Landell Mills	Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics within EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Action, 2013-2017	2018
European Commission (JRC)	Science for Disaster Risk Management 2017. Knowing better and loosing less	2018
Centre for Strategy and Evaluation services (CSES)	Evaluation study of Definitions, Gaps, and costs of response capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism	2019
ICF	Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training programme	2019
European Commission (JRC)	Risk Data Hub – web platform to facilitate management of disaster risks	2019
ECORYS	Network of European Hubs for Civil Protection and Crisis Management	2020

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	Commission Staff Working Document. Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face	2020
European Commission	Special Eurobarometer 511b: EU Civil Protection	2020
European Court Auditors	Opinion No 9/2020 (pursuant to Article 322(1)(a) TFEU) accompanying the Commission's proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (COM(2020) 220 final) (2020/C 385/01)	2020
European Commission (JRC)	Update of Risk Data Hub software and data architecture	2020
European Commission (JRC)	Update of Risk Data Hub software and data architecture	2020
European Commission (JRC)	Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in EU	2021
European Commission (JRC)	Science for Disaster Risk Management 2020: acting today, protecting tomorrow	2021
European Commission (JRC)	First Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC) Info day	2021
ICF	Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil protection prevention and preparedness projects (2014-2020)	2021
DG ECHO & The World Bank	Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense	2021
Centre for Security Studies (CSS), ETH Zürich	An Evaluation of Switzerland becoming a Participating State of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism. Risk and Resilience Report	2021
DG Health and Food Safety	Inception Impact Assessment - European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority	2021
Ispra	Concept paper: Building the science pillar of the union civil protection knowledge network	2021
Landell Mills	Combined evaluation of DG ECHO's humanitarian response to epidemics, and of DG ECHO's partnership with the World Health Organisation, 2017-2021. Draft Final Report	2022
European Commission (JRC)	Fifth Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre. Annual Seminar	2022

Author	Document	Year
European Commission (JRC)	Pekel, J., Spruyt, P., Broglia, M., Toreti, A., San-Miguel-Ayanz, J., Kemper, T., De Groeve, T., Salamon, P., Moreira Agrela Goncalves, A. and Bortolamei, F., A decade of the Copernicus Emergency Management Service, European Commission, 2022, JRC130970	2022
Landell Mills	Combined evaluation of DG ECHO's humanitarian response to epidemics, and of DG ECHO's partnership with the World Health Organisation, 2017-2021. Draft Final Report	2022
DG ECHO & The World Bank	Understanding the Needs of Civil Protection Agencies and Opportunities for Scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments	2022
KANTAR Public	Draft desk research report and annexes. Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, 2020-2022.	2022
CPWO A/S	Study on Greening the Union Civil Protection Mechanism	2023
Kantar	Evaluation of humanitarian logistics in the European Commission's civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, (2018-2022), and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument re-activation, (2020-2022).	2023
Exchange of Experts Outputs		
German Federal Agency for Technical Relief	Final Report. Exchange of Experts in civil protection programme, including annexes detailing statistical information from the expert application forms, list of exchanges, description of exchanges, state participation, participants, and countries involved	2018
Consortium of civil protection	Final Report. Programme of Civil Protection Experts	2020
National Centre APELL for the Disaster Management	Romania (CN APELL-RO) and the Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (Consortium) . Programme of exchange of Civil Protection Experts. Final Report	2021
National Center APPEL for the Disaster Management	Romania (CN APPEL_ RO) & Romanian General Inspectorate for Emergency situations (IGSU). Programme of Exchange of Civil Protection Experts. Final Report of the first 12 months renewal Contracting Phase/Stage 2	2021

Author	Document	Year
Consortium of civil protection	Programme of exchange of civil protection experts. Final Report of exchange of civil protection experts. Final report of the first 12 months renewal Contracting Phase/stage 2	2021
European Commission	Exchange of Experts statistics	2022
Modules, Field and Table-Top Exercises		
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Progress Report. EU Module Exercises Lot 3	2018
ENQUIRY & LAUREA	Final Progress Report. 8 th Cycle external exercise evaluation findings	2018
EU Chem React and European Union Civil Protection	EU-CHEM-REACT-2, Full scale field exercise (FSX) final conduct report, grant agreement ECHO/SUB/2018/828788, Warsaw 2021	2018
European Commission	Progress Report. Modules Table-Top Exercises 2017-2018 N°ECHO/SER/2016/738037	2018
EU MODEX Consortium	EUROMODEX Lot 2 2017-2018 Final Consolidated Report	2018
European Commission	Planning activities, timetable and deliverables LOT 2 / cycle 8 - 2017-2018, Annex 2	2018
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Progress Report. ModTTX Modules Table-Top Exercises	2018
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Progress Report. EU MODEX 2018-2019 lot 3	2019
European Commission	Planning activities, timetables and deliverables LOT 2 / cycle 8 - 2018-2019	2019
EU MODEX Consortium	Final report ECHO/A2/SER/2017/04	2019
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Report. Lot 4: Design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate two field exercise programmes with a refresher programme and a field exercise in each, primarily for experts of a European Union Civil Protection Team (EUCPT) and technical assistance and Support Teams	2019
European Commission	Tender requirements for LOT 2 - Annex 1	2019

Author	Document	Year
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Report. Lot 2: Design, plan, conduct and evaluate two exercises High Capacity Pumping, Water Purification, Flood Rescue Using Boats, Flood containment and forest fire fighting modules as well as other assets of the European Emergency Response Capacities	2019
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Progress Report. ModTTX Modules Table-Top Exercises. Exercises on civil protection modules, technical assistance and support teams and European Union civil protection teams – Design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate five table top exercises for Key Personnel of all Civil Protection Modules, Technical Assistance and Support Teams (TAST), experts of a European Union Civil Protection Team (EUCPT) - Lot 1	2019
European Commission	Final Report. CN APELL = 2018/2019, Contract N° ECHO/SER/2017/767616	2019
European Commission	ModTTX Modules Table-Top Exercises 2018-2019 N°ECHO/SER/2017/767615	2019
European Commission	Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) Prevention and preparedness in civil protection and marine pollution Union Civil Protection Mechanism Exercises TECHNICAL REPORT (PART B)	2019
Ironore	Project final technical and financial report	2019
European Commission	Prevention and preparedness in civil protection and marine pollution. UCPM Technical Report (PART B)	2019
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Report. Lot 2. Cycle 10. Design, plan, conduct and evaluate two exercises High Capacity Pumping, Water Purification, Flood Rescue Using Boats, Flood containment and forest fire fighting modules as well	2020
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Report. Lot 5. Design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate two field exercises for advanced medical posts with or without surgery (AMP-S), emergency medical teams (EMT), field hospital (FHOS), medical aerial evacuation of disaster victims (MEVAC) other response capacities, technical assistance and support team (TAST) and experts of a European Union civil protection team (EUCPT)	2020
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Progress Report. ModTTX Modules Table-Top exercises. Exercises on Civil Protection Modules, Technical Assistance and Support Teams, other Response. Capacities and European Union Civil Protection Teams – Cycle 10. Design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate three table top exercises for key personnel of civil protection modules, other response capacities, technical Assistance and support teams (TAST) and experts of a European	2020

Author	Document	Year
	Union civil protection team (EUCPT) and design, plan and conduct one virtual reality based exercise for potential team leaders of a EUCPT.”	
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Progress Report. EU MODEX 2019-2020 lot 3	2020
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Report. MODEX 2019-2020 lot 5	2020
EU MODEX Consortium	ModTTX Modules Table-Top Exercises 2019-2020 N°ECHO/SER/2018/785702	2020
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Progress Report. Lot 3. Design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate four field exercises for medium/heavy, urban search and rescue (USAR), USAR in CBRN conditions (CBRNUSAR) and other response capacities	2021
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Report. Lot 4: Design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate two field exercise programmes with a refresher programme and a field exercise in each, primarily for experts of a European Union Civil Protection Team (EUCPT) and technical assistance and Support Teams	2021
European Commission	MODEX, Tender’s requirements fulfillment for LOT 2 Cycle 10 – 2019-2021	2021
European Commission	Planning activities, timetable and deliverables LOT 2 / cycle 10 - 2019-2020	2021
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Consolidated Report Lot 2 / cycle 10 January 2019 - July 2020	2021
EU MODEX Consortium	Final Consolidated Report Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Program Modex Cycle 10 2019 – 2021	2021
International Centre for Chemical Safety and Security (ICCSS)	Full Scale Field Exercise (FSX) final conduct report. Grant agreement ECHO/SUB/2018. Final Document. EU-CHEM-REACT-2.	2021
Disaster Risk Mapping and Assessment and Early Warning Systems		
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Early Warning System Meeting Minutes	2017
European Commission (JRC)	Science for Disaster Risk Management	2017
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Early Warning System Meeting Minutes	2018

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	Overview of natural and man-made disaster risks the European Union may face	2018
European Court of Auditors	Floods Directive: progress in assessing risks, while planning and implementation need to improve	2018
European Commission	Safeguarding Cultural Heritage from Natural and Man-Made Disasters. A comparative analysis of risk management in the EU	2018
European Commission	Disaster Risk Assessment and Mapping in Western Balkans and Turkey Progress Report (December 2017 - May 2018)	2018
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Early Warning System Meeting Minutes	2019
Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services	Evaluation Study of Definitions, gaps and costs of Response Capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.	2019
European Commission (JRC)	Risk Data Hub - web platform to facilitate management of disaster risks	2019
Karlstads Universitet	External evaluation of the IPA DRAM – Programme for Disaster Risk Assessment and Mapping in the Western Balkans and Turkey	2019
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Early Warning System Meeting Minutes	2020
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Early Warning System e-Meeting Minutes (online)	2020
European Commission	Science for Disaster Risk Management . Executive Summary	2020
European Commission (DRMWC)	Science for Disaster Risk Management 2020. Acting today, protecting tomorrow	2020
European Commission	Evaluation of RRPD East 2 Programme EuropeAid/13877/dh/ser/multi Final Report 20 March 2020	2020
European Commission (European Civil Protection)	IPA DRAM, disaster risk assessment and mapping in the Western Balkans and Turkey, grant contract ECHO/SER/2016/740641	2020
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Early Warning System Meeting Minutes	2021

Author	Document	Year
European Commission (JRC)	Recommendations for National Risk Assessment for Disaster Risk Management in the EU	2021
European Commission (DG ECHO) and The World Bank	Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments	2021
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Early Warning Systems (EWS) Expert Group Meeting	2022
Peer reviews		
Ecorys & Fraunhofer int.	Peer review report. Cyprus 2018	2018
Ecorys & Fraunhofer int.	Peer review report Tunisia	2018
Ecorys & Fraunhofer int.	Peer review report North Macedonia	2018
Ecorys & Fraunhofer int.	Peer review report. Portugal 2019	2019
Ecorys & Fraunhofer int.	Peer review report Serbia	2019
Ecorys & Fraunhofer int.	Peer review report Algeria	2019
European Commission	Peer review assessment framework	2022
Training Programme		
Consortia of national civil protection	UNDAC Induction course (IC) and team leader course (TL)	2018
IOM and EUCP	Camp Coordination and Camp Management Training Course for Natural Disasters and Emergencies. Summary Report	2018
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Outcomes of the Lessons learnt Meeting on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism operations in 2017	2018

Author	Document	Year
Consortia of national civil protection	UNDAC Induction course (IC) and team leader course (TL)	2018
IOM and EUCP	Camp Coordination and Camp Management Training Course for Natural Disasters and Emergencies. Summary Report	2018
Emergency Services Academy Finland	Progress Report. Logistics Response Team Training (LRT)	2019
Consortia of national civil protection	Final Report. UCPM 16th Cycle (AMC). Lot 5. Assessment Mission Course. Services related to offering capacity to design, plan, conduct and evaluate Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Courses- Lot 5: design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate in total four to five Assessment Mission Courses (AMC) 05/2018-05/2019	2019
Consortia of national civil protection	Final Report. UCPM Introduction course. LOT1, for services related to offering capacity to design, plan, conduct and evaluate Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Courses	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. UCPM Operation Management Course (OPM). 16 th Cycle.	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Progress Report and Final Report. Seminar for mechanism experts. (SME) Lot 7. 17 th cycle.	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. UCPM. Modules basic courses and technical experts courses Lot 2 - Design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate in total eleven MBC and TEC (MI) courses per cycle	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Logistics Response Team Training (LRT)	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Logistics Response Team Training (LRT)	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Logistics Response Team Training (LRT)	2019

Author	Document	Year
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM Training programme. Staff Management Course & Security Course. 16 th Cycle	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM Training Program 16th Cycle 2018-2019. UCPM Introduction Course (CMI)	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM Training Program 16th Cycle 2018-2019. UCPM Introduction Course (CMI)	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM Training Program 16th Cycle 2018-2019. UCPM Introduction Course (CMI)	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. Induction Course and Team Leader Course.	2018
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. UCPM training programme. High Level Coordination Course (HLC) and Course on Negotiation and Decision-Making (CND). 16 th cycle	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Training Consortium. UCPM Training Program 16th Cycle 2018-2019. Assessment Mission Course (AMC)	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Training Consortium. UCPM Training Program 16th Cycle 2018-2019. Assessment Mission Course (AMC)	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. UCPM. Operation Management Course (OPM). Lot 3. 17 th cycle	2019
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. UCPM Introduction course. – LOT 1, for services related to offering capacity to design, plan, conduct and evaluate Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Courses. 17 th Cycle	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report UCPM Staff Management & Security Course. 17 th cycle	2020

Author	Document	Year
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. UCOM Modules Basic Courses and Technical Experts Courses. LOT 2 - Design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate in total eleven MBC and TEC (MI) courses per cycle 17 th Cycle	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. Specific. Services related to offering capacity to design, plan, conduct and evaluate Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Courses- Lot 5: design, plan, conduct and self-evaluate in total four Assessment Mission Courses (AMC) per cycle-17th Cycle-06/2019-06/2020	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. UCPM Training program. High Level Coordination Course (HLC) and Course on Negotiation and Decision-Making (CND) Lot 6. 17 th cycle	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program 17th cycle. Assessment Mission Course (AMC)	2020
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	Emergency Medical Team Coordination Cell training course (EMT CC)	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program 17th cycle. Assessment Mission Course (AMC)	2020
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Outcomes of the Lessons Learnt Meeting on the 2019 UCPM activations	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	Emergency Medical Team Coordination Cell training course (EMT CC)	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program 17th cycle. Assessment Mission Course (AMC)	2020
Consortium of national civil protection	Final Report. Emergency Medical Team Coordination Cell Training Course	2020

Author	Document	Year
Consortium of national civil protection	Mid-Term Report. UCPM Assessment Mission Course (AMC) Lot 51 Cycle. Lot 5	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	Mid-Term Report. UCPM. Operational Management Course (OPM) 18 th Cycle. Lot 3	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM Training program cycle 18th. Operational Management Course (OPM)	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	Mid-Term Report. UCPM. Modules Basic Courses and Technical Experts Courses. Lot 2	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program. 18th cycle. Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical experts courses (TEC)	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program 18th cycle. Union Civil Protection Mechanism Introduction Course (CMI)	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program. 18th cycle. Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical experts courses (TEC)	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program 18th cycle. Union Civil Protection Mechanism Introduction Course (CMI)	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program. 18th cycle. Modules Basic Courses (MBC) and Technical experts courses (TEC)	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program 18th cycle. Union Civil Protection Mechanism Introduction Course (CMI)	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	Mid-Term Report. UCPM. Introduction Course (CMI) 18 th Cycle. Lot 1	2022

Author	Document	Year
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting on 2021 UCPM activations	2022
Consortium of national civil protection	Progress Report. On-site integration Course (OSIC) in the frame of the UCPM Training Programme. Including Annexes with evaluation by participants, lesson templates, course curriculum, staff list, list of participants, and timeframe	2022
DG ECHO documents - UCPM annual work programmes and annexes, annual activity reports, grant application forms, certification guidelines		
European Commission	Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) User Guide	2016
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision adopting the Annual Work Programme 2017 in the framework of Decision No1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	2016
European Commission	DG ECHO Strategic Plan 2016-2020	2016
European Commission	Annex - Commission Implementing Decision adopting the Annual Work Programme 2017 in the framework of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	2016
European Commission	Annex - Commission Decision on financing emergency response actions under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in 2017 from the general budget of the European Union	2016
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision adopting the annual work programme 2018 in the framework of Decision 1313/2013	2017
European Commission	DG ECHO Annual Activity Report 2017	2017
European Commission	Annex - Emergency response actions under the UCPM to be financed in 2018	2017
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision adopting the Annual Work Programme 2018 in the framework of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	2017
European Commission	CECIS Report	2017-18

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	Commission Implementing Decision amending Commission Implementing Decision C(2018)7559 on the financing of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and the adoption of the work programme for 2019	2018
European Commission	DG ECHO Annual Activity Report 2018	2018
European Commission	CECIS Report	2019-19
European Commission	DG ECHO Annual Activity Report 2019	2019
European Commission	List of awarded Track I projects	2019
European Commission	Annex – Work programme for emergency response actions under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in 2020	2019
European Commission	CECIS Report	2019-20
European Commission	Commission Decision on financing emergency response actions under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism for 2021	2020
European Commission	Annex - Work programme for emergency response actions under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in 2021	2020
European Commission	List of awarded Track I projects	2020
European Commission	DG ECHO Annual Activity Report 2020	2020
European Commission	Grant application forms for the "development of a rescEU aerial forest firefighting capacity"	2020
European Commission	Grant application form for the action "availability and deployability of a rescEU aerial forest Firefighting capacity"	2020
European Commission	Grant application form for the action "development of an aerial medical evacuation capacity for patients with highly infectious diseases"	2020

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	Grant application form for the action "rescEU Stockpiling of medical countermeasures and/or personal protective equipment, aimed at combatting serious cross-border threats to health"	2020
European Commission	Grant application form for the action "rescEU Transition Aerial Forest Firefighting Capacities"	2020
European Commission	Grant application form for the action "rescEU Emergency medical team type 2"	2020
European Commission	DG ECHO Strategic Plan 2020-2024	2020
European Commission	Certification and registration guidelines of response capacities in the European Civil Protection Pool (ECP)	2020
European Commission	Guidelines "recertification and registration" of response capacities in the European Civil Protection Pool (ECP)	2020
European Commission	CECIS Report	2020-21
European Commission	Commission implementing decision on the financing of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and the adoption of the work programme for 2021	2021
European Commission	Annex - Work programme for 2021 for a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	2021
European Commission	Commission implementing decision amending Implementing Decision C(2021)935 on the financing of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and adopting a multi-annual work programme for years 2021-2023	2021
European Commission	Annex – Commission implementing decision amending Implementing Decision C(2021)935 on the financing of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and adopting a multi-annual work programme for years 2021-2023	2021
European Commission	DG ECHO Annual Activity Report 2021	2021
European Commission	UCPM Conditions for awarding grants without a call for proposal. European Civil Protection Pool Upgrade or Repair of Response Capacities. UCPM - 2021- ECP - URC	2021
European Commission	European Civil Protection Pool (ECP) Snapshot report 2021 State-of-play on 01/01/2022 and major developments in 2021	2021

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	Overview and analysis of the online outreach meetings with Union Civil Protection Mechanism Member States and Participating States on the Civil Protection Knowledge Network	2021
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Concept paper: Capacity development pillar	2021
European Commission	CECIS Report	2021-2022
European Commission	Guidelines for a streamlined certification and re-certification process for “twin” ECPP capacities	2022
European Commission	DG ECHO internal voluntary pool monitoring tool	2022
European Commission	DG ECHO data on UCPM budget details 2023-2025	2022
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Note to DG ECHO Management - Prevention and preparedness Programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme	2022
European Commission	Communication from the Commission on European Union Disaster Resilience Goals	2023
Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Summary Reports ¹¹⁰⁶		
Malta	Malta national risk assessment report	2019
Netherlands	National security strategy	2019
Netherlands	National risk assessment	2019
Hungary	A relevant summary of the report on Hungary’s National Disaster Risk Assessment	2020
Slovenia	Report on the state of play of disaster risk management in the republic of Slovenia (2020)	2020
Romania	Disaster risk management summary	2020

¹¹⁰⁶ The National Risk Assessments are not publicly available documents and therefore will only be reported on in an aggregated manner

Author	Document	Year
Turkey	Disaster risk management summary report	2020
Austria	National risk assessment and risk management capability assessment	2020
Cyprus	Report on Disaster Risk management in the Republic of Cyprus	2020
Denmark	Danish Disaster Risk Management Summary	2020
Slovakia	(Threat) of the Slovak republic in the context of civil protection of the population	2020
Finland	Disaster risk management in Finland. Summary report to the commission	2020
Czechia	Disaster Risk Management Summary Report – Czech Republic 2020	2020
France	Summary of the national risk assessment and national risk management capacity assessment report prepared under Article 6(d) of Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on the Union's civil protection mechanism	2020
Republic of Ireland	A national risk assessment for Ireland 2020	2020
Latvia	On the national civil protection plan	2020
Norway	National disaster risk management summary report of Norway	2020
Poland	Summary of relevant elements of the national risk assessment	2020
Slovakia	Risk assessment	2020
Luxemburg	Summary of the national risk assessment and risk management capability assessment	2020
Sweden	Presentation of risk assessment and risk management capability 2020 under the Union Mechanism	2020
Germany	Report of the Federal Republic of Germany on risk assessment and risk management capability pursuant to Article 6 (d) of Decision 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	2021

Author	Document	Year
North Macedonia	Civil protection	2021
Portugal	Disaster risk management summary report	2021
Latvia	Disaster risk management summary report Latvia	2021
Lithuania	National risk analysis	2021
Montenegro	Disaster risk assessment of Montenegro	2021
Montenegro	Template for disaster risk management summary report	2021
Republic of Ireland	Report to the Government Task Force on Emergency Planning. National Disaster Risk Management Capabilities Assessment	2021
Italy	Summary report Italy	2021
Serbia	Disaster risk management summary report form Republic of Serbia	2022
Other		
European Commission (Council of the EU, European Parliament)	Joint statement. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid	2008
	Administrative arrangement between DG ENV and Attorney-general's department (emergency management Australia) of the Commonwealth of Australia on cooperation in the field of civil protection	2008
European Commission	Action Plan to enhance preparedness against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear security risks	2017
European Committee of the Regions	Opinion on the review of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism	2018

Author	Document	Year
European Commission	6 th Meeting of the Commission Expert Group on the Control of Major Accident Hazards involving dangerous substances (Seveso expert group)	2018
European Commission	7 th Meeting of the Commission Expert Group on the Control of Major Accident Hazards involving dangerous substances (Seveso expert group), Seminar and Site-Visit	2019
European Commission	Communication on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles	2021
European Commission	Communication. Forging a climate-resilient Europe. The new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change	2021
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Overview UCPM activations in 2020	2021
Centre for Security Studies	An evaluation of Switzerland becoming a Participating State of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism. Risk and Resilience Report	2021
European Commission	Special Euromarometer 511 b EU Civil Protection	2021
MSB and consortium partners	Inception Report. Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters in Eastern Partnership countries (phase 3) (PPRD East 3)	2021
PPRD East 3 Consortium	Interim Technical Implementation Report for the programme; "Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters in Eastern Neighbourhood Partner Countries – Phase 3 (PPRD East 3)	2021
European Commission (JRC)	Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa	2021
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Annual Activity Report 2020.	2021
European Commission	Note for the Attention of Head of Cabinet ALEŠKA SIMKIĆ. UCPM strategy for the Southern Neighbourhood	2021
European Commission	Note for the attention of Ms ALEŠKA SIMKIĆ, HEAD OF CABINET OF COMMISSIONER LENARČIČ. DG ECHO communication strategy 2022	2021
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Overview UCPM activations in 2020	2021

Author	Document	Year
Centre for Security Studies	An evaluation of Switzerland becoming a Participating State of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism. Risk and Resilience Report	2021
European Commission	Special Eurobarometer 511 b EU Civil Protection	2021
European Commission	Inception Report. Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters in Eastern Partnership countries (phase 3) (PPRD East 3)	2021
European Commission	Interim Technical Implementation Report for the programme; “Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters in Eastern Neighbourhood Partner Countries – Phase 3 (PPRD East 3)	2021
European Commission (JRC)	Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa	2021
European Commission (DG ECHO)	Annual Activity Report 2020	2021
European Commission	Note for the Attention of Head of Cabinet ALEŠKA SIMKIĆ. UCPM strategy for the Southern Neighbourhood	2021
European Commission	Note for the attention of Ms ALEŠKA SIMKIĆ, HEAD OF CABINET OF COMMISSIONER LENARČIČ. DG ECHO communication strategy 2022	2021
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program 18th cycle. High Level Coordination Course (HLC) and Course on Negotiation and Decision-making (CND)	2022
Consortium of national civil protection	EU On-site Integration Course (OSIC) in the frame of the UCPM training program. Project progress report.	2022
European Commission	Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM) Strategic crisis management in the EU	2022
Consortium of national civil protection	UCPM training program cycle 18th. Assessment Mission Course (AMC)	2022
European Commission	Annual Work Plan of the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA)	2023

Author	Document	Year
European Committee of Regions	Draft opinion. Preparing for and dealing with crises: strengthening the resilience of the Union, its regions and cities	2023

ANNEX 5 OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

A5.1 Key Informant Interviews (KII)

Type	Interviews carried out	Remarks
National authorities ¹¹⁰⁷	36 interviews <i>Member States:</i> Austria, Belgium (2), Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark (2) Estonia, Spain (2), Finland, France (2), Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta (2), Netherlands, Poland (3), Portugal, Romania, Sweden (2), Slovenia (2), Slovakia <i>Participating States:</i> Bosnia and Herzegovina, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia	No response received by: <i>Member States:</i> Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg <i>Participating States:</i> Iceland, Montenegro, Turkey <i>Third countries:</i> Lebanon, Tunisia
DG ECHO	24 interviews	
EU stakeholders	27 interviews DG CLIMA (2), DG ECFIN, DG ENERGY, DG ENV, DG HOME (4), DG MOVE, DG RTD, DG SANTE (2), EC Secretariat General, ECDC, EEAS, EIB, EMSA, EU Council, EU Delegation to Turkey, HERA (3), JRC (2), DG TAXUD; Cabinet for the Commissioner for Crisis management	No response received by: EFTA Secretariat, DG REFORM, DG REGIO, EIOPA, DG NEAR, European Parliament, EUSPA, FPI, INTPA, REA, SG, TRADE Invitations were rejected by: DG DEFIS, DG CONNECT, Committee of the Regions, EIOPA, Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM)

¹¹⁰⁷ These include 33 national civil protection/marine pollution authorities, as well as one representative from the private donations hub established in Belgium, one representative from the Governmental Strategic Reserve Agency in Poland, and one representative from the PL Ministry of Health.

Experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities	10 interviews Experts deployed (5); UCPM-funded project managers (e.g., Prevention and Preparedness Programme project managers, Knowledge Network partnership projects) (3), Other (2)	No response received by: 7 UCPM-funded project managers project managers; 22 experts deployed; 3 academics/researchers
International stakeholders	8 interviews Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for Southeast Europe (DDPI); European Space Agency (ESA); International Organisation of Migration (IOM), NATO Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC); Italian Red Cross; Red Cross EU Office; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR); World Health Organisation (WHO)	No response received by: WFP, OECD, World Bank, Euro-Mediterranean Centre for Climate Change (CMCC)
Professional organisations involved in supporting the implementation of UCPM activities	3 interviews Bit Media e-solutions GmbH; CN APELL -RO (2)	No response received by Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe

A5.2 Case studies

Type of case study	Case study	Interviews conducted	Stakeholder
Traditional UCPM activation	Forest Fires	12 interviews	DG ECHO (1); Civil Protection authorities from IT (4); PT (2), and Chile (1); PT Ministry of Home Affairs (1); CZ Ministry of Interior (1); Other (2)
	Floods	9 interviews	DG ECHO (2); National Civil protection authority from BE (1); Regional civil protection authority from BE (1); Regional Emergency Planning BE (1); Federal Agency for Technical

			Relief – DE (1); Ministry of Interior – Crisis Management and Civil Protection Department – DE (1); Federal Agency for Civil Protection (1); Joint Research Centre Disaster Risk Management Unit (1)
Unexpected emergencies	Beirut Port Explosion	16 interviews	DG ECHO (1), UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy TL (4), EUCPT Team Leader (1), Lebanese Armed Forces (7), Lebanese Office of the Prime Minister (1), Lebanese Civil Defense (2)
	COVID-19	11 interviews	DG ECHO (5); HERA (2); National civil protection authority from IT (1); Ministry of Foreign Affairs from FR (1); Ministry of Interior from RO (1); Official EU Delegation in India (1)
	Russia's war of aggression against Ukrainian	17 interviews	DG ECHO Liaison Officers (8); ERCC (1); DG ECHO EHRC (1); DG ECHO rescEU (2); EUCPT Leaders (2); National civil protection authorities (2); Donor (1)
Integration between preparedness activities		13 interviews	DG ECHO (5); DG ECHO (Interview on the Framework contract for ad hoc training (1); Expert in civil Protection (Training programme) (1); Expert in civil protection (PPP, Knowledge Network Partnership projects) (1); Expert in civil protection (lessons learnt programme, trainings, exercises (2); National civil protection authorities (2); Contractor carrying out Framework contract for ad hoc training (1).

A5.3 Surveys

Survey	Responses received	Invitations sent
DG ECHO desk officers	38 responses	190

National authorities	<p>58 responses</p> <p>Member States: AT (2), BE (2), HR (1), CY (2), CZ (1), DK (2), EE (3), FI (2), FR (2), DE (3), EL (1), HU (1), IE (1), IT (1), LV (1), LT (1), MT (2), PL (4), PT (2), SK (1), SI (3), ES (1), SE (2), NL (3)</p> <p>Participating States: NO (2), TR (2)</p> <p>Third Countries: TN (2), Kosovo (1), EG (1), AZ (1), MD (2), GE (1), JO (1), DZ (1)</p>	400 ¹¹⁰⁸
Trainers/Training/Exercise Contractors/National training coordinators	59 responses	118
Experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities	21 responses	136

¹¹⁰⁸ The survey was sent to all email addresses belonging to national authorities sent by DG ECHO, including national civil protection authorities, marine pollution authorities and other related services (such as fire fighting services).

ANNEX 6 APPROACH TO THE COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

One of the elements the evaluation aimed to quantify, quantify and analyse was how costs and benefits evolved over time and how they compared to each other in order to assess the efficiency of the UCPM.

In light of the broad scope of the evaluation and known data limitations, it was decided to carry out:

- e) a qualitative assessment of the costs and benefits, how they compare to each other as well as of the level of efficiency (including wastage, best practices and opportunities for improvement) for the whole UCPM (all three pillars).
- f) a full-fledged CBA of some of the components of the UCPM in the framework of most of the case studies, namely UCPM activations in the context of forest fires, floods, the Beirut port explosion, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Ukrainian crisis.

The qualitative assessment was done based on documentation review, the results of the survey and the feedback from interviews with Key Informants from various stakeholder groups, namely:

- DG ECHO desk officers
- EU Institutions and Agencies
- National authorities
- Professional organisations
- Experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities; and
- International partners

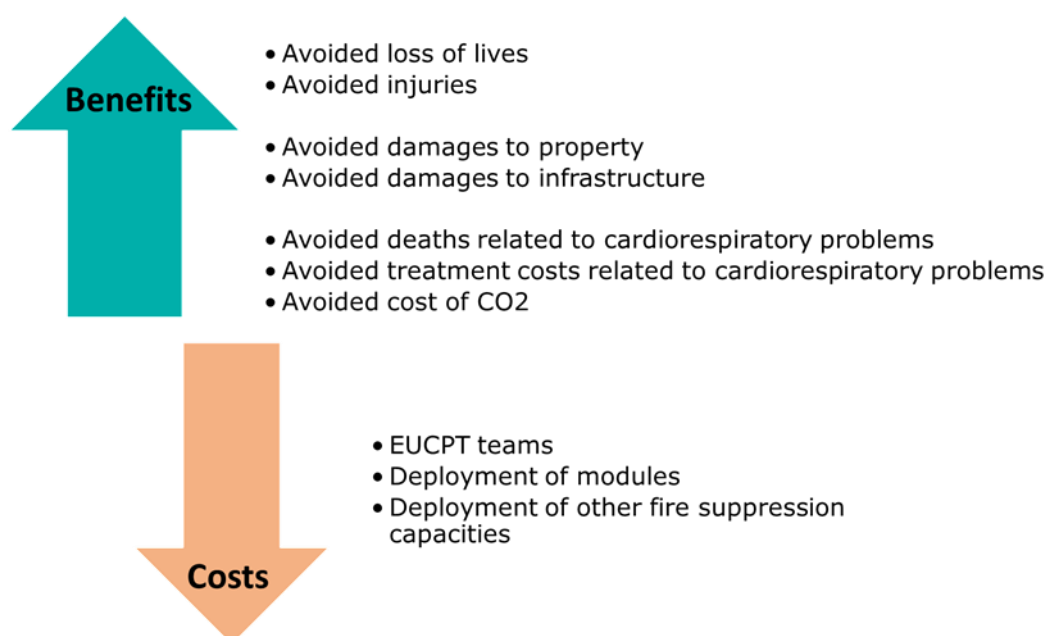
The assessment also included an analysis of the disaggregated budget per activity and per year, and when possible (given the availability of data and relevance) we calculated indicators of efficiency (e.g., cost of training per participant) and analysed their evolution over the evaluation period. The diversity, complexity and continuous expansion of the different UCPM activities/elements was taken into account when comparing costs across the years and, sometimes, rendered comparisons into not be appropriate. The addition to these, the lack of quantitative data on results also limited the calculation and analysis of efficiency indicators.

The qualitative assessment was to be complemented by a full-fledged CBA for the five case studies. The approach followed to carry out the full-fledged CBA for each case study was the following:

- Identify the main investment and operational costs incurred by the UCPM and national authorities to respond to each of the activations under analysis, relate to the cost for the UCPM to provide the response to the request (i.e., EUCTP teams, modules, and other fire suppression capacities) as well as the cost for UCPM to provide prevention and preparedness activities (including training, exercises, PPP, exchange of experts, etc). This was done by reviewing documentation and conducting interviews.
- Quantify the costs, by analysing budget data and, fill in gaps, by using market data to estimate the costs of resources used.
- Identify main types of benefits (e.g., lives saved, prevent injuries to people), and estimate the dimension of those benefits (e.g., how many lives were saved, how many avoided injured people), but reviewing documentation and interviewing key stakeholders.
- Carry out an estimate of the benefits by relying of unit costs from literature.
- Compare the costs with the benefits and conclude about the cost-effectiveness of the activations.

We followed the approach used by the World Bank¹¹⁰⁹ and the model developed for the European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS)¹¹¹⁰, to develop simplified models for each UCPM activation covered in-depth by the case studies. Figure 1.1 provided depicts the model developed for the CBA in the context of the forest fires case study.

Figure 74. Simplified model for the CBA in the context of the forest fires case study



Source: ICF elaboration

After a review of the available documentation and data and consulting relevant stakeholders, the very limited collected data did not allow for a robust quantification of benefits that could be attributable to the support provided by the UCPM in any of the activations under scope.

The key data missing was mainly related to the results of the activations, such as:

- Estimation of the number of lives that would have been lost without UCPM support;
- Estimation of the number of people that would have been injured without UCPM support;
- Estimation of the number of property that would have been lost / damaged without UCPM support;
- Infrastructure that would have been lost / damaged without UCPM support.

Without this data, a quantitative comparison of the costs with the benefits was not possible and therefore it was decided to describe them in a qualitative way and provide a judgment when the data available data would allow it.

ANNEX 7 CASE STUDY REPORTS

A7.1 Forest fires

¹¹⁰⁹ World Bank. 2021. Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness. © World Bank, Washington, DC.

¹¹¹⁰ Pettenella, D., Marchetti, M., Marino, D., Marucci, A., Ottaviano, M. and Lasserre, B., 2008. Proposal for a harmonized methodology to assess socio-economic damages from forest fires in Europe.

A7.1.1 Introduction to the case study

This case study examines the activation and functioning of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) in combatting forest fires between 2017 and 2022. The case study focuses on two of the Member States most affected by forest fires in that period and with the highest number of UCPM activations: namely, **Portugal** (burnt area 722,113 ha until 2021; seven UCPM activations) and **Italy** (burnt area 425,122 ha until 2021; five UCPM activations). Inputs were also gathered regarding a Member State that only recently activated the UCPM for the first time (**Czechia**); and for one of the third countries with prior experience in requesting UCPM activation in the area of forest fires, namely **Chile**.

The aim of the case study is to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and added value of the UCPM intervention on forest fires. The case study further highlights lessons learnt and outstanding challenges.

A7.1.2 Context and nature of the emergency

This section will provide an overview of:

- The evolving context and nature of forest fires in Europe;
- Key developments in EU law and policy regarding forest fires;
- Activation of the Mechanism for forest fires;
- Key stakeholders involved in forest fires.

A7.1.2.1 Evolving context and nature of forest fires in Europe

Forest fires have continued to ravage European lands between 2017 and 2022, including large areas of Europe's Natura 2000 network (the network of protected areas for Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats).¹¹¹¹ The **origin** of the great majority of fires is anthropogenic, due to either deliberate acts or negligence.¹¹¹² Causes of fires need to be put in the broader context of climate change, which influences the number and extent of forest fires by affecting weather conditions as well as vegetation and fuels. Furthermore, prevention measures for forest fires – such as awareness raising, sustainable forest and land management practices – are essential to minimise the risk and impact of forest fires.¹¹¹³

While the total **burnt area** in Europe has steadily grown between 2018 and 2022 (see Table 15 and Figure 76), the worst year on record remains 2017 – and no unequivocal trend can be identified in terms of the number of fires (Figure 75). Broadening the temporal scope, while overall fire risk has increased in Europe since 1980 particularly due to conducive weather conditions, the total burnt area in the most affected Mediterranean region has actually slightly decreased.¹¹¹⁴ However, as projections point to climate change considerably increasing forest fire risk in Europe – particularly in the Southern region, but also in Central Europe¹¹¹⁵ –, current fire suppression capacities may be insufficient.¹¹¹⁶

As is shown in Table 14 and Figure 75, between 2017 and 2021 almost 300,000 **forest fire events** took place in Europe. Portugal, Spain, Italy and France accounted for over half of the number of all forest events. As far as burnt area is concerned, over the same period five countries in the south of Europe were the most affected (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Turkey and Greece), accounting for over 80% of the total burnt

¹¹¹¹ European Commission, "Natura 2000", https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm.

¹¹¹² See the data reported by the relevant national authorities and included in the JRC technical reports on forest fires.

¹¹¹³ JRC (2018) "Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa 2017", pp. 6 and 9.

¹¹¹⁴ European Environment Agency, "Forest fires in Europe", <https://www.eea.europa.eu/ims/forest-fires-in-europe>.

¹¹¹⁵ European Environment Agency, "Forest fires in Europe", <https://www.eea.europa.eu/ims/forest-fires-in-europe>.

¹¹¹⁶ Carnicer et al (2022) "Global warming is shifting the relationships between fire weather and realized fire-induced CO2 emissions in Europe", *Nature* 12:10365.

area; Portugal is a distant first due to the unprecedented fire season of 2017 (see Table 15 and Figure 76 below).

Member States outside of the Mediterranean region were also impacted by forest fires, such as Poland and Sweden being also among the five countries most severely hit, in terms of number of forest fire events.

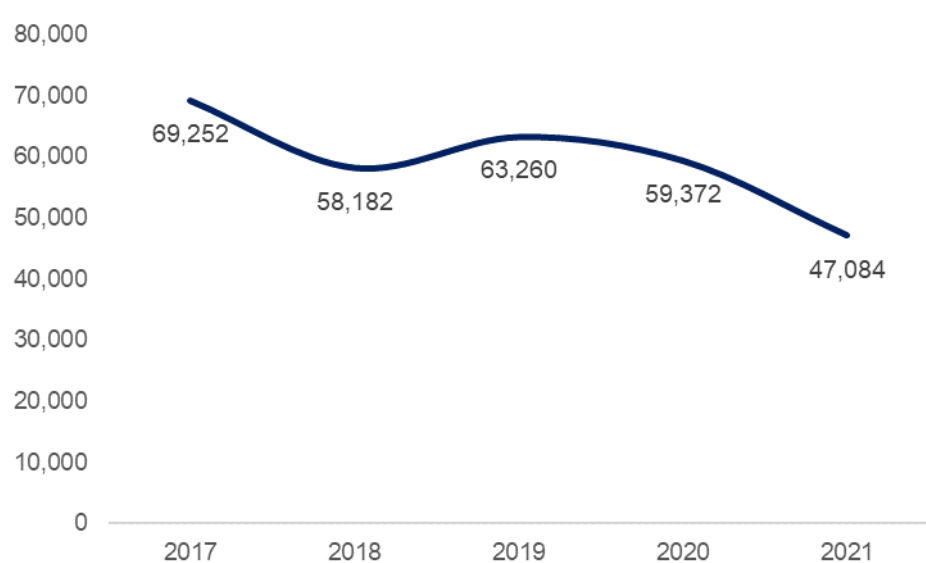
Table 14. Number of forest fires in Europe (2017-2021)

COUNTRY	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL (COUNTRY)
SLOVENIA	108	32	84	120	73	417
ESTONIA	61	230	143	24	32	490
SWITZERLAND	110	153	79	78	85	505
CYPRUS	92	131	99	108	111	541
SERBIA	222	62	189	81	75	629
NORTH MACEDONIA	301	19	251	48	113	732
CROATIA	329	54	123	142	116	764
LITHUANIA	80	211	279	157	46	773
SLOVAKIA	162	262	210	221	101	956
AUSTRIA	278	174	244	234	164	1,094
ROMANIA	447	158	425	627	278	1,935
BULGARIA	513	222	668	499	349	2,251
NORWAY	264	887	261	609	653	2,674
NETHERLANDS	321	949	548	724	212	2,754
LATVIA	423	972	1,107	581	448	3,531
GREECE	1,083	793	657	1,060	1,250	4,843
GERMANY	424	1,708	1,523	1,360	548	5,563
HUNGARY	1,454	530	2,088	1,239	1,154	6,465
FINLAND	881	2,427	1,458	1,260	1,231	7,257
UKRAINE	2,371	1,297	1,261	2,598	659	8,186
CZECHIA	966	2,033	1,963	2,081	1,517	8,560
TURKEY	2,411	2,167	2,688	3,399	2,793	13,458
FRANCE	4,429	3,027	5,728	7,961	4,739	25,884

ITALY	7,855	3,220	4,351	4,865	5,989	26,280
SWEDEN	5,276	8,181	5,483	5,305	4,087	28,332
POLAND	3,592	8,867	9,635	6,627	3,295	32,016
SPAIN	13,793	7,143	10,883	7,745	8,780	48,344
PORTUGAL	21,006	12,273	10,832	9,619	8,186	61,916
TOTAL (YEAR)	69,252	58,182	63,260	59,372	47,084	297,150

Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of JRC (2022) "Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa 2021"

Figure 75. Number of forest fires in Europe (2017-2021)



Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of JRC (2022) "Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa 2021"

Table 15. Burnt area (ha) in Europe (2017-2021)¹¹¹⁷

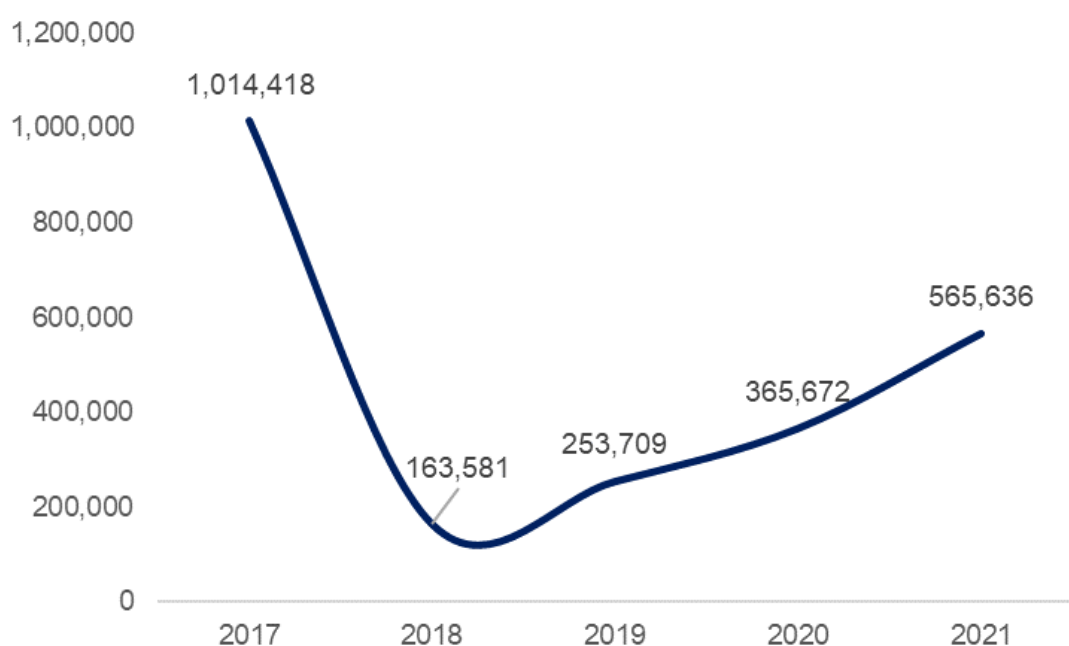
COUNTRY	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL (COUNTRY)
AUSTRIA	25	19	20	60	117	241
SWITZERLAND	118	69	31	26	35	279
LITHUANIA	53	110	200	64	11	438
ESTONIA	33	430	69	191	33	756
SLOVENIA	441	20	154	118	124	857
SLOVAKIA	295	248	462	477	159	1,641

¹¹¹⁷ Countries are listed from the lowest to the highest number of forest fires over the period 2017-2021.

CZECHIA	170	492	520	484	411	2,077
NETHERLANDS	232	639	250	1,072	18	2,211
FINLAND	460	1,228	565	719	785	3,757
LATVIA	265	2,864	805	309	504	4,747
GERMANY	395	2,349	2,711	368	148	5,971
NORWAY	525	3,279	3,077	363	653	7,897
CYPRUS	428	1,136	733	1,305	6,612	10,214
ROMANIA	2,459	1,341	2,496	5,152	2,101	13,549
POLAND	1,023	2,696	3,572	8,417	894	16,602
NORTH MACEDONIA	5,619	95	4,834	68	6,796	17,412
HUNGARY	4,933	906	6,541	2,895	2,413	17,688
SERBIA	4,757	1,502	9,872	1,417	1,630	19,178
BULGARIA	4,569	1,453	5,620	5,258	3,143	20,043
SWEDEN	1,433	24,310	1,233	821	861	28,658
UKRAINE	5,474	1,367	1,065	74,623	289	82,818
CROATIA	48,543	1,506	2,180	23,994	6,660	82,883
FRANCE	26,641	5,193	24,133	18,451	15,114	89,532
GREECE	13,393	15,464	9,153	9,300	108,418	155,728
TURKEY	11,992	5,644	11,332	20,971	139,503	189,442
ITALY	161,987	19,481	36,034	55,656	151,964	425,122
SPAIN	178,234	25,162	83,963	65,923	87,880	441,162
PORTUGAL	539,921	44,578	42,084	67,170	28,360	722,113
TOTAL (YEAR)	1,014,418	163,581	253,709	365,672	565,636	2,363,016

Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of JRC (2022) "Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa 2021",

Figure 76. Burnt area (ha) in Europe (2017-2021)



Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of JRC (2022) "Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa 2021"

The summer of 2022 in Europe has been unprecedented in many ways, including:

- in terms of **burnt area** (750,000 ha up to 3 September);¹¹¹⁸
- **number of forest fires**, which "was higher than the long term average of 2006-2021".¹¹¹⁹ The most affected countries were France, Spain and Portugal;¹¹²⁰
- the highest level of **carbon emissions** since 2007.¹¹²¹

Regions outside of Europe were also increasingly affected by forest fires. Between the end of January and February 2023, 430,000 hectares of forests in Chile were destroyed by fires,¹¹²² amidst a prolonged megadrought plaguing the country. The severity of the fires prompted the Chilean authorities to activate the UCPM for the second time, after the first one in 2017.

As regards the **damages** caused by forest fires, with particular regard to Portugal and Italy (Member States in focus for this case study), the number of casualties has always been <10, with the notable exception of the devastating 2017 forest fires in Portugal (see Table 16).

¹¹¹⁸ Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS), "Europe's summer wildfire emissions highest in 15 years", September 2022, <https://atmosphere.copernicus.eu/europes-summer-wildfire-emissions-highest-15-years>.

¹¹¹⁹ Sundström et al, "Summer 2022: exceptional wildfire season in Europe", December 2022, <https://www.eumetsat.int/summer-2022-exceptional-wildfire-season-europe>.

¹¹²⁰ Sundström et al, "Summer 2022: exceptional wildfire season in Europe", December 2022, <https://www.eumetsat.int/summer-2022-exceptional-wildfire-season-europe>.

¹¹²¹ CAMS, above n 7.

¹¹²² Reuters, "Wildfires in Chile raise 'great concern', says minister", 18 February 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/wildfires-chile-raises-great-concern-says-minister-2023-02-18/>.

Table 16. Casualties due to forest fires (2017-2021)

Member State	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Italy	9	0 ¹¹²³	1	2	1 ¹¹²⁴
Portugal	114	N/A	N/A	9	6

A7.1.3 Key developments in EU law and policy

The period 2017-2022 witnessed significant changes in the EU law and policy related to the prevention of, preparedness for, and response to forest fires.

A7.1.3.1 Main changes to the UCPM

The most significant change made to the UCPM during the period under consideration is arguably the creation, in 2019, of **rescEU** – a reserve pool of resources to which Member States and Participating States can draw on in “situations where overall existing capacities at national level and those pre-committed by Member States to the European Civil Protection Pool are not, in the circumstances, able to ensure an effective response to the various kinds of disasters”.¹¹²⁵ Significantly, aerial forest firefighting capacities were the first ones to be included in the reserve.¹¹²⁶ In 2022, 12 firefighting planes and 1 helicopter were contributed by Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Sweden;¹¹²⁷ and plans are under way to double the fleet in 2023 and 2024 and reach the full rescEU fleet in 2029.¹¹²⁸

Other noteworthy developments for the UCPM in the period 2017-2022, which are relevant to forest fires, include efforts to put more emphasis on **prevention and preparedness** in the context of civil protection, including by

- providing for the development of “Union disaster resilience goals”,¹¹²⁹ which were recently outlined in a Commission Recommendation and Communication;¹¹³⁰
- reinforcing the gathering, processing and dissemination of relevant knowledge through the establishment of the **Knowledge Network**, which includes civil protection and disaster management actors, centres of excellence, universities and researchers.¹¹³¹

Most recently in 2022, the Commission adopted the **Wildfire Prevention Action Plan**.¹¹³² The action plan presents a comprehensive approach that encompasses ten key actions, strategically organised into three overarching themes. The first theme focuses on enhancing our capacity to prevent wildfires, emphasising the need for robust measures and resources to effectively tackle fire incidents. The second theme centres on improving knowledge about wildfires, which will inform proactive prevention strategies and enable

¹¹²³ While there was no casualty due to forest fires, vegetation fires caused 2 victims: JRC (2019) “Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa 2018”, p. 42.

¹¹²⁴ Vegetation fires caused 7 further casualties: JRC (2022) “Forest Fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa 2021”, p. 45.

¹¹²⁵ Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, Article 12(1).

¹¹²⁶ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 of 8 April 2019.

¹¹²⁷ DG ECHO, “rescEU – Factsheet”, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/resceu_en.

¹¹²⁸ DG ECHO, “UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting – Lessons Identified From 2022 Wildfire Season”, Lisbon, 10-11 January 2023.

¹¹²⁹ Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

¹¹³⁰ Commission Recommendation C(2023) 400 final of 8 February 2023 on Union disaster resilience goals; and Communication from the Commission COM(2023) 61 final of 8 February 2023 on European Union Disaster Resilience Goals: Acting together to deal with future emergencies.

¹¹³¹ Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism; and Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1956 of 10 November 2021.

¹¹³² [Wildfire Prevention Action Plan.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/wildfire-prevention-action-plan_en)

timely response. Lastly, the plan emphasises the significance of increased financing for wildfire prevention actions, recognising the necessity of adequate resources to implement effective prevention measures. To ensure successful implementation, the plan emphasises reinforced dialogue and cooperation with Member States, based on a clear legal foundation and a well-defined set of proposed deliverables. This collaborative approach will help safeguard our precious forests from the devastating impact of wildfires and ensure their long-term preservation.¹¹³³

In addition, in 2021, **fire fighters were ‘pre-positioned’** in Greece to help with the summer forest fire season. After positive Member and Participating State feedback, this effort has been renewed whereby 11 Member States will send almost 450 firefighters to be pre-positioned in France, Greece and Portugal for the forest fire season.¹¹³⁴

A7.1.3.2 Main changes to policy areas related to forest fires

The **New EU Forest Strategy for 2030**, adopted in 2021, comprehensively deals with forests as multi-functional assets with a crucial role to play in combatting climate change, reversing biodiversity loss, safeguarding human health, and supporting socio-economic development – among others.¹¹³⁵ With a view to strengthening forest resilience, including against wildfires, the Strategy refers to the need to map and strictly protect primary and old-growth forests; implement sustainable and ecosystem-based forest management practices; include “restore and reforest better” conditions in disaster response and recovery; sustainably reforest and afforest (including by planting at least 3 billion additional trees by 2030); and strategically monitor and collect data on European forests. In the latter respect, the Commission committed to put forward a legislative **proposal for a Forest Observation, Reporting and Data Collection framework**, with a view to harmonising forest reporting in the EU and making data more accessible.¹¹³⁶ An online public consultation on the proposal was held between 25 August and 17 November 2022.

The New EU Forest Strategy is strictly connected to other crucial pieces of EU legislation and policy. The Strategy itself mentions the **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**, which, between 2014 and 2020, allocated to forestry EUR 6.7 billion, 24% of which funding was specifically targeted at the prevention of forest fires and disasters. As a consequence of implementation shortcomings, the new CAP (2023-2027) is expected to focus more on forestry, including in the Commission’s assessment of CAP Strategic Plans drawn up by Member States.¹¹³⁷

Forest conservation and sustainable management is also closely related to the protection of biodiversity – forest being among the richest areas in terms of biodiversity. Accordingly, the **EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030** refers, among others, to the strict protection of all EU primary and old-growth forests; the strengthening of the quantity, quality and resilience of EU forests; the continued engagement of the Commission, in cooperation with Member States, in the prevention and response to major forest fires; and the further development of the Forest Information System for Europe. On the basis of the Strategy and following a public consultation, in June 2022 the Commission adopted a proposal for a **Regulation on Nature Restoration**,¹¹³⁸ which aims to restore all degraded ecosystems (including forest ecosystems) by 2050 and ecosystems covering at least 20% of EU land and sea by 2030. The proposal is currently under discussion and might require some amendments, including to align it with the global goals agreed on at the

¹¹³³ European Commission, DG ECHO (2023): Lessons learnt wildfires and floods: Reinforcing prevention

¹¹³⁴ European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). ‘Success is based on preparation’ – ERCC ready for the 2023 wildfire season. As of 29/06/2023 available at: ‘[Success is based on preparation’ – ERCC ready for the 2023 wildfire season](#) | UCP Knowledge Network: Applied knowledge for action ([europa.eu](#)); Minutes from Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023.

¹¹³⁵ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, “New EU Forest Strategy for 2030”, 16 July 2021, COM(2021) 572 final.

¹¹³⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, “New EU Forest Strategy for 2030”, 16 July 2021, COM(2021) 572 final.

¹¹³⁷ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, “New EU Forest Strategy for 2030”, 16 July 2021, COM(2021) 572 final.

¹¹³⁸ Proposal COM(2022) 304 final of 22 June 2022 for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on nature restoration.

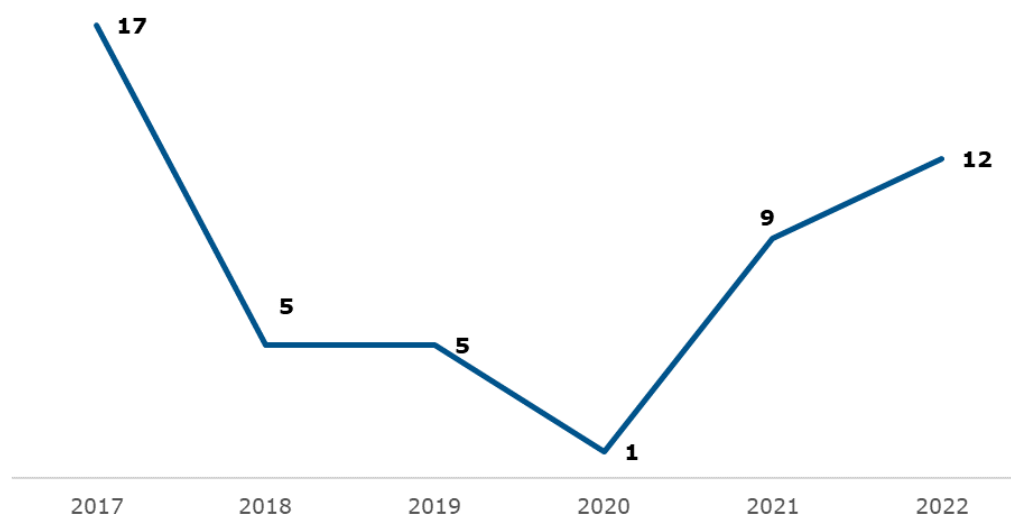
15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the **Convention on Biological Diversity** (Montreal, December 2022).¹¹³⁹

Finally, in light of the crucial role that forests play in sequestering and storing carbon and in facilitating adaptation to climate change (including by limiting coastal erosion, regulating water flows, and providing socio-economic benefits to local communities), forests are also an integral part of the EU's strategy to fight climate change and its effects and implement the Paris Agreement. Accordingly, the **European Green Deal** and the so-called European Climate Law refer to the role of forests in mitigating and adapting to climate change.¹¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, the **2021 EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change**¹¹⁴¹ includes the sustainable management of forests among effective nature-based solutions for adaptation.

A7.1.4 Activation of the Mechanism

UCPM has been activated a total of 49 times between 2017 and 2022. The highest number of activations took place in 2017 followed by 2022.

Figure 77. Total number of UCPM activations for forest fires between 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG Annual reports and DG ECHO internal data

A7.1.5 Key stakeholders involved

A7.1.5.1 National level

The competent authorities in the two Member States examined more closely in the study (that is, Portugal and Italy) as well as in the third country considered (Chile) are mapped below:

Portugal

¹¹³⁹ Hildt and Agapakis, "Biodiversity: the EU and the race against time", Social Europe, 21 December 2022, <https://www.socialeurope.eu/biodiversity-the-eu-and-the-race-against-time>.

¹¹⁴⁰ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, "The European Green Deal", 11 December 2019, COM(2019) 640 final; and Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 ("European Climate Law").

¹¹⁴¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, "Forging a climate-resilient Europe - the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change", 24 February 2021, COM(2021) 82 final.

Civil protection in Portugal is structured around three main levels – national, regional and local. The **Portuguese National Authority for Emergency and Civil Protection**, which operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs, is responsible for the planning, coordination and implementation of civil protection policies at all stages of the disaster management cycle (prevention, preparedness, response and relief).¹¹⁴² Municipalities, on their part, also develop their own risk assessment plans, awareness campaigns, and training activities; they further provide a first response to fire events.¹¹⁴³ In the case of fire events, responsibility is then transferred to the level which is more appropriate in light of the size and type of emergency.

Among the relevant bodies recently instituted is the **Agency for Integrated Rural Fire Management** (“Agência para a Gestão Integrada de Fogos Rurais”, AGIF), which was created in 2017 within the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and is entrusted with the planning, strategic coordination and assessment of the Integrated Rural Fire Management System.¹¹⁴⁴ In this capacity, AGIF currently monitors the implementation of 97 projects aimed at realising the National Plan for Integrated Rural Fire Management.¹¹⁴⁵ One of the main aims of AGIF is to redress the imbalance – both in terms of investments and culture – between the prevention and response to forest fires.¹¹⁴⁶ In Portugal, both prevention and response efforts are made difficult by the peculiar situation of forest ownership which characterises the country – where only 3% of forests are owned by the state and private forests are extremely fragmented (around 750,000 estimated owners) or have no known owner.¹¹⁴⁷

Italy

The Civil Protection Code identifies the state, regions and autonomous provinces, and municipalities as the components of the National Civil Protection Service. The Code further lists the “operational structures” of the National Civil Protection Service, which include the national fire and rescue service, the armed forces, police forces, relevant research institutes, the healthcare system, and meteorological services.¹¹⁴⁸

Since the end of the 1990s, an increasing number of responsibilities across the disaster management cycle have been attributed to regions and municipalities. At the central level, the **Civil Protection Department** – established under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, but whose status might change after the recent creation of the Ministry for Civil Protection and Sea Policies¹¹⁴⁹ – directs and coordinates the National Civil Protection Service, represents it abroad, and intervenes when emergencies exceed the capacities of local authorities.

Regions have the primary competence for the prevention of, preparedness for and response to forest fires. This leads to significant differences in terms of both the approach and resources available to address forest fires (for instance, the Basilicata Region has no helicopter). A Civil Protection Commission has been created within the Conference of Italian regions and autonomous provinces, to ensure better coordination among regional authorities. Should the response to a fire exceed regional capacities, the Civil Protection Department – through the Unified Aerial Operations Center (“Centro operativo aereo unificato”, COAU) –

¹¹⁴² DG ECHO, “The national disaster management system – Portugal”, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/national-disaster-management-system/portugal_en.

¹¹⁴³ DG ECHO, “The national disaster management system – Portugal”, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/national-disaster-management-system/portugal_en.

¹¹⁴⁴ Resolution of the Council of Ministers (Portugal) of 27 October 2017, no. 157-A/2017.

¹¹⁴⁵ Almeida Gomes, “Measures taken after the fires of 2017, evaluation of the 2022 season and challenges ahead”, 45th Meeting of the Expert Group on Forest Fires, 7 December 2022.

¹¹⁴⁶ AGIF, “Investment in the SGIFR”, <https://www.agif.pt/en/investment-in-the-sgifr>.

¹¹⁴⁷ Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente, “National Forestry Accounting Plan Portugal 2021-2025”, 2020, https://apambiente.pt/sites/default/files/_Clima/Mitiga%C3%A7%C3%A3o/Plano%20Contabilidade%20Florestal%20Nacional%202021-2025/National%20Forestry%20Accounting%20Plan_Revised%20version%20january%202020.pdf; and interview with Portuguese civil protection authorities.

¹¹⁴⁸ Law-Decree of 2 January 2018, no. 1 (“Civil Protection Code”).

¹¹⁴⁹ The new Ministry was created in November 2022, after the parliamentary elections that led to the establishment of a new government in Italy.

ensures and coordinates the support of the national aerial fleet. It is also for the Civil Protection Department to request the activation of the UCPM.

As is shown below in Section 2, the fact that the main competences in the matter of forest fires are attributed to decentralised entities might lead to information gaps about the UCPM and EU resources on the part of those entities that are more directly involved in the fight against forest fires but have more limited interactions with the EU level.

Chile

The National Forest Corporation (“Corporación Nacional Foresta”, CONAF) has the primary role in the sustainable management and conservation of Chilean forests, including through the prevention, monitoring and suppression of forest fires. CONAF is particular in that it is a private entity that is, nonetheless, structurally dependent on and reporting to the Ministry of Agriculture. The National Service for the Prevention and Response to Disasters (“Servicio Nacional de Prevención y Respuesta ante Desastres, SENAPRED”), which recently replaced the National Office of Emergency of the Interior Ministry, is entrusted with the coordination of both the response to forest fires and their prevention (while the former Office of Emergency was only competent regarding response). SENAPRED therefore coordinates CONAF and the other actors involved in the fight against forest fires, who include firefighters (“bomberos”, who are volunteers); the armed forces (generally recruits, rather than professional personnel); and also private entities, such as corporations in the forestry sector, which put their resources (human and material, including aerial ones) at the disposal of the State in case of emergency.

A7.1.5.2 EU level

At EU level, the following mechanisms and tools have been identified as specific or particularly relevant to the fight against forest fires:

Tasked with the primary responsibility of implementing the UCPM in all its components, **DG ECHO** is the point of reference for Member States, Participating States, third countries and other stakeholders throughout all phases of the disaster management cycle, including with respect to forest fires. Among others, DG ECHO promotes awareness-raising activities on the risk of forest fires; facilitates the exchange of knowledge on and best practices in forest fire prevention and suppression; manages a training programme; organises meetings in preparation of the annual fire seasons and lessons learnt meetings at the end of the season, as well as thematic workshops; manages the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) and the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS); and defines and deploys rescEU resources. Also, DG ECHO’s UCPM Knowledge Network serves to fill information and communication gaps (on which see more below, in Section 2.1) that currently affect the relationship between the UCPM and national and sub-national operational officials. The full operationalisation of the Network and the better dissemination of its outputs will continue in the years ahead.

The **EU Earth Observation Programme** (Copernicus), managed by the European Commission, provides information from satellite earth observation and in-situ data which, among others, allows both for forest mapping and for the monitoring of forest fires. The **Copernicus Emergency Management Service** (Copernicus EMS) is particularly relevant to the management of forest fires, as it can provide detailed and real-time maps to first responders (a service that is much appreciated by the operational officials interviewed for this case study), as well as maps for prevention and preparedness purposes. In addition to the provision of maps, Copernicus EMS also plays an early warning function through the

European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS) monitors forest fires over the whole cycle – from issuing fire danger fire forecasts to providing information on active fires, burnt areas and post-event damages. EFFIS also gathers online news related to forest fires in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.¹¹⁵⁰ EFFIS is supported by the **Expert Group on Forest Fires**, which is a network of experts from 43 countries and

¹¹⁵⁰ EFFIS, “Firenews”, <https://effis.jrc.ec.europa.eu/apps/firenews.viewer/>.

from international organisations. The Expert Group plays an advisory role with respect to forest fire prevention practices as well as with respect to the development of EFFIS.

Forest Information System for Europe (FISE), developed by the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA), aggregates information and knowledge about the state of Europe's forests, primarily by relying on EU and EEA Member States. While FISE is not focused on forest fires as such, the data and knowledge that it collects regarding forests, their health, and their sustainable management can importantly contribute to the prevention of forest fires especially; and they are relevant to the whole fire cycle more generally.

A7.1.6 Case study findings

This section provides the case study findings per evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, EU added value.

A7.1.6.1 Effectiveness

The Member States under consideration for this case study relied to a significant extent on the UCPM to respond to major forest fires, which they were unable to address nationally or using the bilateral agreements with bordering States, due to the scale of the fires or the peculiar characteristics of the fires or terrains. This is evidence that the UCPM has been generally effective: the case study only found one case where a Member State – Italy – sending its Canadairs (water bomber aircraft) to another country – Albania – felt that they were not really necessary considering the context and the reality on the ground. All respondents indicated the UCPM as the **most effective mechanism for the response** to major fire outbreaks.

When it comes to **prevention and preparedness** policies and tools offered under the UCPM were less significant in terms of size, but nevertheless stimulated Member and Participating States to change and innovate their internal policies. In this frame, the UCPM funded projects implemented in 2021 and 2022 by partners from 16 Member and Participating States focusing on the development of cross border risk assessments, definitely contributing to improved regional and cross-sectoral coordination and prevention (for example, in the area of marine pollution accidents). As far as preparedness is concerned, the enhanced financing for the ECPP and the progressive development of rescEU capacities, as well as the increasingly diversified training and exercise programme and the launch, in 2021, of the Knowledge Network, contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the UCPM. At any rate, the “stimulation effect” produced by the EU sectoral policies at the domestic level was extremely significant and relevant.¹¹⁵¹ Nevertheless, for instance, regional authorities in Italy did not seem to be fully aware of the UCPM role in prevention and preparedness – a lack of knowledge which hampers the effectiveness of the Mechanism in these areas. As a result, the Mechanism comes to be identified exclusively as aerial support in the response phase. This position was shared by AGIF in Portugal. On the other hand, funds available through Horizon Europe (and, before, Horizon 2020) and LIFE projects were more well-known and used also for prevention and preparedness activities related to forest fires.

The UCPM indirectly contributed also to reinforce bilateral and sub-regional cooperation by reinforcing national capacities and assets to deal with forest fire management. This is due, among others, to the harmonisation of assets, joint training opportunities, and participation in EU MODEX, which significantly improved the ability of Member and Participating States to be more effective in case of activation of bilateral agreements. An interviewee also highlighted a – positive – shift in the narrative of DG ECHO, which now puts less emphasis on the role played by the EU and more on the need to develop national capacities and conclude bilateral agreements (under the EU umbrella).¹¹⁵²

¹¹⁵¹ Interviews with national authorities (2) and regional civil protection official (3).

¹¹⁵² Interview with national civil protection official (1).

Relatedly, a majority of the respondents from national civil protection authorities recognised that participation of national staff in **UCPM operations inside and outside Europe has had a significant and beneficial impact on their own capacities**, as those participating in the operations abroad were exposed to innovative techniques, challenges and technologies, which widened their technical knowledge.¹¹⁵³ This knowledge has been transferred to their national institutions for wider dissemination and increased impact. Accordingly, it would be useful to provide Member and Participating States – through UCPM operations – with the opportunity to avail themselves of specific techniques. For example, the “counter-fire” technique to deal with large forest fires has been used, so far, by a limited number of EU countries/regions (for example, Tuscany Region in Italy); while other countries are keen to learn more about this innovative tool, this has not been possible so far.

The development of national capacities is also a crucial element of UCPM interventions in **third countries**: for instance, at the end of the 2017 UCPM mission in Chile, an expert team addressed a number of recommendations to the national authorities with a view to improving the country’s preparedness for and response to forest fires. The implementation of the 2017 recommendations has been recently scrutinised by another expert team on the occasion of the 2023 activation. An executive summary has already been favourably received by the competent Chilean authorities, as it reinforces the findings by CONAF (the Chilean National Forest Corporation), while also highlighting further areas for improvement.

Overall, in the last five years, Member and Participating States have strengthened their capacity to deal effectively with forest fires, and this happened, to a large extent, thanks to the work carried out in the frame of the UCPM (through training, assets and modules standardisation, increasing focus on preparedness and prevention etc.). Nevertheless, considerable differences still exist between the capabilities of Southern Member States and those of Central/Northern Europe’s countries – a gap that the UCPM should aim to gradually close. Additionally, UCPM missions in third countries might raise further challenges in terms of interoperability, with direct impacts on the effectiveness of the response: for instance, the 144 firefighters generously offered by Portugal to combat the 2023 Chile forest fires could not always be accommodated by the local transportation capacities.

The launch of **rescEU** has also represented a crucial element in making the response more effective, especially considering that recent statistics demonstrate that wildfires are increasing in number and size, very often happening simultaneously, and making it difficult to count solely on the solidarity of other Member or Participating States. A new layer of common resources is critical to avoid situations, like the 2017 fire season, when the UCPM was not able to fulfil all requests due to the severity of fires affecting multiple Member and Participating States simultaneously.¹¹⁵⁴ In order to ensure the promptest response to forest fires, one interviewee maintained that consideration should be given to activate rescEU resources immediately, once a request for assistance is received, and not only after the exhaustion of national voluntary contributions through the European Civil Protection Pool.¹¹⁵⁵ This is because of the shorter time of deployability for rescEU assets/modules compared to the response time of voluntary contributions by Member and Participating States (which take at least 12 hours to be deployed from the request for activation).

The **rapid reaction capability** demonstrated by the UCPM and Member and Participating States has been generally appreciated. Especially those States which only recently experienced severe wildfires (such as Czechia and Slovenia, which both activated the UCPM for the first time in 2022) expressed, during the Lisbon 2023 Lessons Learnt meeting, full satisfaction with the rapidity of the response and the generosity of the offers received. This was confirmed in the interview with an official from the Czech civil protection authority, who also maintained that the suppression of the fires was more rapid thanks to UCPM aerial support. The UCPM response was prompt also in the case of emergencies outside the European region: the timeliness of the response was highly appreciated by the Chilean authorities on the occasion of the

¹¹⁵³ Interviews with national authorities (3).

¹¹⁵⁴ Interview with national policymaker (1).

¹¹⁵⁵ Interview with regional civil protection official (1).

February 2023 activation, notwithstanding the simultaneous involvement of the Mechanism in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the Turkey–Syria earthquake.

A7.1.6.2 Efficiency

The majority of interviewees raised no specific concern regarding the **cost-effectiveness** of UCPM support. However, an interviewee noted how there is no detailed assessment of how efficiently the funds and, more generally, the resources are being used in the response phase, especially not in real time, as is the case in other countries (such as the US).¹¹⁵⁶ This would be important also for estimating, in a more accurate manner, the cost-effectiveness of prevention and preparedness policies.

Stakeholders also noted their expectations that the funds available for the UCPM will be increased to face emerging challenges, such as the rapid increase in forest fires. Another concern raised by stakeholders was the availability of funds not only to start new activities and policies at the national level (especially for prevention), but also to maintain them throughout the years.

Nevertheless, the fact that the knowledge transferred through trainings, publications and platforms, as well as information regarding funding opportunities, are not widely disseminated might raise issues of inefficiency, especially as regards **prevention and preparedness** activities.

Analysis of the costs and benefits of the UCPM support to Portugal and Italy

As highlighted in the Effectiveness section, stakeholders recognised benefits of the UCPM support. These benefits were related not only to the UCPM response to the activation requests by Portugal and Italy (and its effect in addressing the forest fires), but also to prevention and preparedness activities offered by UCPM to the two countries, including a “stimulation effect” and capacity building (and their effect on preventing and addressing the forest fires).

The corresponding incremental UCPM costs relate to the cost for the UCPM to provide the response to the request (i.e., EUCTP teams, modules, and other fire suppression capacities) as well as the cost for UCPM to provide prevention and preparedness activities (including training, exercises, PPP, exchange of experts, etc).

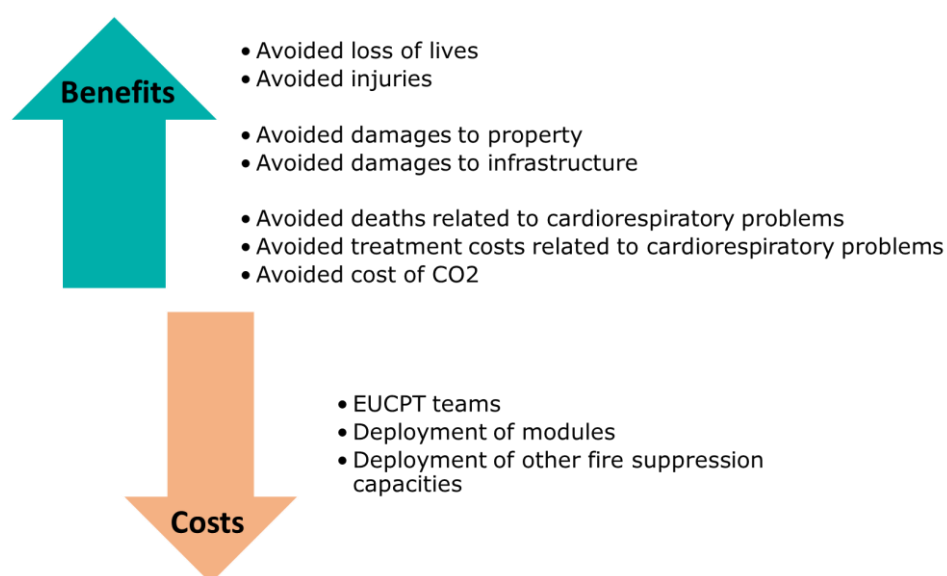
Following the approach used by the World Bank¹¹⁵⁷ and the model developed for the European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS),¹¹⁵⁸ a simplified model was developed to quantify the benefits and costs of the UCPM activations covered in the context of the case study (see Figure 78). The focus was on socio-economic benefits and costs related to the provided UCPM support as a result of the UCPM activations by Portugal and Italy, to addressing the forest fires.

¹¹⁵⁶ Interview with national civil protection official (1).

¹¹⁵⁷ World Bank. 2021. Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness. © World Bank, Washington, DC.

¹¹⁵⁸ Pettenella, D., Marchetti, M., Marino, D., Marucci, A., Ottaviano, M. and Lasserre, B., 2008. Proposal for a harmonized methodology to assess socio-economic damages from forest fires in Europe.

Figure 78. Simplified model for the CBA



Source: ICF elaboration

The quantification of each benefit and cost was to be done following the World bank and the EFFIS model. However, after a review of the available documentation and data and consulting relevant stakeholders, the very limited collected data did not allow for a robust quantification of benefits that could be attributable to the support provided by the UCPM.

The key data missing was:

- Exact location where the support was provided;
- Estimation of the additional burned area without UCPM support (hectares);
- Estimation of the number of lives that would have been lost without UCPM support;
- Estimation of the number of people that would have been injured without UCPM support;
- Estimation of the number of property that would have been lost / damaged without UCPM support;
- Infrastructure that would have been lost / damaged without UCPM support.

A7.1.6.3 Relevance

Data suggests that UCPM activities have been and will increasingly be relevant to combatting forest fires. Forest fires have become, especially in the last years and as a consequence of climate change, a crucial and dramatic challenge worldwide. The magnitude and simultaneity of these phenomena are of such a nature to exhaust rapidly the national reaction and response capacities. The possibility to count on the support of the UCPM in such cases makes this mechanism a fundamental element to address urgent national needs. Although Member and Participating States could seek assistance on a bilateral basis, the number and nature of forest fire-related activations of the Mechanism over the 2017-2022 evaluation period clearly testify to its relevance, as a majority of the requests for UCPM activation were related to forest fires. This was confirmed by the interviewees, virtually all of whom had a **strongly positive opinion about the relevance** of the UCPM in the area under scrutiny. While a few years ago this opinion was mainly shared by the Southern European countries, in the period under consideration it has gained significant support also among the Central and Northern European countries which, unfortunately, have also been recently affected by severe forest fires. Indeed, the impact of climate change on the number and intensity of forest

fires was identified as the main change (already under way, but increasingly relevant in the future) that the UCPM should address.

Regarding the relevance of UCPM activities to national needs, it was also pointed out by an interviewee that EU institutions – and DG ECHO in particular – are now paying more attention to the needs and views of Member and Participating States, which are consistently consulted in the decision-making process.¹¹⁵⁹ The fact that lessons learnt meetings are now held in different Member States – rather than in Brussels – was considered additional evidence of this new approach and described as a positive development. In this frame, the **UCPM training programme and EU MODEX** have been considered crucial tools to meet the specific needs of Member and Participating States on forest fires. EU MODEX scenarios in particular have been perceived as becoming increasingly realistic.

The **rebalancing of the weight given to preparedness, prevention and response** policies and activities within the EU on forest fires was appreciated by key stakeholders and considered a further indication of the persisting relevance of the UCPM.¹¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, according to a majority of respondents from national and regional civil protection authorities, prevention (especially) and preparedness action should be further strengthened at the EU level and greater efforts should be made to make such action known at the national level, so that the competent national (and sub-national) authorities could make better use of EU resources, tools, guidelines, and best practices.¹¹⁶¹ Still, such re-balancing of priorities has already transferred at national level and inspired domestic policies and actions.

The large majority of stakeholders appreciated the **flexibility of the Mechanism** and, even more importantly, the **ability to adapt and respond quickly to new situations**.¹¹⁶² The launch of the rescEU reserve has been mentioned as a good example of the flexibility and innovation capacity of the UCPM to remain relevant, together with the recent, prompt decision to increase the rescEU aerial fleet. The adaptability of the UCPM training programme and EU MODEX has also been commended and considered evidence of the flexibility of the Mechanism.

The opportunities offered under the UCPM to exchange knowledge, information, practices and expertise with other interested partners have represented a unique tool also in terms of learning and building their own capacities. However, **there remains an issue of ensuring that the knowledge gained through training is widely shared at the national level**; and that the information and knowledge tools developed at the EU level are made easily accessible to all interested officials at the national and sub-national levels. An e-learning programme made available by DG ECHO was not mentioned by any of the respondents.

To make the UCPM even more relevant, the following **suggestions** emerged:¹¹⁶³

- the pre-positioning of the necessary tools for the fight against forest fires is an important exercise which should be continued and reinforced;
- the time of response should be reduced by using airlift or other appropriate way of transportation;
- more attention should be paid to awareness-raising campaigns: not only to sensitise citizens on the risk of forest fires, but also to inform them better about how to behave correctly during the outbreak of massive forest fires. An EU-wide campaign or at least EU guidelines on these aspects would be much appreciated by national and sub-national authorities. This is especially important considering that the increased movement of tourists to Mediterranean countries in the summer provoked the outbreak of various fires, due to the tourists' lack of awareness about the potential consequences of their actions (for example, lighting an open-air barbecue in a fire-prone area);

¹¹⁵⁹ Interview with national civil protection official (1).

¹¹⁶⁰ Interviews with national authorities (4), and regional civil protection official (1).

¹¹⁶¹ Interviews with national authorities (4), and regional civil protection official (1).

¹¹⁶² Interviews with national authorities (5), and regional civil protection official (2).

¹¹⁶³ DG ECHO, "UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting – Lessons Identified From 2022 Wildfire Season", Lisbon, 10-11 January 2023; and interviews with national civil protection officials (2) and regional civil protection officials (2).

- more efforts should be made to involve, in the shaping of the new EU policies related to forest fires, actors that are concerned with prevention, preparedness and response to them (for example, regional authorities in Italy);
- the number of assets available should be increased, as in the last years there was an excessive gap between requests and availability (especially as far as aerial means are concerned);
- expectations should be managed and it should be made clear what kind of resources are available depending on the context of the emergency (see the impossibility to send firefighting aircrafts for transoceanic missions).

A7.1.6.4 Coherence

UCPM activities in the field of forest fires have been not only coherent with and complemented by national interventions. There were no significant contradictions between the two levels (European and national) in terms of policies and implementing regulations.

According to several of the national officials interviewed, there is still **room to improve the coherence between UCPM activities and various EU policies** on areas which have an impact on forest fires, such as the common agricultural policy, environmental policies, regulations of protected areas, and the EU Biodiversity Strategy. Many of these policies, strategies and implementing laws do not seem always perfectly aligned with the needs to prevent and manage forest fires, which are at the core of the UCPM mandate. As a concrete example, it has been mentioned that sometimes an excessively stringent regulation of the activities which can be carried out in **protected areas**, are or might be incompatible with proper prevention activities. The Commission recently restated (during the Lisbon 2023 Lessons Learnt meeting) that limited and well controlled activities, including natural disaster prevention ones, that either do not interfere with natural processes or enhance them will be allowed also in protected areas, on a case-by-case assessment. However, doubts remain on the applicability of this procedure. This is even more relevant as only in 2022 about 3300 km² of Natura 2000 areas burnt down. With a view to strengthening coherence, it was also suggested during the interviews that, in preparation of the forest fire season, meetings could be organised with EU actors other than the UCPM and DG ECHO to discuss cross-sectoral issues, such as the issue of cleaning of forests and adjacent areas to prevent or minimise the extent of forest fires.¹¹⁶⁴ Overall, the risk was highlighted of a culture of working in silos that prevents a holistic approach to a complex issue such as that of forest fires, thereby allowing the UCPM to address only the consequences – and not the causes – of the phenomenon. Additionally, an area that appears to have been particularly neglected in the UCPM context and where coordination between the UCPM and other EU policies would be crucial, is the development of appropriate “forest restoration strategies” to be implemented after wildfires, in line with the New EU Forest Strategy for 2030.

In both Italy and Portugal, most of those interviewed expressed their appreciation for the synergies created between UCPM and national level activities, not only in the dramatic moment of the response to the forest fires, but also in the **prevention and preparedness** phases. For example, Portugal has very much benefitted from the outcomes of the Advisory Mission in 2018 with a special focus on prevention and preparedness. This has been crucial to support Portugal in improving its disaster preparedness and prevention activities and in making them more effective, also on the basis of exchanges of lessons learnt in other countries. This notwithstanding, advisory missions do not appear to have been used frequently by other Member and Participating States in the period under consideration, at least in relation to forest fires. This underlines the need for more awareness raising on the availability of advisory missions between Member and Participating States.

In the specific case of forest fires, due to their peculiar nature, there have never been significant problems of coordination/cooperation/synergy with other international activities, especially in the moment of response. As already mentioned, only bilateral cooperation is usually activated but with no significant

¹¹⁶⁴ Interviews with national civil protection officials (2).

problems of coherence with the EU activities: this is due to the fact that bilateral tools are used only to deal with relatively minor events for which there is no need to request the assistance of the UCPM. The situation is partially different for activations outside Europe: here opportunities for complementarity might need to be further explored, in light of the limitations of the UCPM intervention in regions far away from Europe (for instance, requests for firefighting aircrafts by distant countries – like the one made by Chile in 2023 – cannot be satisfied by the UCPM). Accordingly, the opening of a few training courses organised in the frame of the UCPM for officials from the UN has to be welcomed as a positive step to better integrate the work of the two organisations.

A7.1.6.5 EU added value

From the data collected,¹¹⁶⁵ it emerges that the UCPM's work in the field of forest fires in the period under consideration (2017-2022) provided undoubtedly an added value to the work that is already conducted at the national and or international level. This conclusion is based on several arguments:

- Only with the support of the EU it has been possible to develop **new technologies and practices**, many of them as an output of EU-financed research projects, to better deal with the various phases of forest fire management.
- The pivotal EU Forest Strategy, parts of which are devoted to forest fire management, has positively stimulated Member States (for example, as mentioned, Italy) to adopt similar policies which proved to be fundamental for a more integrated approach to the issue at stake.
- All those interviewed confirmed clearly that the increasing frequency and intensity of forest fires, due to climate change, makes every country more prone to risks of devastating events and, at the same time, more dependent on the cooperation of the EU in the response phase. Bilateral agreements, usually between bordering or nearby countries, although appropriate for dealing with minor events, might not be applicable, if the same emergency occurs in the entire region. This also applies to regions other than Europe – for instance, Argentina, whose assistance was requested by Chile on the occasion of the devastating February 2023 wildfires, was only able to send a relatively small team, compared to the resources mobilised by the UCPM, due to the simultaneous fire risk affecting Argentina itself.
- The added value of the recently created **Knowledge Network** has been underlined repeatedly, as it creates a space for practitioners, policy makers and researchers to connect and share knowledge and expertise. However, the scarce visibility of the Network and a lack of clarity regarding its functions and use continue to be a problem, which should be taken into due consideration;
- The ability to rely on a large amount of scientific data has also been crucial in the prevention of, preparedness for and response to forest fires. **Copernicus EMS** has played a crucial role in this respect, both through the rapid provision of reliable maps and through the early warning function of **EFFIS**. This is especially true for those countries which do not have full national monitoring systems or databases.
- As shown above, the EU is perceived by all respondents as the most **efficient, effective and quick in response** institution to deal with major fire outbreaks. While minor forest fires can be dealt with at national level or, if in border areas, in close cooperation and coordination with the neighbouring country (see for example, the agreements between Spain and Portugal or those between France and Italy on the management of forest fires in the bordering areas), major fires need the support of the UCPM.
- As the United Nations system generally addresses disasters other than forest fires, and out of Europe, the added value of the UCPM compared to other forms of supranational intervention is evident and was widely recognised by the interviewees.

¹¹⁶⁵ Interviews with national authorities (4); regional civil protection officials (2). See also DG ECHO, Informal Ministerial Meeting on Reinforcing Wildfire Preparedness and Response. Chair's summary, 5 September 2022; and European Parliament (2023) The European Union and Forests. Fact Sheets on the European Union, www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en.

- As highlighted by an interviewee with a high political role, UCPM operations – especially in Participating States and third countries – are a highly visible and appreciated EU diplomatic tool. EU delegations and pre-existing relationships between the competent authorities of third countries and those of Member States can facilitate knowledge of and interest in the UCPM.

A7.1.7 Key challenges

The key challenges identified regarding UCPM work on forest fires were:

- Although DG ECHO has made significant efforts to increase **accessibility to the relevant information on managing forest fires** – including information on EU policies, UCPM functioning, and funding opportunities –, it emerges clearly that those working in the field believe that such information is not easily accessible and that this prevents them from making good use of all the existing opportunities and from better integrating the different activities related to the overall management of forest fires. First of all, the information is spread out across too many different websites (those of DG ECHO, ERCC, EFFIS, JRC, UCP Knowledge Network, and others). This makes access to the relevant information difficult and time consuming. Furthermore, the ERCC Portal is not easily reachable through search engines, while the Knowledge Network and its outputs are still relatively unknown to operational officials in Member and Participating States. When materially accessible, the resources were at times considered too academic and not particularly useful for the operational level. Finally, the availability of materials in English only represents a further obstacle, especially in those countries where knowledge of English is not widespread, particularly at the operational level.
- **The language barrier has also limited participation in training events**, at least for some countries. Additionally, at least one interviewee highlighted the need for more training opportunities specifically focused on combatting forest fires.¹¹⁶⁶
- Regarding the **response phase, the limited resources available within the UCPM, especially on the occasion of simultaneous catastrophic events** (which are occurring increasingly often) has represented a key challenge, which has been so far tolerated considering the extraordinary nature of the situations. As it can be expected that in the coming future, due to the evolving situation of forest fires, requests for the activation of the Mechanism will increase, also from Member and Participating States that so far have not needed it, the problem needs to be handled rapidly. The creation of rescEU and the increases in the reserve pool which occurred in the last five years are evidence of DG ECHO's awareness about the evolving situation; but probably more has to be done. Specifically, the number of Canadairs currently available in the rescEU reserve seems inadequate and the plan to increase them by 2029 too slow compared to the worrying fire danger forecasts for the next years. Various Member States have called for more rapid action in this respect.
- A further challenge that has been highlighted with respect to the response phase concerns the **lack of adequate air-to-air as well as air-to-ground coordination** in case of use of aerial means. While DG ECHO has already undertaken some training and awareness-raising initiatives in this respect and some good practices exist (for instance, in Portugal, a liaison officer joins the crew on the plane), further efforts are needed to bring together all those involved (including pilots and ground staff), understand the specific problems and adopt the necessary measures to overcome them. This aspect is partially related to the issue of safety and security of the firefighting staff. While no incident has taken place to date in the context of a UCPM mission, there is a need for increased attention to safety issues in the context of training programmes and with respect to the equipment of first responders, also in light of the duty of care of the sending institution.

¹¹⁶⁶ Interview with regional civil protection official (1).

- The alignment and **consistency of EU policies** in different areas (environment, agriculture, natural habitats) and EU tools (Interreg) with the specific needs of preventing and managing forest fires continues to be an area of major concern. In addition to the gaps and potential conflicts highlighted by several interviewees and mentioned above, the European Court of Auditors, in its Special Report “EU funding for biodiversity and climate change in EU forests: positive but limited results”, recommended to better focus rural development forestry measures on biodiversity and climate change. To this end, the Court of Auditors requested the Commission, among others, to ensure that funded forestry actions take place in line with sustainable forest management.¹¹⁶⁷ In the same vein, a better synergy with EU research and innovation policies would be extremely beneficial in this context.

A7.1.8 Lessons learnt and good practices

The lessons learnt and good practices identified related to UCPM activities on forest fires were:

A7.1.8.1 Prevention

- The work carried out in the frame of the **Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe** (a Pan-European voluntary high-level forest policy process launched in 1990 and which brings together 45 European countries and the EU) for a sustainable forest management (SFM) was identified as a good example of integration of several policy areas and cross sectoral engagement. SFM contributes to fire prevention, by reducing fire extent and severity, and promote faster and more effective post-fire regeneration of forest landscapes by implementing the following near and longer-term strategies:
 - near-term technical approaches including fire breaks, fuel breaks, fuel load reduction, risk reduction in the Wildland-Urban Interface, grazing schemes, and community engagement;
 - longer-term conceptual approaches which apply the principles of sustainable forest management to improve vegetation characteristics, such as density, structure, and species composition over time.

A7.1.8.2 Preparedness

- The **pre-positioning** of firefighting teams and tools in countries that are more at risk of wildfires and in greater need of support, which was implemented as a pilot project in Greece in 2022, is generally seen as a key tool to make the response more effective and efforts to expand it have been very well received.
- Concerning the **dissemination of relevant information** related to forest fires, it is generally recognised that DG ECHO – particularly under the Knowledge Network - is making increasing efforts to this end. The Knowledge Network, responsible for the dissemination of informational pamphlets on forest fires, as well as tools like the annual lessons learnt meetings, the yearly meetings to prepare the upcoming fire season, meetings to increase the capacity to act as Host Nations, the TTX, field exercises, thematic workshops (such as the workshop on aerial support and interoperability), the e-learning courses made available on the portal are perceived as extremely useful and relevant.
- The fact that at least some of these **meetings are now held in the Member States**, as opposed to Brussels, **has also been positively received**. Nevertheless, several interviewees underlined the importance that the outcomes of these events are widely spread among interested actors, by making sure that each event produces a specific output (guidelines, recommendations, lessons

¹¹⁶⁷ European Court of Auditors, “EU funding for biodiversity and climate change in EU forests: positive but limited results. Special report No 21, 2021”, Publications Office of the EU, 2021.

learnt etc.) and by encouraging those attending the event to share the output with their colleagues at national level.

- Regarding the language issue, the **translation** in seven languages (those of the most affected countries) of the 2021 Commission's document "Land-based wildfire prevention: Principles and experiences on managing landscapes, forests and woodlands for safety and resilience in Europe"¹¹⁶⁸ **is a good practice that should be replicated.**
- The UCPM **training and exercises** have all been considered as crucial elements in improving preparedness.¹¹⁶⁹ Several interviewees also underlined that the opportunity they had to participate in UCPM operations strengthened their abilities to address technical issues and exposed them to new techniques of which they were not aware before.
- Major **awareness raising campaigns** in Italy ("Io non rischio") and in Portugal ("Aldeia Segura Pessoas Seguras") were launched with a specific focus on forest fires. It is expected that their positive impact will be seen in the next fire season. Furthermore, in Tuscany (Italy), the first "firewise community" pilot project has been launched with the aim to increase prevention and preparedness. These campaigns are further proof of the importance of major awareness-raising campaigns which, most probably, would be even more successful if they could benefit from a larger EU financial contribution and if they could disseminate some standardised messages. The priorities for civil protection of the 2023 Swedish Presidency, which include the proposal for a European crisis preparedness week or month, are indicative of the need for a major involvement of the European society which has emerged strongly in the last years.
- Considering that the timely availability of updated data is of crucial importance both to plan proper prevention strategies and emergency responses, the work carried out by **EFFIS** has been generally highly valued: the EFFIS statistics, estimates, seasonal trend and data banks are used on a regular basis by those involved in the planning of both prevention of and response to forest fires. The maps provided by **Copernicus EMS** have also been of considerable support in deciding strategies to deal with wildfires.

A7.1.8.3 Response

- An **annual meeting with all Member and Participating States** to present new tools, technologies and techniques available to deal more effectively with vast forest fires has been indicated by an interviewee as an **important contribution** to increase the quality of national and EU responses to forest fires.¹¹⁷⁰ Such a meeting could also serve the purpose of better illustrating the complementarities and potential synergies between different EU policy areas and the fight against forest fires.
- **New technologies could significantly improve the effectiveness of the response phase**, provided that they are customised to the specific (and sometimes, diverging) needs of the first responders. As an example, an interviewee mentioned the use (in the Trentino Region, Italy) of drones that automatically and continuously monitor the situation on the ground in high-risk mountain areas and alert, if needed, the firefighters for a quick intervention.¹¹⁷¹

¹¹⁶⁸ European Commission (DG Environment), "Land-based wildfire prevention: principles and experiences on managing landscapes, forests and woodlands for safety and resilience in Europe", Publications Office of the EU, 2021.

¹¹⁶⁹ See also UCPM, "Final Consolidated Report – Union Civil Protection Mechanism Training Program 17th Cycle, 2019-2020", May 2020.

¹¹⁷⁰ Interview with national civil protection official (1).

¹¹⁷¹ Interview with regional civil protection official (1).

- **Developing a common approach on how to address forest fires from a technical perspective continues to be a significant challenge:** if properly elaborated, this common approach might strengthen interoperability among first responders and the overall effectiveness of operations.
- **Calculating the exact costs for fire response operations also remains an area for potential improvement** which could contribute to entrench a culture of accountability and provide a relevant stimulus to invest more in prevention and preparedness.
- **For third countries, the role of EU delegations to facilitate the drafting and processing of the activation requests has proved to be beneficial** (for instance, with respect to Chile), due to their proximity to local authorities and to the situation on the ground. Specific training for EU delegations' staff in this respect could be pursued with a view to further streamlining the activation process. Pre-existing contacts between the competent authorities of third countries and those of Member States (for instance, Spain and Portugal in the case of Chile) have also played a role in making the activation of the Mechanism prompt and smoother.

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A7.1.10 List of stakeholders consulted

Stakeholder	Type of interview (remote/field)
Official, National Authority for Emergency and Civil Protection, Portugal	Remote
Policymaker, Ministry of Home Affairs, Portugal	Remote
Official, Tuscany Region, Italy	Remote
Official, Tuscany Region, Italy	Remote

Stakeholder	Type of interview (remote/field)
Official, National Authority for Emergency and Civil Protection, Portugal	Remote
Official, Autonomous Province of Trento, Italy	Remote
Official, DG ECHO	Remote
Official, Tuscany Region, Italy	Remote
Official, DG ECHO	Remote
Official, AGIF, Portugal	Remote
Official, CONAF, Chile	Remote
Official, Ministry of the Interior, Czechia	Remote

A7.2 Floods

A7.2.1 Introduction to the case study

This case study examines the activation and functioning of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) in response to floods between 2017 and 2022. The case study focuses on Member States that were heavily impacted by flood events and either activated the UCPM (**Belgium**), and those where no activation took place (**Germany**) and in addition a third country relying on the UCPM for support for a flood emergency (**Pakistan**).

The aim of this case study has been to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and added value of the UCPM intervention in the context of floods. The case study further highlights lessons learnt and outstanding challenges.

A7.2.2 Context and nature of the emergency

This section will provide an overview of:

- Evolving context and nature of floods;
- Key developments in EU law and policy regarding floods;
- Activation of the Mechanism for floods;
- Key stakeholders involved in floods.

A7.2.2.1 Evolving context and nature of floods

One of the most widespread natural disasters that impacts individuals worldwide is flooding. Roughly 1.47 billion individuals, equivalent to 19 percent of the global population, face significant danger during flood events that occur once every 100 years.¹¹⁷²

Floods are also the most common and most costly natural disasters in Europe. Climate change is causing floods to occur more frequently, resulting in significant economic losses and endangering lives. In addition, floods can exacerbate pollution levels by releasing contaminants from the ground into the environment and may destroy wetland areas, negatively impacting biodiversity.¹¹⁷³

¹¹⁷² Rentschler, Jun; Salhab, Melda. 2020. People in Harm's Way: Flood Exposure and Poverty in 189 Countries. Policy Research Working Paper; No. 9447. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/34655>

¹¹⁷³ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/water/floods_en

According to the Joint Research Centre¹¹⁷⁴, 172,000 people in Europe (EU27 and the UK) are currently exposed to river flooding on an annual basis and 100,000 are exposed to coastal flooding. A tenth of Europe's urban population is currently living in areas potentially at risk of flooding.¹¹⁷⁵ More recently flood events were recorded in several Member and Participating States including Latvia¹¹⁷⁶ (March-April 2023), the Balkans¹¹⁷⁷ (January 2023), Portugal and Spain¹¹⁷⁸ (December 2022).

Between 1980 and 2017, the EU suffered economic losses of approximately EUR 166 billion due to hydrological events, accounting for around one-third of all losses incurred from climatological events. It is predicted that damages across the EU caused by flooding, as a result of the combined impacts of economic and climate changes, will escalate from EUR 7 billion per year in the reference period of 1981-2010 to EUR 20 billion per year by the 2020s, EUR 46 billion per year by the 2050s.¹¹⁷⁹ The economic impact of flooding in the EU is significant, since 2002, over EUR 1.9 million was mobilised through the EU Solidarity Fund in response to flood events.

The effects of climate change were particularly evident in Europe in 2021 as the continent experienced severe water-related incidents. This included severe flooding in the Rhine and Meuse river basins as well as unprecedented heatwaves and forest fires that caused significant loss of life and property damage amounting to billions of euros. Although not solely attributed to water policy, these incidents emphasise the significance of effective freshwater management that should be implemented consistently and across borders over an extended period.¹¹⁸⁰ However, by taking the appropriate measures, the effect and likelihood of floods can be minimised.

A7.2.2.2 Key developments in EU law and policy regarding floods

The period 2017-2022 witnessed significant changes in the EU law and policy related to the prevention of, preparedness for, and response to floods.

Main changes to the UCPM

The most significant change made to the UCPM impacting floods happens just outside the evaluation period, i.e the introduction of the **disaster resilience goals** in 2023. The rationale for introducing the disaster resilience goals stems from the high number of unprecedented disasters in recent years, including the pandemic, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, but also the impacts of climate change on disasters such as floods, droughts, forest fires. In relation to enhancing the UCPM's response capacity, Goal 4 argues that the Mechanism should be able to respond to at least three Member States simultaneously, ensuring flood containment, waste management, dam assessment and search and rescue operations in a flooding situation.¹¹⁸¹

In addition, the introduction of **rescEU** brought significant changes. It introduced a reserve pool of resources accessible to both EU Member States and UCPM Participating States with the aim to address

¹¹⁷⁴ Dottori, F., Mentaschi, L., Bianchi, A., Alfieri, L. and Feyen, L., Adapting to rising river flood risk in the EU under climate change, EUR 29955 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2020, ISBN 978-92-76-12946-2, doi:10.2760/14505, JRC118425

¹¹⁷⁵ European Climate and Health Observatory: Flooding. Available at: <https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/en/observatory/evidence/health-effects/flooding/flooding>

¹¹⁷⁶ <https://www.efas.eu/en/news/flooding-latvia-april-2023>

¹¹⁷⁷ <https://www.efas.eu/en/news/floods-balkans-january-2023>

¹¹⁷⁸ <https://www.efas.eu/en/news/floods-portugal-and-spain-december-2022>

¹¹⁷⁹ European Court of Auditors (2018): Floods Directive: progress in assessing risks, while planning and implementation need to improve. Available at: https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR18_25/SR_FLOODS_EN.pdf

¹¹⁸⁰ REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (2008/105/EC amended by Directive 2013/39/EU) and the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC) Implementation of planned Programmes of Measures New Priority Substances Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments and Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2021:0970:FIN>

¹¹⁸¹ European Commission (20230: Lessons learnt wildfires & floods: Reinforcing prevention, presentation by Maria Brattemark, ECHO B2.

situations where the existing national capacities and pre-committed resources in the European Civil Protection Pool are insufficient to mount an effective response to various types of disasters.

European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) aims to enable a faster, better-coordinated, and more effective European response to human-induced disasters and natural hazards. It consists of a pool of voluntary pre-committed response capacities of the Member States. The capacity goals are specified in Annex III of the implementing Decision of 16 October 2014¹¹⁸².

Table 17 below provides an overview of ECPP registered capacities towards set goals in relation to floods during the evaluation period.

Table 17. Progress of ECPP registered capacities towards set goals in relation to floods

Capacity	2014-2016 (baseline)	2017-2022 (evaluation period)		
	Progress	Registered	Goal	Progress
FC (flood containment)	200%	1	2	50%
FRB (flood rescue using boats)	150%	3	2	150%
HCP (High-capacity pumping)	233%	14	6	233%
WP (Water purification)	200%	2	2	100%
(WSAR) Teams for water search and rescue	-	1	2	50%
Water pumps with minimum capacity to pump 800L 1/min	-	1	100	1%

Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). “European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) Snapshot report 2022” and ICF (2017) Interim evaluation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2014-2016. Cells marked with ‘-’ do not mean that no capacity was in the ECPP between 2014-2016, rather that the evaluation team did not have access to this data.

Floods risks were also one of the most recurrent topics of the projects within the **Prevention and Preparedness Programme**, covered by 22 projects across 2017-2022.¹¹⁸³ The UCPM also supports the development of **Early Warning Systems** related to flood risks, such as the Copernicus and its European Flood Awareness System, managed by the JRC.

Main changes to policy areas related to floods

The **Flood Directive**¹¹⁸⁴ was adopted in 2007 and it provides a structure for evaluating and controlling flood hazards in Member States. Under the Directive, each Member State must carry out an initial appraisal of flood risks and produce flood risk maps for their coastal areas and river basins. Using this data, they must create management strategies that outline measures for mitigating or preventing flood risks. The Water Framework Directive supplements the Floods Directive by promoting sustainable water management and ecosystem protection, which helps to decrease flood hazards. Furthermore, it requires Member States to monitor and address specific quantitative aspects of water management. Our evaluation has found that

¹¹⁸² Commission Implementing Decision of 16 October 2014 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and repealing Commission Decisions 2004/277/EC, Euratom and 2007/606/EC, Euratom (notified under document C(2014) 7489) (Text with EEA relevance) (2014/762/EU)Text with EEA relevance. [EUR-Lex - 02014D0762-20190410 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹¹⁸³ ICF. (2021). ‘Evaluation of the European Commission’s Civil protection prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020).’ European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). ‘Overview of past Track I and Track II projects’. As of 13/07/2023 available at: [Overview of the past Track I and Track II projects \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹¹⁸⁴ Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks

the UCPM framework and the Floods and Water Framework Directives are mutually reinforcing. Nevertheless, challenges in relation to flood mitigation remain.

The **2019 fitness check of EU water law**, covering the Water Framework Directive, Environmental Quality Standards Directive and the Groundwater Directive, found that the existing legislative framework is broadly fit for purpose, with some scope for improvement. In relation to the Floods Directive, it was found that in order for the Directive to reach its full potential it will require sufficient funding and faster implementation¹¹⁸⁵

During the evaluation period (2017-2022) the EU introduced several policies in the field of floods. In 2020 the new **EU Biodiversity Strategy** was adopted which foresees that at least 25,000 km of rivers will be restored into free-flowing rivers by 2030 through the removal of primarily obsolete barriers and the restoration of floodplains and wetlands to improve water regulation and flood protection. The same year, European Commission Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre established **new Risk Data Hub**, to become the point of reference for curated EU-wide risk data, through hosting relevant datasets or through linking to national platforms.

In 2021 a new strategy was adopted on **Adaptation to Climate Change**¹¹⁸⁶ aiming to facilitate the deeper understanding of climate-related risks for health. It promotes the use of nature-based solutions, to boost the supply of clean, fresh water and reduce risk of flooding.

The same year the EU adopted the new **European Climate Law (Regulation (EU) 2021/1119)** setting out the intermediate target of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050. The European Climate Law plays a significant role in supporting disaster resilience goals which are designed to reinforce prevention and preparedness efforts when facing disasters through strengthening capacity, resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change.

Table 18 summarises the key policy changes in the ambit of flood management parallel to the main changes to the UCPM between 2017 and 2022.

¹¹⁸⁵ REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (2008/105/EC amended by Directive 2013/39/EU) and the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC) Implementation of planned Programmes of Measures New Priority Substances Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments and Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2021:0970:FIN>

¹¹⁸⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, "Forging a climate-resilient Europe - the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change", 24 February 2021, COM(2021) 82 final.

Table 18. Main relevant changes across 2017-2022 to consider

Year	Main changes to the UCPM	Other relevant changes in the ambit of flood management
2018	UCPM: - Integration of European Medical Corps in the Voluntary Resource pool (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/142).	
2019	UCPM: - Redefinition of the European Civil Protection Pool (Decision (EU) 2019/420 and implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1310). RescEU: - Establishment and defining capacities of the rescEU reserve pool (Decision EU/ 2019/420 and Commission Implementing Decisions (EU) 2019/570, 2019/1310, 2019/1930).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- EU Water Legislation Fitness Check
2020	rescEU: - Reinforcement of rescEU’s medical stockpiling capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/414) - Definition of rescEU capacities established to respond to low probability risks with a high impact (Definition of the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/452) Other relevant changes: - Mobilisation of the Contingency Margin in 2020 to provide emergency assistance to Member States and further reinforce the UCPM/rescEU in response to the COVID-19 outbreak (Decision (EU) 2020/547)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2023- European Commission Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre established new Risk Data Hub, to become the point of reference for curated EU-wide risk data, through hosting relevant datasets or through linking to national platforms
2021	UCPM: - Reinforcement of the UCPM Decision , including the following main changes: revising rescEU capacities, development of Union Resilience Goals and a more flexible UCPM budget structure (Regulation (EU) 2021/836) rescEU: - Definition of rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents (Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/88) - Definition of stockpiling rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1886) Other relevant changes: - Establishment and organisation of the Knowledge Network (Implementing Decision 2021/1956)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Public consultation on nature restoration targets- New Climate Law is adopted¹¹⁸⁷
2022	rescEU: - Reinforcement of rescEU shelter capacities and the modification of quality requirements for Emergency Medical Teams Type 3 capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/288) - Reinforcement of rescEU transport and logistics capacities , e.g. also to respond to low probability high impact disasters (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/461) - Definition of rescEU mobile laboratory capacities and rescEU CBRN detection, sampling, identification and monitoring capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/465) - Definition of rescEU emergency energy supply capacities (Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/1198) Other relevant changes: - Establishment of criteria and procedures for recognising long-standing commitment and extraordinary contributions to the UCPM (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/706)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Commission adopts proposal for a Nature Restoration Law¹¹⁸⁸- Proposal for a Directive amending the Water Framework Directive, the Groundwater Directive and the Environmental Quality Standards Directive- Environment Action Programme Monitoring Framework¹¹⁸⁹

¹¹⁸⁷ Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 (‘European Climate Law’)

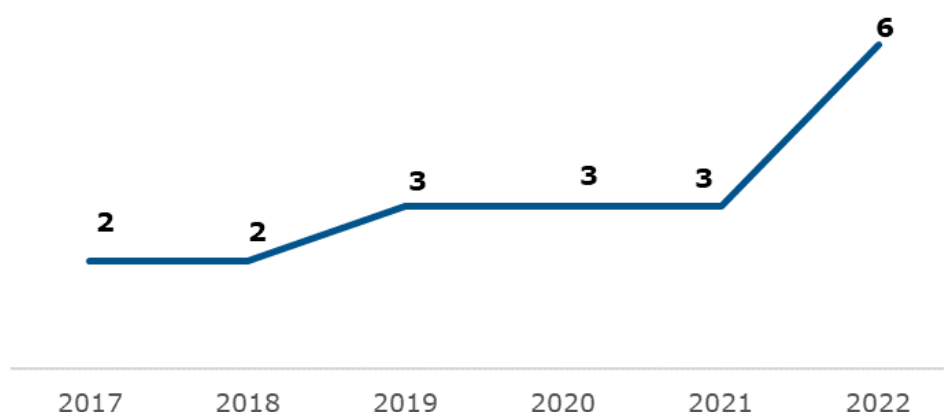
¹¹⁸⁸ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/nature-restoration-law_en

¹¹⁸⁹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2022%3A357%3AFIN>

A7.2.3 Activation of the Mechanism

UCPM has been activated 19 times for flood emergencies from 2017 to 2022. The highest number of activations due to flood emergencies was in 2022.

Figure 79. Total number of UCPM activations for flood emergencies between 2017-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG Annual reports and DG ECHO internal

In terms of the types of resources requested for flood emergencies extraction from CECIS data allows for a snapshot of the support requested and provided. Majority of requests were classed as ‘generic’ followed by requests for experts and in-kind assistance. Qualitative analysis of the generic offers shows that countries provided a wide range of generic support including: disinfectants, blankets, clean-up kits, heaters, water boots, rain coats, hygiene kits, kitchen sets and tents. In the case of Belgium, where the field visit for the case study took place, almost half of the requests concerned technical assistance and support teams (TASTs) followed by generic assistance.

CECIS data also allows for an overview on the average response speed for assistance requested. Estonia, the United Kingdom and Latvia were the fastest between 10-17 hours from request to offer.

A7.2.4 Key stakeholders involved

A7.2.4.1 National level

In Belgium the **National Crisis centre**, within the Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for the coordination of the emergency planning and crisis management policy. Crisis management is implemented at three different levels: municipal, provincial, or federal level.

The management level of a crisis depends on various factors, including the extent of the geographical area affected, the number of victims, the environmental impact, and more.

If a crisis involves two or more provinces or if the resources available to the provincial governor for coordination are inadequate, emergencies are handled at the national or federal level. During the federal phase of emergency planning, the Minister of Home Affairs takes the lead in coordinating and disseminating information at the national level.

Once the federal phase is activated, three entities within the National Crisis Centre come into action: an evaluation and assessment cell, a coordination cell, and an information cell. Each of these entities contributes to the overall decision-making process within their respective areas of expertise.

7.1.1.1 EU level

At EU level, the following mechanisms and tools have been identified as specific or particularly relevant to the fight against floods:

DG ECHO is responsible for implementing all components of the UCPM and acts as the central point of reference for Member States, Participating States, third countries, and other stakeholders for disasters covered by the UCPM in its mandate that they wish for EU support, including floods. DG ECHO undertakes several activities, such as increasing awareness of flood risks, promoting the exchange of knowledge and best practices in flood prevention and suppression, managing a training program, scheduling meetings, hosting lessons learnt meetings, arranging thematic workshops, supervising the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) and the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS), and identifying and deploying rescEU resources. DG ECHO's UCPM **Knowledge Network** serves to fill information and communication gaps that currently affect the relationship between the UCPM and national and sub-national operational officials. The full operationalisation of the Network and the better dissemination of its outputs will continue in the years ahead.

Copernicus Emergency Management Service (CEMS) offers information regarding various natural and human-induced disasters, as well as other humanitarian crises. It covers emergency response, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. It has two main components: 1) on-demand mapping for emergency response and risk and recovery maps for prevention and planning and 2) early warning and monitoring component (which includes EFAS below).

EFAS, the European Flood Awareness System, is the first flood forecasting and monitoring system across Europe that is operational. The Joint Research Centre has been working on its development since 2002 in partnership with the national hydrological and meteorological services, the ERCC, and other research institutions. EFAS became a part of the Copernicus Emergency Management Service in 2011 and was made available for operational use in 2012.

EFAS offers up-to-date and diverse flood forecasting data that is continually updated to assist national and regional flood risk management organisations in preparing for potential events. Furthermore, EFAS provides a one-of-a-kind view of flood events currently predicted and observed throughout Europe and adjacent regions. It is a valuable resource for flood risk management in significant trans-national river basins as well as the UCPM. In addition to forecasting when and where large riverine and flash floods are likely to occur, the service also evaluates and maps the possible socio-economic implications of these events.

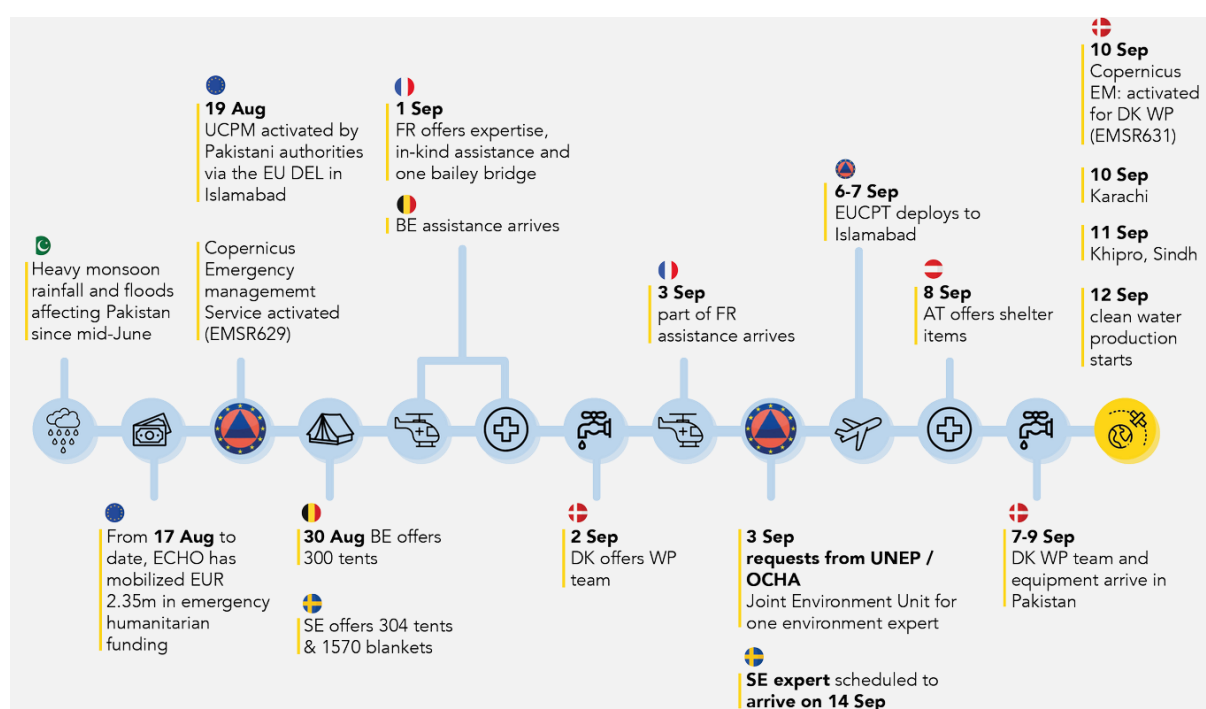
In addition, **GloFAS** (Global Flood Awareness System) is an extension of the European Flood Awareness System that predicts floods across the globe. The Joint Research Centre has been working on its development since 2011, with the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) as its close partner. GloFAS became fully operational under the Copernicus Emergency Management Service in 2018.

A7.2.5 GloFAS activities for the floods in Pakistan¹¹⁹⁰

In 2022, Pakistan experienced one of the worst floods in its history. According to UN Officials, it has affected around 33 million people, which accounts for approximately 14% of the country's population. Request for assistance was submitted in August 2022. The timeline of the emergency is presented below.¹¹⁹¹

¹¹⁹⁰ Information Bulletin 162 - The Copernicus Emergency Management Service monitors the flooding event in Pakistan. Available at: [Information Bulletin 162 - The Copernicus Emergency Management Service monitors the flooding event in Pakistan | COPERNICUS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE](#)

¹¹⁹¹ UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting, Brussels, 24-25 April 2023



A European Union Civil Protection Team was established and tasked with the following:

- Facilitate the coordination of incoming assistance from Member States and Participating States.
- Support the national authorities, liaise and cooperate with UN (UNDAC + humanitarian cluster system) in assessing the situation and facilitate the coordination.
- Ensure, through EUCPT and where OCHA / UNDAC are present, that the coordination of the UCPM response is fully integrated in the overall international coordination provided by OCHA and respects its leading role.
- Identify areas where the Union Civil Protection Mechanism can contribute within its mandate and provide recommendations to the ERCC regarding the needs and type of assistance further needed.
- Liaise with the DG ECHO office on site and the EU Delegation.
- Report to ERCC and operational tasking as required.

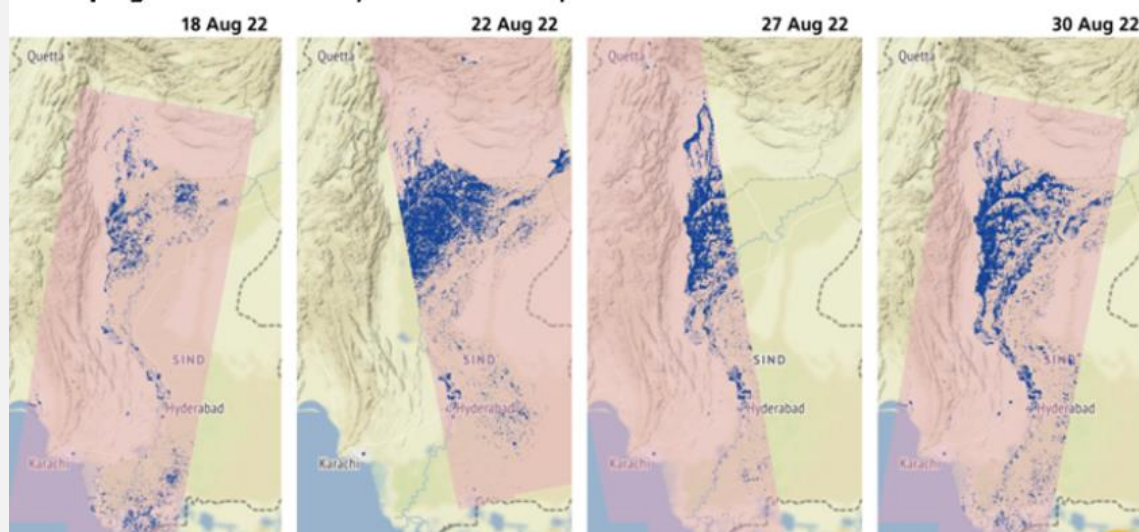
The ERCC, along with international organisations and Pakistani officials used the Early Warning Systems and the On Demand Mapping components of the CEMS for hydrological predictions and overviews.¹¹⁹²

The monitoring of floods has been facilitated by the near real-time capabilities of the GloFAS using the newly introduced Global Flood Monitoring (GFM) product. This innovative tool automatically processes and analyses Sentinel-1 Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) satellite imagery, incorporating cutting-edge scientific advancements from Europe. As a result, it enables flood monitoring on a global scale, providing timely and accurate information. The figure below provides an example of

¹¹⁹² Information Bulletin 162 - The Copernicus Emergency Management Service monitors the flooding event in Pakistan. Available at: [Information Bulletin 162 - The Copernicus Emergency Management Service monitors the flooding event in Pakistan | COPERNICUS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE](#)

flood progression maps generated by GFM based on Global Flood Monitoring data retrieved between 18 and 30 August.¹¹⁹³

Flood progression covered by Sentinel-1 overpasses



During this time UCPM assistance was provided by the following Member States:¹¹⁹⁴

MS	Resource
Belgium	300 family tents
France	8 doctors, four water pumps technicians, 83 mobile water pumps, 200 family tents, 1,000 ground sheets, 200 kitchen sets, 400 hygiene kits and one bailey bridge
Austria	400,000 Rapid Antigen Test kits and 10,000 vinyl gloves, this offer was declined. On 8 September, Austria offered 2,000 blankets, 2,000 mattresses, 1,000 tarpaulins, 20 family tents and 1,000 mosquito nets
Denmark	Water purification team of 10 people with a purification capacity of 120,000 litres of water per day
Sweden	300 family tents 1,520 blankets
Greece	30 boxes of medicinal material, 10 tents, 10,000 pairs of surgical gloves, 2,520 blankets and 150 sleeping bags

A **Working Group on Floods** was established as part of the Common Implementation Strategy (CSI) for the Floods Directive. It has three primary objectives which include exchanging information among Member

¹¹⁹³ Information Bulletin 162 - The Copernicus Emergency Management Service monitors the flooding event in Pakistan. Available at: [Information Bulletin 162 - The Copernicus Emergency Management Service monitors the flooding event in Pakistan | COPERNICUS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE](#)

¹¹⁹⁴ UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting, Brussels, 24-25 April 2023

States, the Commission, and stakeholders on the adoption of new strategies, research/projects, good practices, and policies to improve flood risk management in the European Union, with a specific focus on cross-border management. Additionally, the aim is to receive feedback on the implementation of the Floods Directive and reporting, ultimately achieving a mutual agreement on the necessary requirements for efficient and effective reporting. Finally, this effort aims to establish a connection with related activities of the CSI at EU level as well as other Commission or international initiatives that support the implementation of the Directive.

More recently, the **Water4All Partnership** - Water Security for the Planet – was established, financed jointly by the European Union under the Horizon Europe programme, a significant research and innovation funding program. The partnership will run for seven years from 2022 and aims to confront water-related challenges as a means of addressing climate change, supporting the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, and enhancing the competitiveness and growth of the EU.¹¹⁹⁵

Box 1.2 below presents an example from the field visit to Belgium concerning the 2021 flooding and it provides an overview of key stakeholders involved in responding to the flooding at provincial, national and EU level.

A7.2.6 Floods in Belgium, 2021 – experience from the field

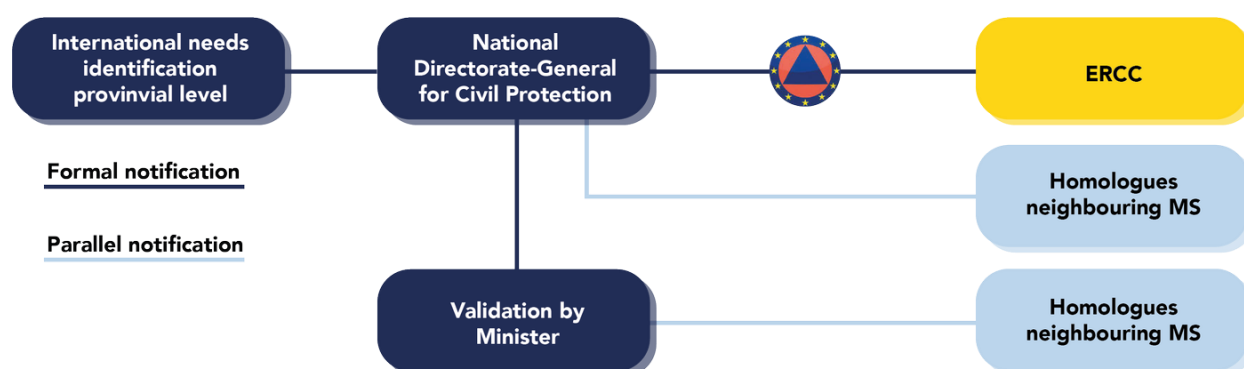
EFAS warning for the region was issued on 10 July. The **provincial phase** of the crisis in Liège and Namur was declared on 14 July 2021. The next day, the federal phase of the crisis management was declared and 1,400 rescue workers from the **fire services, civil protection and the Ministry of Defence** were engaged in the evacuation and search and rescue operations. In total 270 municipalities were impacted and evacuations took place in 50,000 buildings were impacted with 153 houses destroyed. Large areas suffered outages of electricity, gas and telecommunications.

Copernicus was activated on 14 July, the first map was created 24 hours later and detected filled flood basins, but actual flood was not detected. During the interviews national stakeholders highlighted that the communication between **Copernicus EMS** and the **national crisis centre** was not optimal.

Following the outbreak of the crisis Belgium first requested **bilateral assistance** from Luxembourg in the form of FRUB (flood rescue using boat) team and, subsequently, from the Netherlands.

On 15 July, Belgium activated the **UCPM** and requested an additional three FRUB teams and 2 helicopters. The following figure provides an overview of the stakeholders involved at both national and EU in the process of providing assistance. The figure below provides an overview on the process of requesting assistance, both bilateral and through UCPM.

¹¹⁹⁵ 31st Meeting of the CIS Working Group on Floods 20 and 21 October 2022. [Water Security for the Planet \(water4all-partnership.eu\)](https://water4all-partnership.eu)



Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of Crisis Centre, Belgium, presentation at UCPM Lessons Learnt Meeting Floods in Europe, 28 September 2021.

Between 14-16 July Belgium received the following assistance:

MS	Type	Resource
Luxembourg	Bilateral	FRUB
Netherlands	Bilateral	FRUB
France	UCPM	Rescue helicopters
France	UCPM	Zodiacs and divers
Italy	UCPM	Rescue helicopters
Italy	UCPM	FRUB
Austria	UCPM	FRUB
ERCC	UCPM	Liaison officer

Lessons learnt from the flood and UCPM activation are presented section A7.2.9.

A7.2.7 Case study findings

This section provides the case study findings per evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, EU added value.

A7.2.7.1 Effectiveness

The UCPM has effectively supported Member States and Participating States to prepare and respond to floods through improved cooperation and coordination both across borders and across sectors. Member States relied less on the UCPM for flood prevention.

The UCPM conducted several activities in the field of preparedness for floods.

- **UCPM exercises:** Three full-scale exercises were organised by the National Centre for the Disaster Management in Romania (APELL-RO) and its partners in 2021 in Romania and Portugal, for flood related modules: High-Capacity Pumping, Water Purification, Flood Rescue Using Boats, Flood

Containment and Forest Fire Fighting modules during 2019 and 2020.¹¹⁹⁶ The exercise was attended by 543 participants. In addition, between 2018 and 2019, three field EU MODEX exercises were organised by APELL-RO and its partners for flood related modules: High-Capacity Pumping, Water Purification, Flood Rescue Using Boats, Flood Containment and Forest Fire Fighting modules as well as other assets of the European Civil Protection Pool. While Belgium participated in UCPM training modules, flood prevention was organised mostly from national sources and not UCPM, while the country heavily relied on UCPM support for flood response. It was noted that for flood prevention the Floods Directive is used as the main framework.

- **Early Warning Systems:** A recent study from the European Commission also highlights that advanced data and information systems are essential for crisis management. The Copernicus Earth Observation Program serves as a key monitoring tool and is complemented by crisis management services such as the European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS) and the European Flood Awareness System (EFAS), which are used by emergency management and security services.¹¹⁹⁷ These new systems have made UCPM more effective in preparing and responding to emergencies.

In relation to **response capacities**, flood rescue using boat module is seen as relevant and fit for purpose. However, several suggestions have also been identified regarding potential redefinitions including:¹¹⁹⁸

- Incorporating divers into rescue modules: Typically, such modules do not have their own rescue divers and rely on local fire brigades to provide this service. This approach can lead to quicker deployment and more effective collaboration with an existing team. However, the absence of a diver can impede or even prevent rescue efforts. It was suggested to treat diving equipment as an optional extra, available when needed, rather than as an integral part of the module's core functions.
- Additional clarity is needed over the role of medical staff in terms of meeting first needs.
- It is recommended to have a skilled boat mechanic among the personnel to promptly address any damage to the boats.
- To accommodate varying situations, teams could be composed with greater flexibility.
- A deployment of 10 days may not be sufficient if it involves spending four days on travel to and from the host country. However, for rescue purposes, a stay of more than 10 days on site is unnecessary.
- Although air deployment is desirable, it may be contingent on factors such as the capacity and fleet of the national air force. Presently, deployment by land means that the closest module in terms of geography will always be the first to arrive, making it the most pertinent during a crisis. To improve response time, air deployment could be integrated as an optional extra for the module.

These findings are also in line with the experience from the field shared by Belgium.¹¹⁹⁹ The stakeholders consulted in Belgium¹²⁰⁰, including representatives of regional emergency planning and civil protection units shared that cooperation with the ERCC was excellent, and that the usual procedures were implemented without major issues. On the other hand, CECIS was considered insufficiently user-friendly, and the logbook function inefficient, making it difficult to search for relevant information.

During the flooding in Belgium, the effectiveness of the UCPM, compared to bilateral cooperation, was evident in how national stakeholders could express their needs. The Mechanism facilitated a response by countries capable of providing the necessary resources. This simplified the search for the resources to

¹¹⁹⁶ European Civil Protection Mechanism Modules Field Exercises Lot 2 Contract N° ECHO/SER/2018/785705

"Design, plan, conduct and evaluate two exercises High-Capacity Pumping, Water Purification, Flood Rescue Using Boats, Flood Containment and Forest Fire Fighting modules as well as other assets of the European Emergency Response Capacities

¹¹⁹⁷ European Commission (2022): Strategic crisis management in the EU

¹¹⁹⁸ Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services (2019): Evaluation Study of Definitions, Gaps and Costs of Response Capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

¹¹⁹⁹ Field visit to Crisnee on 15 March

¹²⁰⁰ Interviews with national and regional civil protection officers (2 out of 2)

meet the needs and opened the field of available skills compared to bilateral/multilateral cooperation. However, what is also different is that they do not necessarily know their counterparts, compared to what might be the case in bilateral relations.

The **main challenge hindering the effectiveness** of the UCPM activation for Belgium was the urgent need for assistance that emerged within a short timeframe. There was an urgent need for assistance, but the deployment of the teams took time, while Belgium needed those capacities immediately and was under pressure to accept bilateral help. The importance of air deployment mentioned above was also emphasised in this situation where the support by Italy by air was found more efficient compared to support from Austria arriving by road.

In relation to areas for improvement, based on lessons learnt in Belgium, it was suggested that countries should try to identify places in each country where foreign forces can gather.¹²⁰¹ For example, in military barracks, by provinces, at local level. This would prevent teams from getting lost or being without a mission and would centralise/better coordinate actions.

Based on their recent experience with activating UCPM for flooding, national stakeholders¹²⁰² highlighted that the **possibility to use pre-warning and repositioning of teams are not well known among Member and Participating States**. Awareness raising in this regard could significantly improve the response time in emergencies and help prepare the relevant resources.

A7.2.7.2 Efficiency

UCPM's ability to react swiftly to emergencies was perceived to enhance its effectiveness. In relation to response to emergencies, the advantage of receiving support from foreign teams through the UCPM allowed for the deployment of more suitable resources, significantly enhancing the efficiency of the relief operations on the ground.

According to Belgian authorities the main factors enhancing the efficiency of the UCPM support during the floods in 2021 include: good established networks with DG ECHO (as they are also both based in Brussels), flexibility of the Italian team to come by plane and the close geographical proximity of the French teams. The flooding left Belgian authorities overwhelmed, depleting all their available resources at the provincial and federal level, including civilian and military assets and their capacity to respond to the emergency had reached its limit. Receiving support from foreign teams via the UCPM improved resource deployment, leading to more appropriate and effective relief operations.¹²⁰³

Due to a lack of familiarity with UCPM procedures a few local rescue services in Belgium faced a misunderstanding regarding the capabilities of foreign teams. They were unaware that these teams could not be divided into sub-teams, with one part assigned to one location and another part to a different location. This lack of understanding occasionally resulted in operational challenges. If they had possessed a more comprehensive understanding of the situation, these local services could have better assessed and determined their own specific needs, allowing them to make more effective use of available resources and overcome the encountered obstacles.¹²⁰⁴

EFAS aims to enhance the efficiency of UCPM activations by implementing pre-tasking measures. When a significant flood event is anticipated, EFAS promptly notifies ERCC to provide early warning. Through the development of various tools and workflows, EFAS ensures that ERCC receives timely alerts even before UCPM activations are initiated. By proactively engaging ERCC in advance, EFAS aims to optimise response coordination and enable swifter and more efficient disaster management efforts.¹²⁰⁵

¹²⁰¹ Interviews with national and regional civil protection officers (2 out of 2)

¹²⁰² Interviews with national and regional civil protection officers (2 out of 2)

¹²⁰³ Interview with national stakeholder Belgium

¹²⁰⁴ Interview with national stakeholder Belgium

¹²⁰⁵ Interview with Joint Research Centre

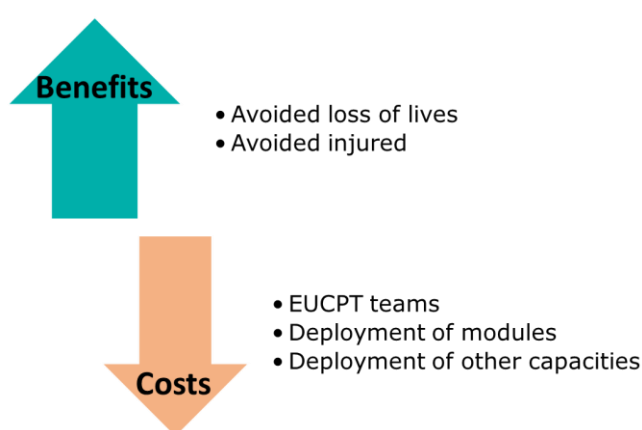
Analysis of the costs and benefits of the UCPM support to Belgium

As highlighted in the Effectiveness section 1.2.1, stakeholders recognised benefits of the UCPM support. These benefits were related not only to the UCPM response to the activation requests by Belgium, but also to prevention and preparedness activities offered by UCPM to Belgium and the countries that provided support to Belgium, including capacity building and coordination.

The corresponding incremental UCPM costs relate to the cost for the UCPM to provide the response to the request (i.e., EUCTP teams, modules, and other capacities) as well as the cost for UCPM to provide prevention and preparedness activities (including training, exercises, PPP, exchange of experts, etc).

Following the approach used by the World Bank¹²⁰⁶ a simplified model was developed to quantify the socio-economic benefits and costs of the UCPM activations covered in the context of the case study (see Figure 80).

Figure 80. Simplified model for the CBA



Source: ICF elaboration

The quantification of each benefit and cost was to be done following the World bank model. However, after a review of the available documentation and data and consulting relevant stakeholders, the very limited collected data did not allow for a robust quantification of benefits that could be attributable to the support provided by the UCPM.

The key data missing was:

- An estimate of the number of lives that would have been lost without UCPM support;
- An estimate of the number of people that would have been injured without UCPM support.

Belgium has also commission and inquiry on the sufficiency of the civil protection capacities in light of the floods.¹²⁰⁷ No consistent data was found on what factors enhanced or reduced the efficiency of UCPM support.

A7.2.7.3 Relevance

¹²⁰⁶ World Bank. 2021. Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness. © World Bank, Washington, DC.

¹²⁰⁷ Parlement Wallon (20220: Rapport de la Commission d'enquête parlementaire chargée d'examiner les causes et d'évaluer la gestion des inondations de juillet 2021 en Wallonie. [894_1.pdf](#) ([parlement-wallon.be](#))

Data suggests that UCPM activities have been and will increasingly be relevant to national needs in order to prevent, prepare for, and respond to floods. As described in section **Error! Reference source not found.** the nature of floods is changing along with its frequency and intensity.

The UCPM's support in flood emergencies is crucial, making the Mechanism an essential component for addressing urgent national requirements. While Member and Participating States could individually request aid, the significant number and type of activations involving floods during the 2017-2022 assessment period clearly demonstrate the significance of the Mechanism.

In terms of the relevance of UCPM activities in meeting national needs, a national¹²⁰⁸ stakeholders highlighted the increased attention given by DG ECHO to the needs and perspectives of Member and Participating States. These states are consistently involved in the decision-making process through consultations. The decision to hold lessons learnt meetings in different Member States was viewed as further evidence of this new approach and seen as a positive advancement. Within this context, the UCPM Training Programme and EU MODEX were regarded as essential tools for addressing the specific needs of Member and Participating States regarding floods.

The UCPM is perceived more relevant for response activities in cases of floods as opposed to prevention.¹²⁰⁹ Most prevention activities take place at national level as different institutions and competences are needed to implement prevention measures. Some stakeholders noted that with the increase in flash floods in recent years new prevention measures need to be explored in the future.¹²¹⁰ Preparedness was positively assessed by stakeholders¹²¹¹ noting that the relevant resources are available, where national stakeholders can test their capacities.

Interviewees unanimously agreed that the **UCPM is sufficiently flexible and agile to adapt to the changing nature of floods.** The interviewees¹²¹² pinpointed one of the main changes that the UCPM faces is the influence of climate change on the frequency and severity of floods. This change is already in progress but is expected to gain even greater significance in the future.

It is expected there will be more extreme events leading to highly localised events, a mix between flash flooding¹²¹³ and larger scale floods, similar to the floods in Belgium in 2021. These relatively rapid onset events are difficult to forecast. The UCPM's relevance is reinforced by the relatively fast activation process.

The majority of national and EU level stakeholders expressed a positive view of the flexibility of the Mechanism, emphasising its ability to swiftly adapt to new situations.¹²¹⁴ The establishment of the rescEU reserve was highlighted as a prime example of the UCPM's flexibility and innovative capacity to stay pertinent. Likewise, the prompt decision to expand the rescEU aerial fleet was recognised as a demonstration of its adaptability. The recommendations extended to the UCPM Training Programme and EU MODEX, which were regarded as further evidence of the Mechanism's flexibility.

Overall, the **UCPM has offered stakeholders great opportunities for sharing knowledge, information, practices, and expertise with interested partners.** These opportunities have proven invaluable for learning and enhancing capabilities. Nonetheless, a challenge remains in effectively distributing the knowledge gained through training at national level. It is equally important to ensure the easy accessibility of EU-level information and knowledge resources to all national and sub-national officials interested in using them.

¹²⁰⁸ Interview with national civil protection official, regional civil protection official and national policymaker (3 out of 6)

¹²⁰⁹ Interview with national civil protection official, regional civil protection official and national policymaker (5 out of 6)

¹²¹⁰ Interview with EU level stakeholder (1) and ¹²¹⁰ Interview with national civil protection official, regional civil protection official (2)

¹²¹¹ ¹²¹¹ Interview with national civil protection official, regional civil protection official, field visit in Belgium

¹²¹² Interview with national civil protection official, regional civil protection official and national policymaker

¹²¹³ Flash floods are defined as those flood events where the rise in water is either during or within a few hours of the rainfall that produces the rise. Therefore, flash floods occur within small catchments, where the response time of the drainage basin is short. In part owing to the rapidly rising, fast-moving waters of a flash flood, the damage from them can be devastating.

¹²¹⁴ Interview with national civil protection official, regional civil protection official and national policymaker (5 out of 6) Interview with national civil protection official, regional civil protection official and national policymaker (3 out of 6)

Lack of capacity in the provision of flood barriers was identified as an emerging need. The use of the UCPM in this area has been infrequent due to the fact that flood containment is typically handled using local resources and capabilities. In situations where international aid was necessary, it primarily involved providing materials such as sandbags, rather than deploying modules. Furthermore, it should be noted that the modules are not suitable for air deployment.¹²¹⁵ Overall stakeholders expressed satisfaction, however, with how easily they could communicate their needs to DG ECHO.¹²¹⁶

A7.2.7.4 Coherence

The case study found that UCPM activities regarding floods complement national interventions, with some areas for further improvement. National level stakeholders were overall satisfied with how UCPM activities complemented national interventions but need for improved coordination was noted. The role of liaison officers was highlighted as crucial to ensure a smooth response mission.

An area for further improvement identified from the interviews¹²¹⁷ related to the better integration of EFAS warning systems to national warning systems. EFAS has seen a continuous increase in national authorities accessing EFAS since 2017 and regional authorities since 2017. The information provided by EFAS is unique and can facilitate the activation of UCPM. Currently national authorities can use EFAS on a voluntary basis, but it is recommended that it is better integrated with national warning systems.

EFAS is currently working on developing a decision support system with more information for future flood events. This would facilitate a faster decision-making process on whether or not UCPM needs to be activated or a country can deal with the emergency on its own and/or bilaterally.¹²¹⁸

Strong coherence was found between EU and international activities regarding floods with some areas for improvement.

- For example, while the preamble of the **Floods Directive** mentions the UCPM, the articles of the Directive make no mention of coordination specifically with civil protection.
- Coherence between **EFAS** and other systems has also evolved over the evaluation period. EFAS data is now essential part of the European Natural Hazard Partnership, Aristotle and other situational reports. The linkages between all the different system have strengthened.
- As shown in Box 1.1 on **GloFAS** activities for the floods in Pakistan complemented international interventions in flood response in the country.
- Strong coherence was found in relation to **humanitarian aid**. The lessons learnt meeting found that synergies between civil protection and humanitarian aid in WASH sector were achieved. Specifically, the cooperation with CESVI, (DG ECHO humanitarian aid implementing partner) helped to created complementarity through creating a network of water distribution. While providing pure water is the role of civil protection actors, distributing it to the community and engaging with them was done by humanitarian aid actors. This worked well: synergies and complementarities were established.¹²¹⁹
- Similarly, in 2017, UCPM was activated by the Peruvian government requesting assistance in response to severe flooding, land- and mudslides in 24 of its 25 regions caused by the El Nino effect on coastal areas. The flooding resulted in more than 100 victims and caused widespread damage to the country infrastructure. On this occasion **UCPM complemented the efforts of the UN, NGOs and other government officials**. UCPM environmental experts supported the work of the UNDAC mission. Results of the lessons learnt meeting show that the EU Civil Protection Team met all

¹²¹⁵ Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services (2019): Evaluation Study of Definitions, Gaps and Costs of Response Capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

¹²¹⁶ Interview with national civil protection official, regional civil protection official and national policymaker (4 out of 6)

¹²¹⁷ Interviews with national and regional civil protection officers (2 out of 2)

¹²¹⁸ Interview with EU level stakeholder

¹²¹⁹ Lessons Learnt Programme Annual Meeting 24/25 April 2023

mission objectives and was well supported by the ERCC but complementarity was hindered by confusing information and lack of coordination by the authorities in Peru which hindered the provision of the requested water purification units offered by Germany difficult to deliver.¹²²⁰

A7.2.7.5 EU added value

UCPM brings significant added value to flood response through research and innovation for prevention and preparedness and providing a single point of contact for resources in case of flood response through rescEU.

In relation to preparedness, the **Knowledge Network brings added value through facilitating connections and knowledge exchange among practitioners**, policy makers, and researchers. Nevertheless, the Network's limited visibility and unclear functions pose ongoing challenges that require careful attention and consideration.

Funding from the EU made it possible to develop **new technologies and practices**, many of them as an output of EU-financed research projects, to better deal with the various phases of flood management.

Copernicus EMS played a pivotal role in providing an extensive range of scientific data which has proven to be indispensable in mitigating, getting ready for, and addressing floods. The role played by EFAS has been pivotal in this regard, encompassing the swift delivery of dependable maps. EFAS provides complementary information (e.g. probabilistic, medium range flood forecasts, flash flood indicators, and impact forecasts) to the relevant national and regional authorities. Furthermore, EFAS keeps the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) informed about ongoing and possibly upcoming flood events across Europe.

There was a consensus among stakeholder groups¹²²¹ that **without UCPM countries would have spent more time searching for relevant resources to respond emergencies**. According to national stakeholders¹²²² relying on bilateral relations and contacting each country individually for support is time-consuming. Having a single point of contact through **rescEU improves response time by centralising efforts and increasing efficiency**. It also ensures that those resources are provided that the country really needs, it is more targeted.

A7.2.8 Key challenges

The key challenges identified regarding UCPM work on floods were:

- **Information management and data analysis are one of the key issues.** Challenges were primarily identified regarding CECIS. It was considered insufficiently user friendly, and the logbook function inefficient. This made it difficult for national stakeholders to search for relevant information. Nevertheless, cooperation with the ERCC was positively assessed by national stakeholders and the usual procedures were implemented without major issues.
- In relation to response for flood emergencies the **timeline for mobilising teams** was another key challenge. In most cases support is urgently needed and often the support requested could only be deployed by road rather than air. An example of this was shown in case of the flood emergency in Belgium where Italian teams could be deployed by air and were an essential part of the emergency response while support from Austria deployed by road only arrived at the end of the emergency.
- **Limited integration of EFAS warning systems and national warning systems.** The increase in flash floods in recent years brings the increased need for new prevention measures in the future. EFAS has seen a continuous increase in national authorities accessing EFAS since 2017 and regional

¹²²⁰ European Commission (2017): Outcomes of the Lessons Learned Meeting on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism operations in 2017

¹²²¹ Interviews with national and regional civil protection officers (2 out of 2)

¹²²² Interviews with national and regional civil protection officers (4 out of 6)

authorities since 2017. The information provided by EFAS is unique and can facilitate the activation of UCPM.

- **Lack of capacity in the provision of flood containment was identified as an emerging need.** The use of the UCPM in this area has been infrequent due to the fact that flood containment is typically handled using local resources and capabilities.

A7.2.9 Lessons learnt and good practices

The lessons learnt and good practices identified related to UCPM activities on floods were:

A7.2.9.1 Cross-pillar/horizontal activities

- The **Knowledge Network** is found to be a useful platform for enabling national civil protection authorities to foster connections and acquire valuable insights on flood management across various sectors and Europe as a whole. This helps civil protection authorities to build connections and enhance preparedness.
- **Enhancing collaboration between UCPM and other EU and international stakeholders facilitates exchange of experiences.** During a UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme meeting in 2021¹²²³, valuable insights were gathered from recent flood situations in Europe, not only during UCPM activations but also beyond. This meeting also served as an opportunity to present the Floods Directive requirements by DG ENV, as well as national level best practices for implementing the directive. This collaborative effort between DG ECHO and DG ENV demonstrates the positive initiative to enhance synergies between the UCPM framework and the Floods Directive. DG ENV actively shares the UCPM's flood prevention work with the flood risk community, and mechanisms for information exchange between DG ENV and the UCPM are established.

A7.2.9.2 Preparedness

- Establishing and strengthening connections between relevant authorities, particularly between civil protection and flood risk management entities, is crucial for building more resilient societies. **Promoting cross-sectoral coordination** at all levels, from local to national and EU levels, and maintaining continuous communication with experts across different ministries, departments, or disciplines is highly encouraged to better prepare for flood emergencies.
- **Raising awareness about the UCPM and its services**, as well as the requirements of the Floods Directive, should extend beyond civil protection authorities to reach a wider audience within Member States and Participating States.

A7.2.9.3 Response

- Lessons learnt from the floods in Belgium show the importance of the **early deployment of ERCC liaison officer**. This practice proves beneficial as the officer's presence at the location establishes a crucial on-site link between the Host Nation, deployed teams, and the ERCC. Additionally, the liaison officer possesses valuable on-the-ground knowledge about the UCPM, further enhancing their effectiveness in coordinating efforts and facilitating communication.
- In terms of capabilities, it was suggested to **utilise size-adaptable teams with minimal equipment, which could enable faster deployment, enhance versatility, and facilitate seamless integration into rescue operations**. Additionally, it is important to address the necessity for capabilities that enable night-time operations, such as search and rescue helicopters or a rapid airlift capacity for swift mobilisation.
- Lessons learnt from the floods in Pakistan and Peru highlights the importance of understanding the different roles of **humanitarian aid partners**. Trainings on this aspect might be useful. Overall

¹²²³ DG ECHO (2022) UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting. Lessons Identified from recent floods in Europe.

activations outside the EU require this level of understanding and awareness that is not usually required inside EU. On this point, the benefits of collaborating with **local NGOs** is very important. Indeed, local population might not trust the people who deliver assistance but can trust local NGOs who know them.

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A7.2.11 List of stakeholders consulted

Stakeholder	Type of interview (remote/field)
DG ECHO (x2)	Remote
National civil protection officer Belgium	Remote and field
Regional civil protection officer Belgium	Remote and field
Head of Regional Emergency Planning Belgium	Remote
Federal Agency for Technical Relief – Germany	Remote
Ministry of Interior – Crisis Management and Civil Protection Department – Germany	Remote
Federal Agency for Civil Protection	Remote
Joint Research Centre Disaster Risk Management Unit	Remote

A7.3 Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

A7.3.1 Introduction to the case study

This case study examines the activation and functioning of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) in supporting Member and Participating States as well as Third Countries in the context of the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

The aim of the case study is to analyse the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and added value of the UCPM intervention in the context of the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, highlighting challenges and lessons learnt.

This case study complements the case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine carried out in the context of the *Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022*, and of the *Mobility Package within the Emergency Support*

Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022, that covers extensively logistic-related aspects of the UCPM support in the context of the crisis. Consequently, the present case study focuses on other elements of the UCPM support and on lessons learnt to improve the UCPM support in future crises with (some) characteristics similar to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine .

A7.3.2 Context

This section will provide an overview of:

- The evolving context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine;
- Support provided by the UCPM.

A7.3.2.1 Evolving context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia on 24 February 2022 triggered a major humanitarian crisis, leading to high numbers of IDPs as well as refugees moving into neighbouring countries (Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and Moldova) and beyond. By July 2023, about 6 million refugees from Ukraine have been recorded in Europe and an additional 364 thousand beyond Europe. In October 2022, it was estimated that the number of IDPs was more than 6.5 million people.¹²²⁴

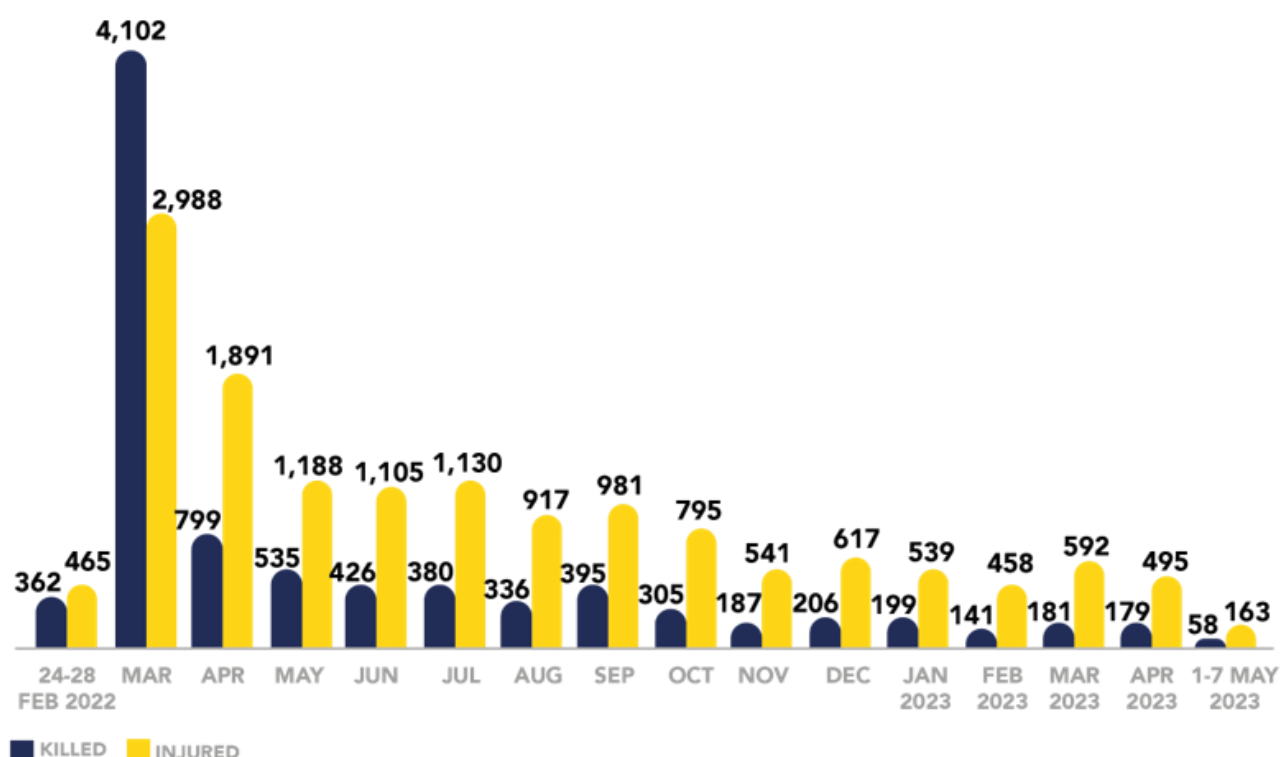
In addition, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has caused the destruction of infrastructure, including hospitals and energy infrastructure, hampered access to basic services, and caused a high volume of civil casualties.

From February 2022 until May 2023, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has recorded more than 26 thousand civilian casualties in the country. These include 8,791 killed and 14,815 injured (see Figure 81). However, according to OHCHR, the number of civil casualties is likely to be much higher as the collection of information is challenging.¹²²⁵

¹²²⁴ Situation Ukraine Refugee Situation (unhcr.org)

¹²²⁵ Ukraine: civilian casualty update 8 May 2023 | OHCHR

Figure 81. Total civilian casualties, per month, from 24 February 2022 to 7 May 2023



Source: ICF elaboration, *Ukraine: civilian casualty update 8 May 2023* | OHCHR

The costs of damage to Ukrainian infrastructure are estimated to be somewhere between \$100 and \$134 billion.¹²²⁶ In particular, attacks on the Ukraine's energy infrastructure have left more than 12 million people with limited or no electricity and have disrupted other basic services such as water supply, heating, and health care services.¹²²⁷

A7.3.2.2 Overview of the support by the UCPM

In preparation for the expected large-scale emergency, Ukraine first activated the UCPM on 15 February 2022. Since then, many requests for assistance by Ukraine and also by Member and Participating States followed. Table 19 provides an overview of requests made by country. The majority of requests across different categories were made by Ukraine.

Table 19. Overview of the share of requests per country

	EU	MD	PL	SK	UA
CBRN	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Clothes	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Communication equipment	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Coordination and assessment experts	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Energy supply items	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

¹²²⁶ See <https://kse.ua/about-the-school/news/the-total-amount-of-damage-caused-to-ukraine-s-infrastructure-due-to-the-war-has-increased-to-almost-138-billion/> and <https://operationalsupport.un.org/en/ukraine-war-100-billion-infrastructure-damage-and-counting>.

¹²²⁷ See <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/publications/ukraine-energy-damage-assessment>.

	EU	MD	PL	SK	UA
Equipment and protection means	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Food items	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Infrastructure, construction and repair work, temporary structures	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Medevac LOs to the ERCC	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Medical supplies - equipment	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Medical supplies - medicines	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Medical supplies - other	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Motor vehicles and special equipment	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Special tools and equipment	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Technical experts	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Temporary sheltering, sleeping items, hygiene, sanitation, etc.	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Tools and equipment	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Training of its pyrotechnical teams	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Transport of patients	4%	2%	1%	0%	93%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%

Source: ICF elaboration based on CECIS data

Table 20 provides an overview of the type of UCPM resources used to address requests. In light of the dimension and type of requests which included some for non-traditional civil protection items, offers by all 27 EU Member States and two Participating States (Norway and Turkey) were complemented by rescEU capacities.

Table 20. Overview of the type of UCPM resource used per offer

Offer	UCPM resource type		
	Generic	Experts	rescEU
CBRN	72%	0%	28%
Clothes	100%	0%	0%
Communication equipment	100%	0%	0%
Coordination and assessment experts	86%	14%	0%
Energy supply items	100%	0%	0%
Equipment and protection means	100%	0%	0%
Food items	100%	0%	0%
Infrastructure, construction and repair work, temporary structures	100%	0%	0%
Medevac LOs to the ERCC	20%	80%	0%
Medical supplies - equipment	40%	0%	60%

Offer	UCPM resource type		
	Generic	Experts	rescEU
Medical supplies - medicines	98%	0%	2%
Medical supplies - other	77%	0%	23%
Motor vehicles and special equipment	100%	0%	0%
Null	100%	0%	0%
Other	100%	0%	0%
Special tools and equipment	100%	0%	0%
Technical experts	0%	100%	0%
Temporary sheltering, sleeping items, hygiene, sanitation, etc.	97%	0%	3%
Tools and equipment	100%	0%	0%
Training of its pyrotechnical teams	0%	100%	0%
Transport of patients	100%	0%	0%
Grand Total	98%	0%	2%

Source: ICF elaboration based on CECIS data

The response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine was the largest and most complex operation of the UCPM to date. The specific characteristics of the crisis, including restricted access to the territory of Ukraine, cross-sectoral needs, long duration, and high involvement of private sector, brought unique challenges to which the UCPM reacted with innovative solutions. For example, access restrictions to Ukraine's territory led to the establishment of three logistic hubs in Poland, Romania and Slovakia and of a MedEvac hub in Poland by ERCC. Furthermore, new rescEU capacities were developed, shelter and energy, and a solution to facilitate and channel private donations was implemented.

A7.3.3 Case study findings

This section provides the case study findings per evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, EU added value.

A7.3.3.1 Relevance and Effectiveness

This sub-section explores the extent to which the support of the UCPM was aligned to the needs and was successful in address them.

The support provided by UCPM in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine was in line with the needs reported by Ukraine and Member/Participating States. While in neighbouring countries it was possible to assess the needs directly, in Ukraine itself this was not feasible due to the impossibility to access Ukrainian territory.

Nevertheless, documentation and interviews show that the request for assistance from the Ukraine government has been continuously updated.¹²²⁸ as the needs within the country changes. In addition, interviewees reported that DG ECHO civil protection staff were in regular contact with their humanitarian

¹²²⁸ DG ECHO (2023), Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022.

counterparts and the international humanitarian community regarding what was being provided on the humanitarian side, and information exchanges on the needs on the ground.

The lack of access to Ukraine was a major challenge to the UCPM as it prevented the direct assessment of the needs by EU Civil Protection Teams (EUCPT) and limited its ability to prioritise needs. Stakeholders¹²²⁹ generally agreed that the UCPM was flexible in dealing with this constraint and in quickly adapting to emerging needs (e.g. energy crisis) by relying on:

- The **continuous needs assessment carried out by the Ukrainian government/authorities**, which specified the needs and accepted offers considered adequate and declined those assessed as not in line with the existing needs;
- The **feedback from DG ECHO Humanitarian Aid officers and international organisations** that had an established presence in the country;
- **Discussions and exchanges** to anticipate how the conflict and needs were expected to evolve. For example, early discussions identified possible risks related to CBRN and the need for the development of CBRN capacities.¹²³⁰

The **flexibility and good organisation of Ukrainian authorities** was also highlighted as a factor that contributed to a better understanding of their needs by the UCPM. Nevertheless, a few stakeholders indicated that a procedure to prioritise needs was missing and should be implemented, given the increased needs and limited resources.¹²³¹ Furthermore, interviews highlighted that in spite of the improved cooperation and collaboration between UCPM and the DG ECHO humanitarian aid at headquarters level, the interaction in the field was limited and could have been further explored.

In neighbouring countries, the direct assessment of needs was possible. For example, this allowed the UCPM to identify the need to address issues related to the wellbeing of the patients (and their families) evacuated via Poland while waiting for transportation to other Member States, and the need to minimise the uncertainty and complexity of those logistic operations. This assessment was done based on the feedback from various UCP teams as well as from the WHO on existing issues and on the expected evolution of the number of medical evacuations.¹²³² At first there were different opinions (in DG ECHO and the Polish authorities) on the extent to which a MedEvac Hub was required and about the level of capacity to be implemented. As the situation progressed, the various entities involved agreed that the MedEvac hub was required, and an agreement was reached. Some needs related to the transport of the patients from Ukraine to the hub were identified but not addressed as they fell outside the UCPM remit.

The support provided by UCPM to prepare for and respond to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which often relied on innovative solutions to address the specificities of the crisis, was generally considered effective by stakeholders.¹²³³ However, the impossibility to monitor the assistance sent to Ukraine was seen as an obstacle for a more robust assessment.

In light of the lack of access to Ukrainian territory as well as due to the type, size and complexity of needs to address, the UCPM quickly adjusted its approach and capacities to provide the required support. This entailed:

¹²²⁹ Interviews with DG ECHO (7); KILs (2 DG ECHO desk officers, 2 Other, 2 National authorities)

¹²³⁰ KILs (2 DG ECHO desk officers, 2 National authorities); DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022.

¹²³¹ Interviews with 3 DG ECHO; KILs (1 DG ECHO desk officers, 2 National authorities); DG ECHO, Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022.

¹²³² Interviews with 3 DG ECHO;

¹²³³ Interviews with 3 DG ECHO; KILs (1 DG ECHO desk officers, 2 National authorities); DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022; DG ECHO (2022), Final Report of the 7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022., DG ECHO (2023), Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022.

- Coordinating the assistance and promoting the sharing of information by the ERCC, for example through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder crisis centre in Brussels and the continuous deployment of EUCP teams to Poland, Slovakia and Romania;
- Reinforcing existing rescEU capacities and developing new rescEU capacities, such as shelters and emergency energy supply;
- Establishing a rescEU hub in Belgium that channels private donations;
- Establishing three UCPM Logistics Hubs in neighbouring countries (Poland, Slovakia and Romania) to receive and consolidate assistance from Member and Participating States before sending it to Ukraine;
- Establishing a MedEvac hub in Poland to offer the proper support to patients arriving from Ukraine to be evacuated to a hospital in another country.¹²³⁴

Coordination of assistance and promotion of information sharing

The ERCC and the EUCP teams contributed to the effectiveness of the provided support by coordinating assistance and promoting information-sharing among Member and Participating States¹²³⁵ and across sectors. This entailed interacting with authorities not traditionally associated to civil protection (e.g., DG SANTE and Health ministries). Despite the overall positive balance of the provided support, the interviews conducted and document reviewed highlighted some aspects that may have limited its effectiveness:

- **The profile of the deployed EUCP team staff.** The long duration of the crisis posed a significant burden on human resources, which meant that some members of the EUCPT deployed lacked experience and had limited UCPM training.
- **The high rotation of EUCP teams.** The long duration of the crisis also meant that the EUCP teams in the field had to be replaced every two to three weeks. This sometimes led to knowledge not being transferred between teams, to different approaches/views across teams and to some fatigue and confusion by the national entities and other organisations engaging with them. These issues were minimised by having the team leaders overlap 1-2 days to ensure a proper handover.
- **Supporting tools not fit for purpose.** CECIS was not capable of managing the high number and frequency of requests and offers in the context of the crisis. It is likely that despite the presence of EUCP teams onsite, the shortcomings of CECIS in managing highly complex operations resulted in less effective support.¹²³⁶ Furthermore, the available tools do not support an appropriate tracking and traceability of the provided assistance.
- **Limited awareness of the UCPM by non-civil protection sectors.** Outreach efforts towards entities in non-civil protection sectors were seen as positive but insufficient, which may have limited the capacity to understand needs, identify gaps and provide more effective assistance.

rescEU

The characteristics of the crisis, and its long-lasting nature, led to massive needs in areas for which the UCPM had developed capacities but not at the necessary level (e.g. medicines, CBRN) and in areas that had not been considered before, including shelter,¹²³⁷ energy,¹²³⁸ and transport. The availability of budget and a co-financing rate of 100%, coupled with the fatigue of Member States that had already provided significant

¹²³⁴ Jointly with the Ministries of Health of Poland and Ukraine.

¹²³⁵ For example, by weekly transmitting the top Ukrainian requests and their acceptance and the 24/7 availability of ERCC. See lessons learned document.

¹²³⁶ According to an interviewee, CECIS collapsed after a few weeks. Another highlighted that in the beginning of the operations, CECIS did not assign unique identifiers to offers and requests making the linkage of offers with requests challenging.

¹²³⁷ Total budget available EUR 60 million for three grants.

¹²³⁸ Total budget available EUR 30 million for one grant.

assistance during the first period of the crisis, contributed to the support of Member States for the acceleration of the development and deployment of capacities under rescEU.

As the work to define the standards of different capacities was very advanced and the legal basis for the needed capacities was either adopted or almost adopted, the main challenge was the implementation of those capacities, as:¹²³⁹

- This phase had been foreseen to take more time than what was available. DG ECHO increased the human resources available for the task, which reduced to some extent the burden on the team;
- The available stock of capacities was limited and insufficient in some instances (e.g. shelters), and so DG ECHO relied on Member States with providers capable of producing the necessary stocks.

In all cases, the necessary procedures to consult members were followed, which took about three weeks, after which the implementation phase started.

Overall, the expansion of rescEU in the context of this crisis was seen as positive and effective, as it was able to address requests that otherwise would probably have been addressed only later or not at all, given that the Member States were already overwhelmed. Nevertheless, some national authorities indicated that going forward they would favour a more robust analysis of needs and gaps to support the decision making underpinning capacities development.¹²⁴⁰

Channelling private donations

From the beginning of the crisis, there was an interest of the private sector and of third countries to provide help to Ukraine. Some stakeholders directly contacted DG ECHO/UCPM expressing their interest to donate goods. Traditionally Member and Participating States, as well as Ukraine itself, would have been the ones dealing with those private donations. However, the dimension of the crisis went beyond capacities available and prompted the UCPM to find a solution to act on those offers and channel private donations to fill assistance gaps and broaden available capacity.¹²⁴¹

As the UCPM is based on state-to-state support, the legislation imposed limitations on how private/external donations could be channelled by the UCPM. The practical solution that was found was to use rescEU grants to have Belgium establishing a hub to manage those donations. This entailed receiving donations of medicines and other goods, matching requests to offers and ensuring acceptance by Ukraine, carrying out a first quality check and dispatching the goods to the logistic hubs. The transportation of the assistance to the Belgium hub was to be supported by the donors. From the hub onwards the UCPM rules of co-financing applied.¹²⁴²

The interviews conducted and document reviewed highlighted that the channelling of private donations was seen as a positive development as they increased the capacity of the UCPM, when Member and Participating states and the market were strained. However, some elements were considered to have hindered, at some point, the effectiveness of this innovative solution:¹²⁴³

- **Lack of knowledge regarding Ukrainian requirements for goods.** At the beginning of operations, Ukrainian requirements (related, for example, to the expiry date of medicines) were not known, which led to the acceptance by Ukraine of offers that did not address specific requirements. Subsequently, measures were put in place to collect as many details as possible about requirements and to verify the compliance of the offers with those requirements.

¹²³⁹ Interviews with 2 DG ECHO.

¹²⁴⁰ Interviews with national authorities; KIIs (1 National authorities); DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022.

¹²⁴¹ Interviews with 3 DG ECHO and 1 donor; KIIs (3 DG ECHO desk officers).

¹²⁴² Interviews with 2 DG ECHO and 1 national authority; KIIs (3 DG ECHO desk officers).

¹²⁴³ Interviews with 7 DG ECHO, 1 national authority and 1 donor; KIIs (2 National authorities); DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022.

- **Offers with commercial interest.** In a limited number of cases, offers had financial burdens attached for Ukraine. The processing of these offers used resources without a positive impact.
- **Lack of legal framework.** While a practical solution was found for issues related to insurance, liability, transportation, customs, and financing, a more robust framework would have made the process simpler and faster, potentially leading to more offers and effective use of the hub.

UCPM Logistics Hubs

As access to Ukraine was restricted, the UCPM usual *modus operandi* was not feasible to implement and an alternative approach was necessary. The solution was found and consisted of establishing a system of warehouses as close to the borders of Ukraine as possible. The selection of the countries to host those hubs fell on Poland, Romania and Slovakia in order to receive, compile and dispatch goods to Ukraine from neighbouring countries. The hubs were set up jointly with respective national authorities. The main challenges were:

- Finding appropriate facilities at the desired locations with good accessibility;
- The limited availability of transport resources to Ukraine;
- Coordination with Ukrainian authorities to ensure the proper reception of goods;
- Lack of protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs);
- The limited availability of human resources to run the hubs.¹²⁴⁴

As concluded by the Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, the UCPM Logistics hubs contributed to a more effective response.¹²⁴⁵ The interviews and the review of documentation carried out in the context of this case study support this finding, highlighting the flexibility of the UCPM teams in developing this innovative solution (in the context of the UCPM) and in quickly setting it up together with Member States. While the legislation had not foreseen the co-financing of hubs, it proved somewhat flexible and allowed for it under certain conditions. One of the main advantages to Member and participating States of this solution was that DG ECHO was able to provide and fully finance the last leg of transport to Ukraine.¹²⁴⁶

The lack of monitoring of the delivered assistance provided through the hubs limited possibilities of conducting a robust assessment of the concrete outcomes/impacts of that assistance. Nevertheless, the provision of generators to medical facilities, of demining equipment, and medicines are expected to have reduced human suffering and loss of life.

MedEvac hub

In response to requests for medical evacuation by Ukraine, more than 2,350 patients were transferred to various countries between March 2022 and July 2023.¹²⁴⁷ Before the setting up of the MedEvac hub, patients and families arriving from Ukraine would wait for the transportation in an area that did not have adequate facilities (e.g. toilets) and support.

Consequently, the MedEvac hub was considered a positive and effective development with an impact on the wellbeing of patients and their families, which contributed to reducing human suffering and potentially saving human lives. In addition, it contributed to simplifying the logistics of the medical evaluations as, by providing a proper place for patients to wait for transport, it reduced the need to precisely coordinate the

¹²⁴⁴ In Slovakia a private company was hired to manage the hub.

¹²⁴⁵ DG ECHO (2023), Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022.

¹²⁴⁶ Interviews with 9 DG ECHO; DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022.

¹²⁴⁷ Emergency Response Coordination Centre —DG ECHO Daily Map | 05/07/2023

transport from Ukraine with the arrival of the onward plane to Poland and thus avoided the return of patients to Ukraine in case of a significant delay/cancellation of the transport.¹²⁴⁸

- The main limitations highlighted by stakeholders consulted and documentation reviewed were:¹²⁴⁹
- The reliance on one airplane for transportation, which limited transport capacity and potentially led to longer waiting times. This was also seen as risky as the operation would have had to be stopped in case of issues with the plane.
- The reliance on volunteers to transport the patients in ambulances from Ukraine to the hub.
- Limited number of ambulances.
- The use of informal communication channels with the responsible for the first leg of the trip (i.e., Ukraine to hub).

A7.3.3.2 Efficiency

This sub-section explores the extent to which the support provided could have been done at a lower cost or faster and whether there were more cost-effective alternatives.

During the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the swiftness of the assistance took priority over cost considerations. Nevertheless, the coordination of the assistance by the UCPM was seen as contributing significantly to the efficiency of the overall support provided by Members and Participating States.¹²⁵⁰

The interviews and documentation review highlighted that DG ECHO's main focus was to provide the necessary assistance as quickly as possible, even if that meant occasionally inefficient use of resources. For example, trains would be sent to Ukraine even when not full to ensure the quick delivery of assistance and the allocation of grants for the implementation of capacities was mostly driven by speed of delivery.

Some elements however hindered the efficiency of the support, with an impact on its costs and timeliness, including:¹²⁵¹

- Transportation financing procedures were considered cumbersome and long, using substantial human resources and leading to delays in the operations;
- Procedures to develop capacities causing unnecessary delays given the extraordinary context of the crisis (e.g., the need to follow certain steps sequentially instead of in parallel);
- Insufficient coordination of procurement procedures;
- Supporting tools to management of requests/offers (CECIS) were not adequate to deal with the dimension and complexity of the operations, which led to human resources needing more time to manage the process and delays;
- Communication was non-optimal at times leading to occasional misunderstandings and wastage of resources;
- Unavailability of SOPs at the beginning of the operations leading to sub-optimal coordination of the resources;

¹²⁴⁸ Interviews with 3 DG ECHO; DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022.

¹²⁴⁹ Interviews with 3 DG ECHO; DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022.

¹²⁵⁰ Interviews with 5 DG ECHO; DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022; DG ECHO (2023), Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022.

¹²⁵¹ Interviews with 11 DG ECHO; DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022; DG ECHO (2023), Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022.

- Unavailability of human resources with the necessary experience/knowledge of the UCPM which led to some misalignments and delays;
- Misunderstanding around the MedEvac and the approach to channel private donations.

It is however not possible to assess the extent to which each of these elements impacted efficiency due to the lack of data.

The challenging context, as well as limited data on needs and urgency of the response, limited the possibility of conducting a robust and consistent analysis of alternative solutions, with the UCPM often adopting a pragmatic approach of selecting the most feasible and quicker solution.

The lack of disaggregated data on costs and monitoring data on the outcome of the provided support does not allow for an analysis of the cost-effectiveness of the operations. Interviews conducted and documentation reviewed suggest that when setting up the logistic hubs, the MedEvac hub, and private donations scheme, DG ECHO made some cost-effectiveness considerations, but that these were not consistent or systematic. Overall, the logistic hubs were considered a cost-effective solution by stakeholders consulted. The opinions on the cost-effectiveness of the MedEvac and of the channelling of private donations were generally positive, but some concerns were expressed.

Regarding the MedEvac hub, the main concern was that it was not being used at its full capacity, and therefore did not generate as many benefits as it might have.¹²⁵²

Regarding the channelling of private donations, its positive impact on cost-effectiveness was highlighted by donors, DG ECHO and national authorities.¹²⁵³ For example, available data on the donations processed by the hub in Belgium and the hub in Poland suggests that the overall value of the donated medicines, medical equipment, CBRN countermeasures and hygiene and sanitation items (about EUR 7 million of completed donation and EUR 4.2 million in ongoing donations) was about 11 times the cost of operating the hubs (which DG estimates to be less than EUR 1 million on personal, subcontracting, and purchasing costs). This means that the return on the investment was extremely high and that the cost-effectiveness of processing donations was positive in principle.¹²⁵⁴

Furthermore, the fact that the UCPM requires the acceptance of offers by Ukraine and ensures the delivery of the goods to the authorities was regarded as contributing to the cost-effectiveness by those providing the donations. Nevertheless, the relation between costs and benefits appears to depend on the type of goods, and the complexity of requirements and procedures associated to those goods. In some cases, interviewees considered that the resources required to control the quality / process some of the goods donated (e.g. laptops) were higher than the expected benefits of those goods.¹²⁵⁵

A7.3.3.3 EU Added value

This sub-section explored the extent to which logistic hubs and channelling private donations would be relevant to prepare and respond to future crises.

The support provided by the UCPM complemented bilateral support by Member and Participating States and increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall assistance to Ukraine. The UCPM coordination role could have not been provided by Member States alone.¹²⁵⁶

¹²⁵² ECHO (2023), Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022.

¹²⁵³ Interviews with 5 DG ECHO, 1 national authority, 1 donor; DG ECHO (2022), Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022; DG ECHO June 2022, Final Report of the 7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022.

¹²⁵⁴ No definitive conclusion can be taken as there is not information on the use and impact of those medicines.

¹²⁵⁵ Interviews with 2 DG ECHO.

¹²⁵⁶ Interviews with 2 DG ECHO.

The UCPM coordination of the assistance provided by Member States and Participating States was seen as offering added value, as it ensured a more efficient assistance and reduced the burden on Ukrainian authorities who had to engage with fewer counterparts and delivery events thanks to the pooling of goods. In addition, coordination with various cross-sectoral national and international entities and organisations was also regarded as of added value.

The use of rescEU capacities filled gaps and relieved the burden on some Member States already overstretched by providing continuous assistance over a long period of time.

Finally, the channelling of private donations removed an administrative burden from different national authorities and Ukraine, as they did not have to deal with processing and channelling the donations themselves.

A7.3.3.4 Coherence

This sub-section explores the level of alignment and coordination between the UCPM support the DG ECHO Humanitarian Aid support.

The relations between the Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid parts of DG ECHO were strengthened, however coordination and cooperation in the field was limited.

Interviews highlighted that challenges and characteristic of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine brought the Civil Protection and the Humanitarian Aid sides of DG ECHO closer. Some of the needs to be addressed by UCPM, such as food assistance and shelter, were traditionally also covered by Humanitarian Aid. Furthermore, the presence of DG ECHO field officers in Ukraine allowed to fill in information gaps in UCPM given that civil protection authorities could not access Ukrainian territory. Finally, both sides were facing similar logistic and coordination challenges and decided to coordinate and explore synergies, while respecting their intrinsic difference as UCPM deals with state-to-state assistance while Humanitarian aid does not deal directly with states.¹²⁵⁷

Nevertheless, evidence suggests that in the field, coordination and cooperation was not visible and that interactions between the different components of DG ECHO was left to the pro-activeness of individuals.¹²⁵⁸

¹²⁵⁷ Interviews with 7 DG ECHO.

¹²⁵⁸ Interviews with 5 DG ECHO.

A7.3.4 Key challenges faced and Lessons learnt

This section summarises the key challenges faced by the UCPM when providing support and lessons learnt (including best practices) that can be of added value not only in the context of this crisis but also for future operations that may face similar challenges.

Key challenge	Implications	Lessons learnt	Comments for future operations
Lack of access to the territory	Not possible to directly assess the needs on the ground and subsequent difficulties in prioritising need	Close interaction with the national authorities of the requesting country.	Integration of a liaison officer from CP authority of the affected country in the EUCPT and in Logistic Hubs
		Close interaction with the DG ECHO Humanitarian Aid HQ and field officers.	Continue strengthening the interaction between DG ECHO CP and DG ECHO HA, by increasing internal awareness of the work done by each as well as promoting regular exchanges between the teams.
		Close interaction with other international organisations with information about the needs.	When feasible, consider setting up on-site joint working groups with relevant international stakeholders (no duplication of UN cluster system)
		Obtain as many details as possible about the needs and request.	Ensure CECIS 2.0 can support the collection of detailed data on requests and needs in a structured way. Consider providing a good alternative to CECIS for countries without access to it
	Not possible to deliver the support in the target territory	Logistic hubs that receive and consolidate assistance can be very effective and efficiency solutions. Important to have SOPs in place as soon as possible and continuously improve them based on the evolution of the operations and lessons learnt.	Consider having templates for protocols/agreements as well as guidelines to facilitate systematic and prompt setting up of logistic hubs. Consider drafting guidelines/ SOPs for logistic hubs so that they are ready from the onset.

Key challenge	Implications	Lessons learnt	Comments for future operations
			Consider building on the expertise developed by the teams that established and ran the logistic hubs.
		Identify the interlocutors from the requesting country	
		Set up communication protocols supported by reliable communication system	
	Not possible to directly monitor the assistance provided , which limits possibilities to assess the effectiveness of operations	<p>Need to develop and implement a system to support the tracking and traceability of assistance, including its final destination</p> <p>Collect data on the results and possible outcomes of the assistance.</p> <p>Ensure the Member States receive the obtained information.</p>	<p>Consider developing a tool to support the tracking and traceability of assistance.</p> <p>Consider developing a few indicators on results and outcomes, to make support the collection of structure data.</p>
<p>High level of a variety of needs for a long period of time;</p> <p>Needs that evolve quickly with the changes in the context/crisis</p>	Limited availability of Pool capacities	<p>Flexibility and ability to quickly reinforce/develop new capacities is essential to address needs in a timely manner.</p> <p>Having the standards and the legal basis of the various capacities ready / in a very advanced stage significantly reduced the workload and time required for the development of new capacities.</p> <p>Competition/lack of coordination between procurement by Members and limited</p>	<p>Consider using scenario-based approach to plan the development of capacities (at least the standards and draft legal basis).</p> <p>Consider developing procedures for fast access to private market to get specific capacities which rare/not existing within the UCPM but critical for mission success (e.g. MedEvac transport capacities, both land and air)</p>

Key challenge	Implications	Lessons learnt	Comments for future operations
	Unavailability of capacities to address certain types of (non-traditional) needs	<p>availability of stocks on the market, can lead to price increases and scarcity of items.</p> <p>Donations from private sector and third countries can help fill in gaps, however this solution may not be cost-effective for certain types of items, given the resources required to process the offers, carry out quality check and customs clearance.</p>	Consider allowing for Member and Participating Member States declaring an 'accelerated procedure', that would allow to simplify some administrative procedures and carry out certain steps in parallel.
	Procedures to use rescEU requiring some time		Further strengthen the coordination of Member States procurement of certain identified items, for example by establishing a platform for States to share information on planned procurements.
			Consider developing legislation to ensure cooperation with the private sector and third countries when feasible and cost-effective.
	Support system to manage requests/offers not fit for purpose	An updated version of CECIS is highly needed to improve the management of information and support operations.	Ensure that future support systems and IT platforms are designed with scalability and adaptability in mind to accommodate new and emerging challenges in a flexible manner.
Involvement in a man-made crisis not traditionally address via civil protection mechanisms	Periodic emergence of non-traditional civil protection needs	<p>Cross-sectional approaches are very important to meet certain needs.</p> <p>There was a need to coordinate/cooperate with authorities from non-civil protection / traditional sectors.</p> <p>The lack of awareness of the UPCM by authorities/entities/organisations that the UPCM</p>	<p>Consider actions to improve the awareness of the UCPM among entities/organisations from various sectors at EU level and national level.</p> <p>Consider fostering a culture of adopting a more cross-sectional approach to needs when relevant</p>

Key challenge	Implications	Lessons learnt	Comments for future operations
		<p>has to interact and coordinate with can cause delays, misunderstandings and impact the effectiveness and efficiency of operations.</p> <p>Having people with different areas of expertise in the EUCP Teams improves the interaction with authorities from different sectors</p>	<p>Consider building on the relations developed with other sectors during the operations and promote outreach actions towards new stakeholders</p> <p>Consider providing appropriate political support from the DG ECHO top management to the EUCP teams in the early stage of their deployment, particularly to a country which is, for example, not aware about UCPM</p>
Limited resources both at DG ECHO and national authorities to provide timely support	Limited human resources at ERCC and UCPM in general	Ability to quickly increase the human resources available (for example by temporarily deploying/moving people from different unit) is highly beneficial	Consider having an internal mechanism to further simplify and promote internal mobility when needed.
	Limited human resources for field deployment, leading to the deployment of people with sub-optimal profiles and high rotation of teams	<p>Overlapping of team leaders to ensure a proper handover is essential.</p> <p>Formal introduction of the new team leader to relevant national authorities and other partners can be beneficial.</p> <p>High rotation of teams can cause fatigue at national counterparts and ensuring a consistent message/approach by all deployed teams is extremely important.</p>	Consider developing procedures and guidelines to ensure proper handovers between teams and the consistency of approach by all deployed teams.
	Limited human resources in the Member and Participating States to deal with the high administrative burden related to UCPM procedures	Transportation financing procedures, grant procedures and other procedures are cumbersome and resource/time consuming.	Consider simplifying transportation financing procedures and grant related procedures.

Key challenge	Implications	Lessons learnt	Comments for future operations
	Member and Participating States have limited budget	The existing procedures cause delays in transferring budget from UCPM to States which puts a high burden on the latter	

A7.3.5 List of references

- Mission reports:
 - Expert Mission - Final Report EUCP TEAM BRAVO PL, May 2022
 - Mission report to MD and UA, June 2022
 - Mission and Capitalization Report, September 2022
 - Mission Report - MedEvac hub, November 2022
 - Mission Report – Poland, June 2022
 - Mission Report_Medevac Hub PL, January 2023
 - Call for rescEU proposals:
 - UCPM-2022-rescEU-UA Response Emergency Energy Supply DE
 - UCPM-2022-rescEU-UA Response Shelter RO
 - UCPM-2022-rescEU-UA Response Shelter SE
 - UCPM-2022-rescEU-UA Response Winter Shelter SE
- Lessons learnt:
 - DG ECHO, Outcome Document: UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting Preliminary Lessons from Russia's War on Ukraine – internal communication, 15 September 2022.
 - Progress report n° 1, Grant agreement n° ECHO/RESP/SUB/2022/873056/RESCEU/SHELTER/Bex
 - SPOs for Belgium hub
 - DG ECHO 2023, Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022, and of the Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022.
 - DG ECHO June 2022, Final Report of the 7th European Civil Protection Forum 2022.

A7.3.6 List of stakeholders consulted

Stakeholder	Type of interview (remote/field)
DG ECHO LO (x8)	Remote
DG ECHO ERCC	Remote
DG ECHO EHRC	Remote
DG ECHO rescEU (x2)	Remote
EUCPT leaders (x 2)	Remote
National civil protection authority (2)	Remote
Donor	Remote

A7.4 Beirut port explosion

A7.4.1 Introduction to the case study

This case study examines the UCPM response to the explosion occurred in the port of Beirut (Lebanon) in August 2020. The aim of the case study is to assess the effectiveness of UCPM's response to the request for assistance, and also to measure the extent to which UCPM support was cost-effective and timely, the relevance of the response, as well as the extent to which UCPM work related to the explosion was coherent and complementary with national and international efforts. As

there were several reports produced by DG ECHO and national teams on the UCPM response to the Beirut port explosion, this case study aims to complement the information included in existing reports, particularly by assessing the perspective of Lebanese national authorities and of single Civil Protection (CP) experts who were deployed during the mission.

A7.4.2 Limitations to the case study

A few limitations should be considered with regard to this case study:

- Despite numerous requests from the evaluation team, the Lebanese authorities did not share some documentation related to previous exercises and simulations carried out in Lebanon (with and without the support of the European Commission), impacting the analysis of Relevance and Coherence;
- No data was provided regarding the cost-effectiveness of the response by the stakeholders, therefore the findings against this criterion (Efficiency) were limited.

A7.4.3 Context

This section will provide an overview of:

- The evolving context of Beirut port explosion;
- Support provided by the UCPM.

At 18:08 on 4 August 2020, a warehouse containing a large amount of ammonium nitrate exploded at the port of Beirut, Lebanon. Two explosions caused a devastating blast wave that impacted the city of Beirut for over 20 kilometres from the port area. Numerous neighbourhoods were severely affected. Infrastructure, health facilities, residential buildings, businesses, and schools within a five-kilometre radius from the explosion epicentre suffered damage.¹²⁵⁹ The explosion resulted in the death of at least 200 people, while approximately 6,500 individuals were injured and around 300,000 were displaced from their homes. The incident had long-term effects on the lives of thousands of people, as healthcare centres, homes, and schools were significantly damaged. The situation was complicated by the presence of hazardous chemicals, safety concerns due to anti-government protests, and travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 82 provides a visual overview of the location of the explosion and the damage at the affected pier.

Figure 82. Location of explosion and consequent crater at Beirut's port

Location of the explosion at Beirut's port



Location of the crater at the pier



Source: Lebanese Armed Forces - Engineering Regiment

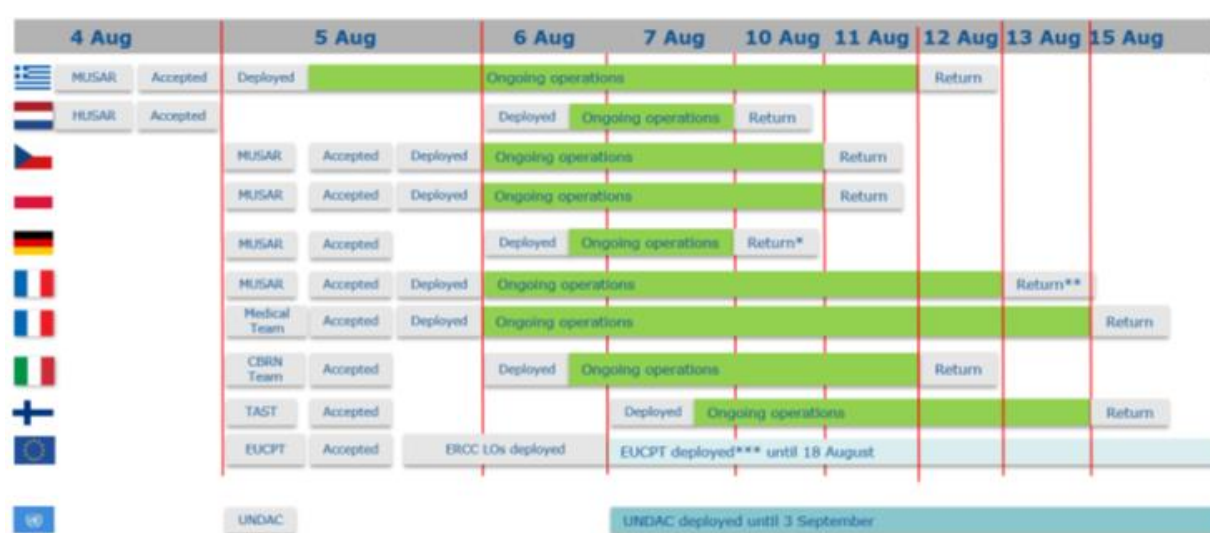
The UCPM was activated by the Lebanese Government (Prime Ministers' office) in pre-alert mode 2 hours after the explosion. Video-conferences with Member States and Participating States were

¹²⁵⁹ INSARAG Technical After-Action Review (AAR) on the Beirut Port Explosion Response Report, 18 December 2020

carried out by the ERCC to allow for a coordinated offer of assistance. Nearly 300 emergency response professionals from seven EU Member States (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Poland, and Italy) were deployed, providing search and rescue (CZ, DE, EL, NL, PL, FR) medical (FR), and CBRN (IT) teams and modules. The European Union also dispatched a civil protection team (EUCPT) consisting of 15 experts, including a 6-person Technical Assistance and Support Team (TAST) from Finland and 2 ERCC Liaison Officers (LOs) to coordinate aid provided through the UCPM. Furthermore, sixteen EU Member States and UCPM Participating States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey) delivered in-kind assistance to Lebanon. Other MS provided assistance bilaterally.¹²⁶⁰

Figure 83 provides an overview of the timeline of the deployment of UCPM teams. The initial search and rescue teams (EL), as well as the first wave of in-kind assistance, arrived on 5 August 2020. The ERCC LOs, the EUCPT and the other teams followed shortly after, arriving between 6 and 7 August. Additionally, the local DG ECHO Office received reinforcements in the form of seven humanitarian experts.

Figure 83. Beirut blast – UCPM timeline



Source: DG ECHO, Overview UCPM activations 2020

This emergency response marked the first major deployment of the UCPM during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) faced challenges related to quarantine measures and logistics in this unique context.¹²⁶¹

A7.4.4 Case study findings

This section discusses case study findings by evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, EU added value.

A7.4.4.1 Effectiveness

On the day of the explosion, the Mechanism was activated at 21:51 UTC by the Office of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The Disaster Risk Management Unit (DRM) acted as a focal point in the country, communicating to the ERCC the type of capacities needed (e.g. USAR, tools, dogs, etc.).

¹²⁶⁰ DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Ammonium Nitrate Explosions In The Port of Beirut, November 2020

¹²⁶¹ DG ECHO, Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting 2020 UCPM Activations, 19-20 January 2021

As outlined in the section above, the EU provided a substantial response to the crisis, with 20 UCPM Member/Participating States offering assistance. Seven Member States sent nearly 300 emergency response professionals, while 16 countries delivered in-kind assistance. A team of nine EU civil protection experts (EUCP Team), a six-person TAST, and two liaison officers were deployed to Beirut from 6 to 17 August. The capacity of the DG ECHO office in Lebanon was also strengthened through the provision of seven humanitarian experts.

Additionally, assistance was delivered via three DG ECHO Humanitarian Air Bridge (EU HAB) flights. The initial flight, on 12 August, travelled from Lyon to Beirut, delivering 17 tonnes of aid, including contributions from UNICEF and Médecins du Monde. The subsequent flight originated from Maastricht, delivering 12 tonnes of aid, which encompassed Spanish assistance, personal protective equipment (PPE) from the University of Antwerp, and other humanitarian partner contributions. On 12 September, the final HAB flight from Munich transported 29 tonnes of assistance, including medical supplies and WASH equipment from Portugal, as well as eight ambulances and firefighting equipment from Germany. The EU's satellite mapping service, Copernicus, was also activated on 5 August to help with damage assessment, resulting in three maps. In total, the European Commission initially allocated €33 million to the response, then pledged an additional €30 million on 9 August, taking the total contribution to €64.12 million.¹²⁶² Furthermore, in December 2020, the EU adopted an additional support package of close to €100 million to help Lebanon address the consequences of the explosion at the port of Beirut and support a recovery from the catastrophe focused on meeting the population's needs.¹²⁶³

The immediate emergency response to the explosion was managed by several local authorities and agencies in Lebanon. These included the Lebanese Red Cross, Lebanon's Civil Defence, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), and local Beirut hospitals. The Lebanese Government, immediately after the explosion, decided to put Beirut under emergency law. Emergency law was subsequently active for approximately 4 months. In the aftermath of the explosion the Government assigned management responsibility inside the port area to the LAF, which coordinated the internal and external response. Outside of the port area, management responsibility was assigned to the municipality of Beirut in collaboration with the LAF and Civil Defence.¹²⁶⁴ These actors worked together on search and rescue operations, emergency medical care, and other immediate response activities.

The majority of stakeholders consulted reported that **UCPM teams effectively supported the efforts of Lebanese authorities, and that there was effective communication and collaboration with the LAF**, which assigned liaison officers to each of the UCPM teams.¹²⁶⁵ Furthermore, although a UNDAC team was present at the site, their role in coordination was somewhat marginalised due to the fact that they were invited by the UN Resident Coordinator rather than directly by the Lebanese government. However, after the publication of the Flash Appeal, they closely collaborated with the Advanced Emergency room to coordinate the activities of various international and non-governmental organisations (INGOs and NGOs) operating in the field.¹²⁶⁶

Data collected in the field shows that Lebanese national authorities directly involved in the search and rescue operations expressed satisfaction with the results of the work of all UCPM teams.¹²⁶⁷ UCPM team were assigned to working sectors (see Figure 84) within the port perimeter and performed additional work outside the port area. The UCPM teams carried out several activities during the deployment period, including search and rescue operations, structural assessments, CBRN

¹²⁶² DG ECHO, Questionnaire for UCPM representatives regarding case studies

¹²⁶³ EU Press Release, The EU mobilises additional €100 million in response to the Beirut port explosion in Lebanon, 23 December 2020

¹²⁶⁴ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (6 out of 10)

¹²⁶⁵ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (9 out of 10), Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (2), Interviews with EUCPT Team Leader (1)

¹²⁶⁶ Interviews with EUCPT Team Leader (1); DG ECHO, Final Report: EU Civil Protection Team – Beirut, 15 September 2020

¹²⁶⁷ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (8 out of 10)

assessments, medical assistance, meetings with local authorities and international response actors, and more. The main achievements of response efforts are discussed below.

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) response:

- The UCPM sent USAR teams from six Member States: the Netherlands (Heavy USAR), Czech Republic (Medium USAR), France (Medium USAR), Germany (Medium USAR, damage assessment team), Greece (Medium USAR), Poland (Medium USAR);
- The NL HUSAR team established a USAR Coordination Cell (UCC) to assist the LAF in coordinating the international search and rescue efforts, and to directly coordinate UCPM USAR teams and the IT CBRN team. The team also retrieved from the rubble some cell phones and human remains which were handed over to LEMA;
- The EL MUSAR team, , recovered five large safes as a result of the search operations. Safes were then handed over to local authorities;
- The FR MUSAR team, in coordination with local and international teams, extracted a total of 7 bodies from the rubble;
- USAR experts also joined the Damage Assessment Coordination Cell (DACC) and provided assistance in assessing the extent of damage to buildings. Overall, more than 580 assessments were conducted by engineers from international USAR teams, with more than half performed by engineers from UCPM teams in the municipality of Beirut (NL, CZ, DE, FR, IT CBRN).

Chemical-Biological-Radiological-Nuclear (CBRN) response:

- Italian CBRN experts supported the operations of USAR teams through the identification of possible CBRN related risks and definition of mitigation measures in the area affected by the explosion;
- The IT team reported small concentrations of chemical substances (e.g. paint, solvents, and asbestos), which could have posed potential minor health risks without protective equipment. Upon their arrival to Beirut, the DG ECHO LOs were informed by the CBRN team about the presence of asbestos particles in the air close to the port, and about the need to wear FFP2-type masks at all times when in the affected areas. The ERCC immediately conveyed this information to all teams and experts deployed under the UCPM.

Medical Team response:

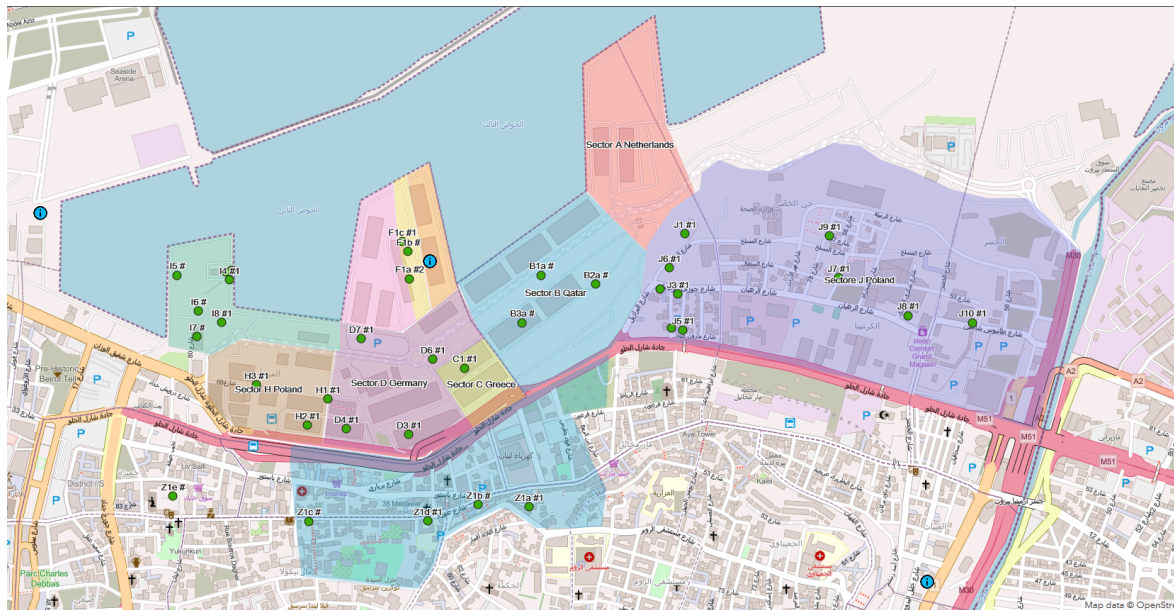
- The French medical team supported the set-up of mobile medical posts in four hospitals in Beirut (Saint Joseph Hospital, Hotel Dieu Hospital, American University of Beirut Medical Center, and Rafik Hariri Hospital). It also set up a dispensary at the Quarantina barracks near the port, which had been heavily damaged by the explosion, for the benefit of the local population;
- The team treated more than 150 patients and French medical staff also used the opportunity to train Lebanese nurses.

European Union Civil Protection Team (EUCPT) coordination:

- During the whole deployment period, the EUCPT remained in constant contact with Lebanon's local authorities, analysing potential needs for Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) or other support modules;
- The EUCPT had other focal points in the Advanced Emergency Room and tasked with the management of in-kind assistance;
- The EUCPT medical experts' role was initially ambiguous due to the presence of only one medical team deployed under UCPM. As the focus shifted from explosion-related health issues to a COVID-19 response, EUCPT's involvement in the health sector was limited, with a good cooperation with the Ministry of Public Health.

- The EUCPT had to identify different national contact points as operations were divided in two main parts: ground zero (i.e. the port) which was managed by the LAF; and Beirut City, which was managed by the municipality of Beirut under the supervision of the LAF.

Figure 84. Division of working sectors for international response teams



Source: THW, *Explosion Lebanon - Final Report*

Furthermore, the large majority of stakeholders, including Lebanese national authorities, reported that the **communication and coordination with (and within) UCPM teams was very good**.¹²⁶⁸ The UCPM teams particularly praised the swift communication and coordination with the LAF, and reported it as a good result because CP teams are normally not used to working in a setting coordinated by military forces (but rather by the host country CP authority).¹²⁶⁹ As reported by the Lebanese stakeholders interviewed, the LAF was not trained to manage emergencies of this type, but they received overall coordination responsibility from the Government due to their reliability and experience in similar contexts.¹²⁷⁰

It was also reported that communication with Lebanese authorities was facilitated by the good level of English of all relevant stakeholders, which enabled a swift collaboration, and that the **initiative of the Lebanese authorities to assign LAF Liaison Officers to each of the UCPM teams** (also helping with logistical requests such as fuel, etc.) enabled a more coordinated response and was considered as a best practice of “ideal response situation” in a third country.¹²⁷¹ Lebanese authorities also reported that the choice to assign LOs from the LAF Engineering Regiment was positive, as the selected Officers had undergone international coordination trainings with other armed forces in Europe (e.g. France).¹²⁷²

Another enabler to the positive communication and collaboration between the UCPM and Lebanese authorities was the **choice of the DG ECHO Liaison Officers (LOs) sent in the field**. Personnel deployed were familiar with the cultural, political and social situation of Lebanon and were praised by interviewees for their active role during the mission as well as for their rapid deployment, which

¹²⁶⁸ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (8 out of 10), Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (1), Interviews with EUCPT Team Leader (1), Interviews with DG ECHO (1)

¹²⁶⁹ Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (1), Interviews with EUCPT Team Leader (1)

¹²⁷⁰ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (6 out of 10)

¹²⁷¹ Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (1)

¹²⁷² Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (6 out of 10)

was useful for the EUCPT to get quickly up to speed upon arrival in Beirut.¹²⁷³ Indeed, as reported in the Final Report of the EUCPT, the deployment of DG ECHO LOs ahead of the rest of the EU Civil Protection Team was useful to gain better situational awareness. Their priority in the first two days was to make contact with the European teams deployed under the UCPM who were already on site; connect with the point of contact from the LAF; identify and prioritise additional needs; clarify the emergency national organisation; and support the logistics needs for incoming EUCPT (e.g. accommodation, warehousing).¹²⁷⁴

As regards coordination, Lebanese authorities also reported that they found the virtual OSOCC (VOSOCC) as a very helpful tool for them to organise and carry out meetings and briefings, thus contributing to better coordination. As a lessons learnt, the LAF mentioned the possibility to be granted limited access to the VOSOCC (for example as a user with no input rights), which would help their internal coordination as well as coordination with the international response.¹²⁷⁵ However, EU Teams argued that the VOSOCC is a more complex tool which is not dedicated only to single actions, but encompasses a series of emergencies. In light of this, an alternative choice could be the creation of an emergency management platform dedicated to single responses and access to which could be shared with external stakeholders.¹²⁷⁶

With regard to whether UCPM teams used the most updated technologies to deal with the response to the explosion, none of the interviewees expressed an opinion on the matter. However, the TAST reported on the excessive use of printers and paper, suggesting a shift towards more environmentally friendly and secure methods in future missions. The TAST proposed using more technologically advanced tools, such as projectors, to display maps and information on walls or backgrounds, which would not only reduce paper usage but also improve the security of sensitive information. This change would also make potentially unexpected visits from camera crews less problematic, as digital displays can be quickly turned off.¹²⁷⁷

A7.4.4.2 Efficiency

Overall, the **EU response to the explosion was carried out in a timely manner**, although there were some issues related to the timeframe of the deployment of some teams (e.g. EUCPT). Due to the absence of relevant data, it **was not possible to conclude whether the mission was cost-effective**, although some examples of factors which might have influenced cost-effectiveness were reported.

For the mission in Beirut, the European Commission covered up to 75% of transport and operations costs for modules and in-kind assistance, with Member and Participating states requesting around EUR 6 Million.¹²⁷⁸ The European Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) effectively handled all travel arrangements for the team. Flights were booked from the team members' home cities to Beirut International Airport. The DG ECHO Office in Beirut assisted with airport pickups, thus facilitating timeliness of the response.

The timeliness of the UCPM response was particularly praised by Lebanese authorities, who reported that:

7. the activation of the Mechanism and communication with ERCC was rapid and efficient, particularly because of the speed of the ERCC in replying to the requests of the Lebanese DRMU Office;¹²⁷⁹

¹²⁷³ Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (1), Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (2 out of 10), Interviews with EUCPT Team Leader (1)

¹²⁷⁴ DG ECHO, Final Report: EU Civil Protection Team – Beirut, 15 September 2020

¹²⁷⁵ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (6 out of 10)

¹²⁷⁶ Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (1)

¹²⁷⁷ DG ECHO, Final Report: TAST – Beirut, 15 September 2020

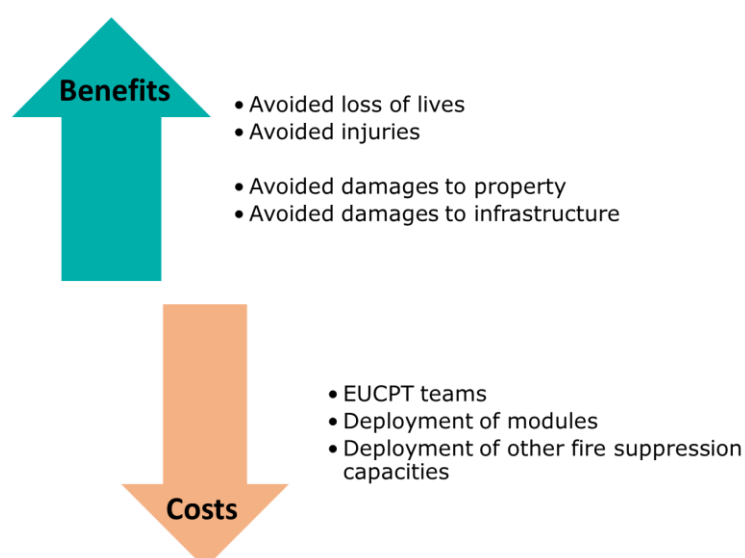
¹²⁷⁸ DG ECHO, Questionnaire for UCPM representatives regarding case studies

¹²⁷⁹ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (1 out of 10)

8. the work of the USAR and CBRN teams in the port area lasted five days, and the Engineering Regiment of the LAF estimated that it would have taken at least three times longer to perform search and rescue as well as CBRN detection without the UCPM intervention. Notably, the LAF mentioned that the EU USAR teams were proposed by local authorities to start working in the assigned areas the day after their arrival, but they insisted on starting immediately, which was positively remarked by Lebanese stakeholders.¹²⁸⁰ One stakeholder criticised the fact that the EUCPT was deployed only two days after the first USAR team and the DG ECHO LO's, stating that the EUCPT should be on site before the UCPM modules.¹²⁸¹

In terms of cost-effectiveness, the potential benefits of the UCPM response to the activation request made by Lebanon include avoided loss of lives; avoided injured; avoided property losses / damages; and avoided infrastructure losses / damages. The corresponding incremental UCPM costs was related to the cost for the UCPM to provide the response to the request (i.e. EUCPT teams, modules, and other capacities). Following the approach used by the World Bank,¹²⁸² a simplified model was developed to attempt to quantify the socio-economic benefits and costs of the UCPM activation covered in the context of the case study (see Figure 85).

Figure 85. Simplified model for the CBA



Source: ICF elaboration

The quantification of each benefit and cost was to be done following the World bank model. However, after a review of available documentation and data and consulting relevant stakeholders, it was concluded that the benefits did not materialise because of the nature of the consequences of the disaster. Although the UCPM teams were deployed in a timely manner, due to the type of consequences of the explosion, no lives were directly saved by UCPM teams and there is no record of avoided injuries besides treatment of patients at the hospital (on which there was no available data to be analysed). Furthermore, while there were no collapsed buildings outside of the port area, UCPM USAR teams carried out building damage assessments in coordination with the Damage Assessment Coordination Cell (DACC), but the model did not allow to quantify the potential benefit related to avoided injuries or further damages to properties and infrastructure.

Nevertheless, the analysis of reports highlighted some factors which influenced the efficiency of the mission in Lebanon as well as lessons. These include:

¹²⁸⁰ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (6 out of 10)

¹²⁸¹ Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (1)

¹²⁸² World Bank. 2021. Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness. © World Bank, Washington, DC

- The collaboration between the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP) and the Technical Assistance and Support Team (TAST) could offer more synergies and efficiencies, particularly if the same country is supplying TAST to the UCPM and IHP ICT support to the UNDAC;
- The local capacity to efficiently receive and distribute incoming aid was relatively weak. Lebanese authorities did not set up a Reception Departure Centre (RDC), nor did they allow others to establish one. This caused delays in integrating the incoming aid into the country and its current structures. National authorities set up an "Emergency Room" for coordination only a week after the incident;
- For the first time, a Liaison Officer from the Local Emergency Management Authority (LEMA) was included in the UCC team, improving its efficiency and effectiveness. This practice could become a standard and be incorporated into UCPM Guidelines/ Manual;
- The TAST should have been better prepared for an "hotel-based" mission, and able to start support from very beginning (e.g. through the provision of WIFI, logistics, business cards, mapping, etc.). Some important material from TAST was also held in the cargo at the airport (e.g. FFP2 masks);
- The mission's cost-effectiveness was positively influenced by the fact that the accommodation was hotel-based rather than camp-based, which considerably reduced expenses on equipment and transport.¹²⁸³

Another efficiency-related aspect investigated was the necessity to deploy on a "non-regret basis" a large EUCPT and TAST team to Beirut, with the possibility to scale-down at a later stage. When the mission was scaled down, four out of six members of the TAST team were repatriated. When prompted about the potential effect on the efficiency of sending larger teams on the mission, stakeholders agreed that it would be better to deploy on a non-regret basis and then downscale rather than facing a resource issue during the most intensive days of a response mission (i.e. the first days).¹²⁸⁴ In the case of the Beirut explosion, the scale and affected areas were clear from the beginning, but the number of people affected was unclear.

Lastly, the "morale" effect of the UCPM deployment was reported by Lebanese national authorities as a non-quantifiable benefit of the work of UCPM teams in Beirut. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the LAF mentioned that the presence and expertise of international teams made them feel supported in coping with a disaster which had no similar precedents in the country. Second it reassured the Lebanese population and media who were starting to put pressure on authorities in the aftermath of the explosion, for example to promptly recover the bodies of victims.¹²⁸⁵

A7.4.4.3 Relevance

Overall, the case study found that **UCPM preparedness (e.g. training and exercises) and response activities were relevant to the needs of Lebanese national authorities.**

Disaster risk management in Lebanon is coordinated by the **Disaster Risk Management Unit (DRMU)**, which is part of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The DRMU works to enhance Lebanon's resilience and ability to respond to a variety of disasters, including natural disasters, environmental emergencies, and man-made crises. The DRMU's work involves preparing for potential disasters, including planning, coordination, and capacity building. Furthermore, the Lebanese **Civil Defence**, which is part of Lebanon's Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, also plays a crucial role in disaster risk management. Its responsibilities include:¹²⁸⁶

- raising awareness about potential risks, hazards, and the importance of preparedness;

¹²⁸³ Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (1)

¹²⁸⁴ Interviews with UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader (1), Interviews with EUCPT Team Leader (1), Interviews with TAST (1)

¹²⁸⁵ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (6 out of 10)

¹²⁸⁶ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (3 out of 10)

- providing an immediate response during a disaster or emergency;
- coordinating with other national and international agencies during a disaster response; and
- conducting training and exercises.

Lebanese stakeholders reported that their involvement in UCPM activities prior to the port explosion contributed to ensuring a harmonised response approach and fostered a good collaboration with EU teams.¹²⁸⁷ In particular, the Lebanese Civil Defence participated in trainings organised by the European Commission, including one training about the UCPM and how third countries can benefit from it.¹²⁸⁸ Furthermore, representatives from the Civil Defence attended at least one UCPM full scale exercise,¹²⁸⁹ and the DRMU organised two simulations exercises on scenarios for international assistance.¹²⁹⁰ However, despite the numerous requests of the evaluation team, the DRMU did not share additional relevant information on exercises organised in the country prior to the 2020 port explosion.

Additionally, it was reported that other EU and UCPM funded activities were relevant to the needs of Lebanese national authorities, particularly in relation to the response to the post explosion. These include PPRD-South projects (see the Coherence Section) and the UCPM response to the 2019 forest fires in Lebanon. On 15 October 2019, Lebanon requested assistance through the UCPM for aerial forest firefighting capacities. RescEU firefighting planes were mobilised from both Italy and Greece and two Cypriot planes had already been deployed on 14 October. Furthermore, as of 16 October an EU Liaison Officer supported the deployment of assets onsite. The European Commission's Copernicus Emergency Management Service was activated on 15 October to provide satellite maps of the area.¹²⁹¹ In this context, the DRMU reported that the 2019 activation was of extreme importance for Lebanese authorities to understand the support role that UCPM can offer in case of disasters, and was particularly useful during the preparation and implementation of the request for assistance and reception of teams for the port explosion mission.¹²⁹² Lastly, in light of the high relevance of UCPM activities, Lebanese authorities consulted expressed the interest in being more involved in UCPM prevention and preparedness work.¹²⁹³

A7.4.4.4 Coherence

The case study found that the **UCPM mission directly complemented the efforts of national authorities and other international actors**. Furthermore, there was also a **strong degree of coherence between other EU-funded initiatives and the work of Lebanese national authorities in responding to the 2020 emergency**.

The UCPM teams deployed to Beirut complemented the work of national authorities already deployed on the sites (e.g. LAF Engineering Regiment in the port area, Civil Defence outside the harbour, Ministry of Health in Beirut hospitals, etc.) as well as of other international teams (e.g. USAR teams from Qatar and Russia). For example, the UCPM NL USAR team, in accordance with the INSARAG Guidelines and in conjunction with LAF, set up and managed the USAR Coordination Cell (UCC). The team provided coordination to all EU and international USAR teams involved in the response. This entailed carrying out coordination meetings with LEMA and USAR Team Leaders, as well as discussing and operationalising the sectorisation plan, and coordinating with OSOCC/EUCPT. They were also assisted in the preparation of the UCC by teams from France, Poland and Qatar and a

¹²⁸⁷ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (3 out of 10)

¹²⁸⁸ It was not specified if this training was part of the UCPM Training Programme

¹²⁸⁹ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (2 out of 10)

¹²⁹⁰ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (1 out of 10)

¹²⁹¹ DG ECHO Daily Flash Archive, 16 October 2019

¹²⁹² Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (1 out of 10)

¹²⁹³ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (3 out of 10)

liaison officer from LAF. The NL USAR also provided the UCC with ICT, an information manager and administrator and a logistics manager.¹²⁹⁴

Furthermore, prior to 2020, Lebanon was involved in the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters (PPRD) South programme, and stakeholders reported that **their involvement in PPRD activities were coherent with and complemented subsequent UCPM activation and operations for the port explosion.**¹²⁹⁵

Literature reviewed confirmed the finding from the field mission. In particular, it was found that the lessons learnt from the PPRD phases were instrumental for enhancing crisis management in Lebanon. For example, recognising the DRMU as the central unit for managing national crises enabled the Lebanese authorities to stay informed and effectively manage future crises,¹²⁹⁶ resulting in the direct involvement of the DRMU in the 2020 activation. PPRD training also facilitated inter-departmental collaboration and decision-making, which was crucial during the port explosion due to the several national authorities involved at different levels.¹²⁹⁷ This previous work made it possible for Lebanon to promptly and appropriately request help from the ERCC during crises, and to prepare and send out a coherent, documented and complete request for international assistance through the UCPM after the blast in Beirut Harbor.¹²⁹⁸

Furthermore, in 2019, PPRD assessment missions were conducted in Lebanon to identify risk hotspots, key players, and the scope and approach of national/sub-regional actions. These missions also aimed to develop national capacities for risk monitoring, early detection of critical situations, setting up and managing early warning systems, and the creation of emergency plans. This included inter-agency operational management support and facilities of the operational centres. The field mission was integrated with a regional workshop related to flood and forest fire risk monitoring, early warning systems, and emergency planning.¹²⁹⁹

¹²⁹⁴ Post-Mission Report, USAR.NL deployment to Lebanon Mass Explosion August 2020, Final version, September 2020

¹²⁹⁵ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (3 out of 10)

¹²⁹⁶ European Commission, Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural & man-made Disasters, region South – Phase III, Final Report

¹²⁹⁷ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (3 out of 10)

¹²⁹⁸ European Commission, Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural & man-made Disasters, region South – Phase III, Final Report

¹²⁹⁹ European Commission, Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural & man-made Disasters, region South – Phase III, Final Report

Figure 86. Assessment missions in the Partner Countries to identify risk hotspots, Beirut, Lebanon, 3-4 July 2019



Source: PPRD South – Phase III, Final Report

A7.4.4.5 EU added value

The main EU added value brought by the UCPM work related to the explosion in Beirut's port concerns the overwhelming benefit of having UCPM teams deployed right after the emergency, as opposed to a situation where UCPM assistance would not be available. The significance and added value of UCPM teams was unanimously noted by Lebanese stakeholders consulted.¹³⁰⁰

Lebanese national authorities noted that, without UCPM teams, search and rescue operations in the entire blast area of the port would have lasted three times more compared to the overall duration of the USAR phase. Furthermore, outside the port, UCPM engineers conducted over 300 structural assessments of buildings in the municipality of Beirut in a timeframe of three to five days. This would have otherwise made the assessment done by Lebanese authorities much lengthier.

A7.4.5 Key challenges

- **COVID-19.** One of the main challenges faced during the Beirut deployment was the COVID-19 emergency. As the first major deployment after the beginning of the pandemic, the deployment faced several challenges and limitations. For example:
 - The ERCC encountered difficulties due to quarantine procedures and logistics, particularly due to the different quarantine measures applied by the several countries involved;
 - Logistical issues hindered the delivery of FFP2 masks from the TAST to UCPM teams, due the equipment being stored at the airport (without the possibility to access it);

¹³⁰⁰ Interviews with Lebanese national authorities (8 out of 10)

- DG ECHO LOs and EUCPT members had a printed email from the authorities indicating that COVID-19 tests would be waived. However, because this was not perceived as an official document, some experts encountered difficulties when trying to board flights in their home countries or during transit;
- **Civil-military cooperation.** The UN World Food Programme identified difficulties for responders due to the presence of military assets and heavily armed personnel. While this did not affect the effectiveness of the UCPM response, it highlighted a key challenge in civil-military cooperation, namely the necessity for a minimal military/security presence and low visibility of weaponry during interactions with emergency responders. In this context, the awareness-raising efforts led by DG ECHO, along with other entities, was crucial in improving the military personnel's understanding of this issue;
- **Timing of deployment.** The EUCPT reported that it encountered difficulties in catching-up with coordination tasks due to the fact that it was deployed with some delay. Similarly, DG ECHO LOs arrived in country after the first USAR team due to the scarce availability of flights and to hindering national public health restrictions in the context of the pandemic;
- **General preparedness challenges.** the TAST was not sufficiently prepared to support a “hotel-based” mission, which caused delays in support activities (e.g. the provision of WIFI, logistics, business cards, mapping, etc.). The code of conduct (e.g. clothing, pictures, behaviour, no pictures with uniform) was not clear to all UCPM team members. Visibility packs (e.g. EU branded vests/t-shirts) arrived 5 days after mission started.

A7.4.6 Lessons learnt and good practices

- In future missions carried out during a pandemic (or similar situations), the ERCC, in collaboration with the EU Delegation should oversee and streamline the process of securing entry/invitation and clearance letters from national authorities, including temporary exemptions for entry requirements such as negative tests and quarantine periods. Member States and Participating States also should embrace the responsibility to equip the deployed teams and experts with safety gear and personal protective equipment. A rapid testing service should be set up for use before departure and immediately upon return of the teams;
- The ERCC should explore all possibilities to make sure that DG ECHO LOs and the EUCPT are deployed before UCPM teams;
- The ERCC should make use of existing expertise (e.g. in DG ECHO HQ, Field Offices, EUDEL) and country connections ahead of emergency situations. The International Team in DG ECHO, aided by experts from PPRD South, collected data about the aid third countries were providing to Lebanon. This data can assist Member States and Participating States in forming a comprehensive understanding of the aid delivered to the affected country. This approach is an effective practice and should be applied to future deployments;
- The organisation of videoconferences with Civil Protection authorities from Member States and Participating States during the early stage of the disaster proved to be another best practice. It helped foster a collective understanding of the context of the crisis and contributed to make the discussion about offers of assistance more efficient.

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- DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Ammonium Nitrate Explosions In The Port of Beirut, November 2020
- DG ECHO, Annual UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme Meeting 2020 UCPM Activations, 19-20 January 2021
- INSARAG Technical After-Action Review (AAR) on the Beirut Port Explosion Response Report, 18 December 2020

A7.4.8 List of stakeholders consulted

Stakeholder	Type of interview
DG ECHO Liaison Officer	Remote
UCPM IT CBRN module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader	Remote
UCPM NL USAR module Team Leader/ Deputy Team Leader	Remote
EUCPT Team Leader	Remote
TAST Team Leader	Remote
Lebanese Presidency of the Council of Ministers – DRM Unit	Field
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zahi Chahine 	
Lebanese Armed Forces – Engineering Regiment:	Field
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brigadier General Mohamad Ossman; • Lieutenant Colonel Elias Hatem; • Lieutenant Colonel Rashad Ghandour; • Captain Ziad Abou Malhab; • Captain Mark El Haber; • Captain Ali Abdallah. 	
Lebanese Armed Forces – Independent Works Regiment:	Field
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Youssef Haydar. 	
Lebanese Civil Defence	Field
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brigadier General Raymond Khattar; • Nabil Salhani 	

A7.5 COVID-19

A7.5.1 Introduction to the case study

This case study examines the activation and functioning of the UCPM in response to the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2022. It focuses on four countries including three EU Members States (France, Italy, and Romania), and a third country (India).

The aim of this case study is to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and added value of the UCPM actions in response to COVID-19. The case study also highlights current challenges and lessons learnt.

This case study complements the case study on COVID-19 carried out in the context of the *Evaluation of Humanitarian Logistics in the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2018-2022*, and of the *Mobility Package within the Emergency Support Instrument Re-Activation, 2020-2022*, that covers extensively the repatriation of EU citizens through the Mechanism. Consequently, the present case study focuses on other elements of the UCPM support, i.e. on in-kind assistance provided..

A7.5.2 Limitations to the case study

A few limitations should be considered with regard to this case study:

- No consultations could be conducted with Indian national authorities and therefore no complete views could be provided regarding this country;
- No data was provided regarding the cost effectiveness of the response by the stakeholders, so no information can be provided in this regard.

A7.5.3 Context and nature of the emergency

This section will provide an overview of:

- The evolving context and nature of the COVID-19 outbreak
- Activation of the Mechanism for COVID-19.

A7.5.3.1 Evolving context and nature of COVID-19 outbreak

The COVID-19 pandemic was caused by a new type of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) and was first identified in China in December 2019. The outbreak that took place in the Chinese municipality of Wuhan spread quickly to other regions of China and the world. By January 2020, isolated cases had appeared in some EU Member States.

At the end of February 2020, **Italy** reported a significant increase of COVID-19 cases concentrated in the northern regions of the country. Most other EU Member States started reporting cases of people infected. By March 2020, all EU Member States reported COVID-19 cases and lockdown measures were adopted in most countries. On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

While the WHO coordinated the global response, EU institutions monitored the evolution of the pandemic, coordinated with Member States in sharing information and assessing needs, and adopted relevant legislation to ensure a coherent EU-wide response.¹³⁰¹

The pandemic tested the preparedness, response, and resilience levels of the EU and UCPM. Between 2020 and 2022, the ERCC has received an unprecedented number of requests for assistance related to COVID-19.

Requests for assistance included personal protective equipment (PPE), medical equipment, diagnostic tests, medicines, and medical teams. Requests of repatriation were also made and were managed by the European Union External Action Service (EEAS) in coordination with the UCPM.¹³⁰²

¹³⁰¹European Council, Council of the European Union, 'The EU's response to the COVID-19 pandemic', as of 07/06/2023 available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/coronavirus/>;

¹³⁰² Repatriations are out of the scope of this case study, as this aspect was covered by the Kantar Case Study 8 'UCPM - COVID-19 repatriations/consular services', drafted by Kantar Public in 2022;

European support delivered through the UCPM included the deployment of medical personnel, medical teams, protective equipment, and consular support operations.

A number of legislative and budgetary **modifications** were made. These aimed to enable the UCPM to adequately respond to the new crisis and deliver the necessary support to Member States, Participating States, and third countries.

- An implementing decision was adopted in the span of a few days to enable **RescEU** to **stockpile medical and personal protection equipment**. RescEU aims to provide assistance in overwhelming situations, where existing capacity at national level and capacity committed to the ECPP are unable to ensure an effective response. Voluntary countries had to be found to host the stockpiles. Delivery support through RescEU was available from May 2020.¹³⁰³
- The **European Support Instrument (ESI)** was reactivated to respond to needs that could be addressed in a coordinated way at European level. It aimed to mitigate the immediate consequences of the pandemic. The **ESI Mobility Package** was implemented by DG ECHO, and it provided support for: transfer of patients within the EU and from the EU to third countries; transport of medical teams and personnel and operating costs within the EU and to the EU from third countries.¹³⁰⁴
- A **European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP)** had been established in 2019 and consisted of a pool of voluntary pre-committed capacities from Member States. Capacities included emergency medical teams, mobile laboratories, and experts. These capacities were supposed to be complementary to the existing capacities in the Member States, however during the early stages of the pandemic, all medical teams were active in Member States and not available for the UCPM. In 2020 new funding was allocated to ESI to support the creation of new committed capacities and for their certification. Additional capacities were made available overtime and the process is still ongoing.¹³⁰⁵

During the crisis, the **ERCC** maintained a **coordination role**. It organised regular meetings with the Council, the Commission's Secretariat-General, DG SANTE, DG HOME and the EEAS to coordinate crisis response efforts and to present the activities carried out by each service. Coordination meetings were also organised with Civil Protection Authorities from Member States and Participating States, as well as with other actors at national level, such as Health authorities and Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Meetings aimed to assess the needs, share good practices, and coordinate the response among Member States and Participating States.¹³⁰⁶

Table 21 below illustrates the main changes made to the UCPM between 2018 and 2022 and with relevance for this case study.

¹³⁰³ DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe; European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, RescEU as of 07/06/2023 available at: https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/resceu_en; Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council, 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, as of 07/06/2023 available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32019D0420>;

¹³⁰⁴ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

¹³⁰⁵ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council, 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, as of 07/06/2023 available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32019D0420>; DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

¹³⁰⁶ DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

Table 21. Main relevant changes across 2017-2022 to consider

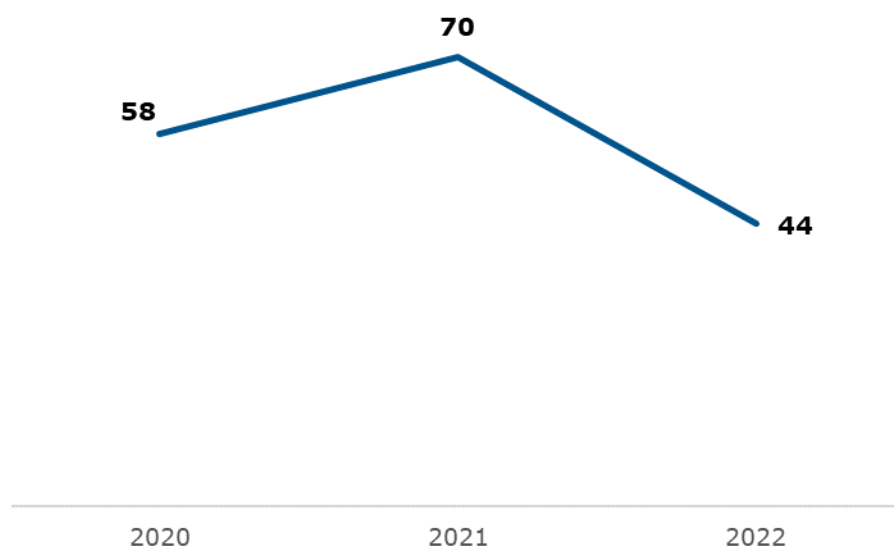
Year	Main changes to the UCPM	Other relevant changes in the ambit of COVID-19
2018	<p>UCPM:</p> <p>- Integration of European Medical Corps in the Voluntary Resource pool (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/142).</p>	
2019	<p>UCPM:</p> <p>- Redefinition of the European Civil Protection Pool (Decision (EU) 2019/420 and implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1310).</p> <p>RescEU:</p> <p>- Establishment and defining capacities of the rescEU reserve pool (Decision EU/ 2019/420 and Commission Implementing Decisions (EU) 2019/570, 2019/1310, 2019/1930).</p>	
2020	<p>rescEU:</p> <p>- Reinforcement of rescEU's medical stockpiling capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/414)</p> <p>- Definition of rescEU capacities established to respond to low probability risks with a high impact (Definition of the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/452)</p> <p>Other relevant changes:</p> <p>- Mobilisation of the Contingency Margin in 2020 to provide emergency assistance to Member States and further reinforce the UCPM/rescEU in response to the COVID-19 outbreak (Decision (EU) 2020/547)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Strategy for COVID-19 vaccines (EC Communication to the Eur. Parliament, the Eur. Council and the EIB), COM (2020) 245 final, 17 June 2020, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0245&from=EN • Coronavirus: Commission unveils EU vaccines strategy, Press Release 17 June 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1103 • Emergency Support Instrument, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/coronavirus-response/emergency-support-instrument_en • Commission Decision C(2020) 4192 final, approving the agreement with Member States on procuring COVID-19 vaccines on behalf of the Member States and related procedures, 18 June 2020, https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-09/decision_approving_the_agreement_with_member_states_on_procuring_covid-19_vaccines_on_behalf_of_the_member_states_and_related_procedures.pdf • Annex to the Commission Decision on approving the agreement with Member States on procuring COVID-19 vaccines on behalf of the Member States and related procedures, 18 June 2020, https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2020-09/annex_to_the_commission_decision_on_approving_the_agreement_with_member_states_on_procuring_covid-19_vaccines_on_behalf_of_the_member_states_and_related_procedures_.pdf • Communication from the Commission to the Eur. Parliament and the Council, Preparedness for COVID-19 vaccination strategies and vaccine deployment, 15 October 2020, https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-10/2020_strategies_deployment_en_0.pdf •
2021	<p>UCPM:</p> <p>- Reinforcement of the UCPM Decision, including the following main changes: revising rescEU capacities, development of Union Resilience Goals and a more flexible UCPM budget structure (Regulation (EU) 2021/836)</p> <p>rescEU:</p> <p>- Definition of rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents (Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/88)</p> <p>- Definition of stockpiling rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1886)</p> <p>Other relevant changes:</p> <p>- Establishment and organisation of the Knowledge Network (Implementing Decision 2021/1956)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication from the Commission to the Eur. Parliament, the Council, the EESC and the COR, EU Strategy on COVID-19 therapeutics, 6 May 2021, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0355R(01)&from=EN • News article, DG ECHO, Coronavirus: EU supports Member States with transport of patients and medical teams, 6 December 2021, https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/news/coronavirus-eu-supports-member-states-transport-patients-and-medical-teams-2021-12-06_en • WHO Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, https://www.who.int/europe/emergencies/situations/covid-19 • WHO A year without precedent: WHO's COVID-19 response, https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/a-year-without-precedent-who-s-covid-19-response • Establishment of the European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA), which the UCPM now shares responsibilities with (Commission Decision (2021/ C 393 1/02))

Year	Main changes to the UCPM	Other relevant changes in the ambit of COVID-19
2022	<p>rescEU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Reinforcement of rescEU shelter capacities and the modification of quality requirements for Emergency Medical Teams Type 3 capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/288)-Reinforcement of rescEU transport and logistics capacities, e.g. also to respond to low probability high impact disasters (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/461)-Definition of rescEU mobile laboratory capacities and rescEU CBRN detection, sampling, identification and monitoring capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/465)-Definition of rescEU emergency energy supply capacities (Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/1198) <p>Other relevant changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Establishment of criteria and procedures for recognising long-standing commitment and extraordinary contributions to the UCPM (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/706)	

A7.5.3.2 Activation of the Mechanism

UCPM was activated 172 times for COVID-19 between 2020 and 2022. The highest number of activations was in 2021.

Figure 87. Total number of UCPM activations for COVID-19 between 2020-2022



Source: ICF elaboration, based on DG Annual reports and DG ECHO internal

All the countries considered in this case study (i.e., Italy, France, Romania, India) **activated the UCPM** at different moments in time. Table 22 provides a detailed overview of all activation requests made by Italy, France, Romania, and India between 2020 and 2022.

Italy was the first country in the EU to be hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. The requests made under the UCPM by Italy in 2020 included medical protective equipment, diagnostic tests, lung ventilators, oxygen cylinders for domestic use, but also medical teams and nurses due to the shortages of medical personnel. Support was provided by Austria, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Romania and Slovakia.

France only made one request for support in 2020, but otherwise did not resort to the UCPM. The request only included medical examination gloves. Support was provided by Czech Republic, Norway and through the RescEU stockpile hosted by Greece.

Romania did not request support during the first wave of COVID-19 and was able instead to provide support to other countries through the UCPM. Romania requested support through CECIS in October 2021. The request included: COVID-19 medicines, oxygen concentrators, ventilators, as well as medical teams. Support was provided by Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, and the RescEU stockpiles.

Similarly to Romania, **India** did not request support via the UCPM during the first wave of COVID-19 in the country. Conversely, during the second wave of 2021, the country requested support via the UCPM. The requests included: oxygen for medical purposes, oxygen concentrators, PSA oxygen generation plants, ventilators, medicines, ECMO machines. Support was provided by: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Luxembourg. Resources were pooled between a number of countries to be delivered more efficiently.

Table 22. UCPM activations made by Italy, France, Romania, and India between 2020 and 2022

Country requesting	Year	Requests details	Offers of assistance
Italy	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">26 February – medical masks.13 March – surgical masks, medical protective overalls, protective glasses, medical visors, medical aprons, surgical caps, surgical overshoes, hydro alcoholic solution.17 March – diagnostic tests and lung ventilators.19 March – 150 medical doctors and 300 nurses due to shortage of medical personnel. Activated the WHO EMT Secretariat to explore the possibility of foreign medical teams.28 March – oxygen cylinders for a domestic use. - 17 April – no need for additional international emergency medical teams19 April – extension of the Romanian medical team’s mission to 25 April.- Italy closed the emergency on 22 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 6 April, Norway sent an EMT-1 composed of 19 personnel (doctors, nurses and support staff) and light medical equipment (including PPE) to Italy (8-28 April. As part of the European Civil Protection Pool, 75% of operational costs, including transport were covered.On 6 April, Romania offered a team of 15 medical personnel (10 doctors, 4 nurses and Liaison Officer). The team arrived in Italy on 7 April and returned on 25 April.Austria offered hand disinfectant on 3 April. Delivered on 7 April.On 20 April, Slovakia offered surgical masks and disinfectant to Italy. Delivered on 20 April.On 25 April, Romania delivered 90,000 masks from the rescEU medical stockpile.On 2 May, Germany delivered an additional 52,000 masks from the rescEU medical stockpile.On 19 May, Denmark offered 13 ventilators to Italy, delivered on 20 May.
France	2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">27 October - 2 million pairs of medical examination gloves.3 November - additional 1 million pairs of medical examination gloves9 November - 1 million pairs of medical examination gloves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 27 October, Norway offered 2 million pairs of gloves. Delivered on 5 November.On 4 November, Norway offered an additional 1 million pairs of gloves. Delivered on 12 November.On 9 November, the Czech Republic offered 500,000 pairs of medical examination gloves. Delivered on 20 November.On 11 November, 1 million gloves (500,000 pairs) from the rescEU medical stockpile hosted by Greece were allocated to France. Delivered on 18 November.
Romania	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">5 October 2021 - Monoclonal antibodies (12 700 vials Tocilizumabum, and 20 000 vials of other types of monoclonal antibodies)6-7 October - 300 (10l) and 250 (5l) oxygen concentrators11 October - 15 ventilators16 October - COVID-19 medicines19-20 October - 8 medical teams, additional 18 transport ventilators and additional 600 oxygen concentrators (5L).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 7 October Poland offered 50 oxygen concentrators (5l). Delivered 13 October.On 8 October, the ERCC invited the Netherlands to mobilise 200 oxygen concentrators (5l) from the rescEU medical stockpile. Delivered 10 October.On 11 October, Italy offered 5,200 vials of monoclonal antibodies. Delivered 12 October.On 13 October, Denmark offered 15 ventilators, 8 oxygen concentrators (10l). Delivered on 16 OctoberOn 16 October, Austria offered 1 075 packages of various ICU medicines. Delivered on 20 October.On 19 and 20 October, France offered 89 030 vials of medicines, 18 mobile ventilators with consumables, PPE (gowns and gloves), antigen tests, sampling kits and syringe pumps. Delivered on 24 and 28 October.On 21 October, Germany offered 12 750 units of Casirivimab/Imdevimab monoclonal antibodies. Delivered on 18 November.On 21 October, Serbia offered 150 oxygen concentrators (5L), 20 oxygen concentrators (8L), and 6 365 monoclonal antibodies Bamlanivimab (4 865 pieces) and Regneron (1 500 pieces). Delivered on 25 October.On 22 October, Poland offered 150 oxygen concentrators (5L), 55 cardiac monitors, 50 respirators, 1 000 pulse oximeters and 3 sets of equipment for disinfection. Delivered on 29 October.On 23 October, Slovakia offered 500 000 antigen tests, 3 136 000 syringes, 1 152 000 needles and 1 000 vials of monoclonal antibodies. Delivered on 11 and 12 November.On 25 October, 350 oxygen concentrators (5L) from the rescEU stockpile hosted by the Netherlands were delivered to Romania.On 25 October, Poland offered a medical 3 team (13 doctors, 33 nurses and paramedics). Team operated between 28 October and 10 November.On 26 October, Denmark offered medical team of 8 ICU specialists (doctors and nurses), arrived on 27 October. Returned home on 14 November.
India	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">23 April 2021 - liquid oxygen for medical purposes, ventilators, medicines18 May - ECMO machines Amphotericin and posaconazole.2 June - the list of priority items was updated with ECMO machines, tocilizumab; amphotericin, isavuconazole, oxygen cylinders and PSA oxygen generation plants. No more need for ventilators, oxygen concentrators, remdesivir and posaconazole.7 July - no further assistance needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 25 April 2021, Ireland offered 700 oxygen concentrators. Delivered 29 April.On 26 and 28 April, 425 ventilators, 2 oxygen generators, 548 oxygen concentrators. Delivered 4 May.On 26 April, Belgium offered 9 000 doses of Remdesivir. Delivered 1 May.On 26 April, Romania offered 80 oxygen concentrators and 75 oxygen cylinders. On 27 April, Romania offered 20 high-flow oxygen therapy devices. Delivered 30 April.On 26 April, Luxembourg offered 58 ventilators. Delivered 11 May.On 27 April, Sweden offered 120 ventilators. The offer was declined.On 27 April, Portugal offered 5 509 doses of antiviral medicines (Remdesivir). Offer accepted. Pooling with the offers from NL, SI and DE. Delivered 14 May.

Country requesting	Year	Requests details	Offers of assistance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">On 27 April, Finland offered 324 oxygen cylinders. On 6 May, Finland offered 225 Pulse oximeters. Pooled with EL and part of the DE ventilators. Delivered 12 May.On 28 April, Italy offered one oxygen generator and 20 ventilators. Delivered 3 May. On 10 May, Italy offered 2 ventilators, 30 oxygen concentrators, 2 ultrasound systems and 212 000 surgical masks. Delivered 13 May. On 14 May, Italy offered 300 stationary oxygen concentrators and 12 ventilators. On 18 May, 30 ventilators and 10 infusion pumps were offered. (10 infusion pumps withdrawn). Delivered 22 June. On 18 May, 130 syringe pumps, 30 enteral pumps and 4 infusion heaters. Offer declined.On 28 April, France offered 8 oxygen generators and 28 ventilators. Delivered 2 May. 5 containers of liquid oxygen (200 tonnes) offered. Delivered between 10 and 24 May. On 20 May, additional offer of oxygen generators, delivered 18 June. On 8 June, France offered 12 oxygen generator units. 5 delivered 29 June. 6 generators delivered 30 July.On 28 April, Austria offered 5 521 vials of Remdesivir, 396 oxygen cylinders, 1 900 oxygen cannulas. Oxygen equipment delivered 8 May (pooled with CZ), Remdesivir on 28 May (pooled with SI).On 29 April, the Czech Republic offered 500 oxygen cylinders. Pooled with AT, delivered 8 May.On 29 April, Denmark offered 53 ventilators. Delivered 7 May.On 29 April, Greece offered 90 oxygen cylinders, 10 accepted by India (10I). Pooled with FI and DE, delivered 12 May.On 29 April, Spain offered 121 oxygen concentrators and on 1 May, 167 ventilators. Delivered 10 and 17 May.On 30 April, the Netherlands offered 100 oxygen concentrators, 449 ventilators and 31 282 vials of Remdesivir. Ventilators and oxygen concentrators delivered 6, 8, 9 May. Remdesivir pooled with PT and DE, delivered 14 May.On 30 April, Germany offered 35 000 vials of antiviral drugs and 120 ventilators. Ventilators delivered on 1 May. On 2 and 4 May, DE offered an additional 399 ventilators, 10 000 vials of Remdesivir and 1 oxygen generator. Generator delivered 7 May. 35 000 vials of antiviral drugs and Remdesivir delivered 14 May (pooling with NL and PT). 399 ventilators delivered in on 12 May (pooling with FI and EL), 14 May (pooling with NL and PT) and 16 May. On 9 and 18 May, DE offered 105 and 28 ventilators. Delivered 26 May. On 19 and 20 May, DE offered 3 and 32 additional ventilators, delivered 9 June.On 7 May, Slovenia offered 240 vials of Remdesivir. Delivered 28 May (pooled with AT).On 7 May, Iceland offered 15 ventilators and 120,000 tablets of antiviral medicines. Delivered 2 June.

Source: DG ECHO Civil protection data - EU COVID-19 Requests for Assistance (2020;2021;2022); no requests for activations were made by the countries in scope in 2022;

A7.5.3.3 Key stakeholders involved

In **Italy**, Civil Protection authorities were in charge of coordinating the response to the crisis, given that the Ministry of Health does not have a central structure or department for the management of emergencies. The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also involved in responding to the crisis. Italian regional health authorities are also co-responsible for the delivery of healthcare in the country. The lack of a national plan for responding to macro-health emergencies and the resulting differences in the response adopted in different regions of the country generated issues with consistency in operational strategies.¹³⁰⁷

In **France**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs acted in coordination with the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for the support provided by France to other countries under the UCPM. The Ministry of Health was responsible for the internal response to the pandemic.¹³⁰⁸

In **Romania**, the main authorities responsible for the response to COVID-19 were the Ministry of interior and the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Interior also included the National Focal Point and the Department of Civil Protection which was established during the pandemic.¹³⁰⁹

The main authorities involved in the response to COVID-19 in **India** were the Ministry of Health and Family. This formulated public health strategy to contain the infection in consultation with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), and the Ministry of Home Affairs.¹³¹⁰

A7.5.4 Case study findings

This section discusses case study findings for each of the evaluation criteria considered: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, and EU added value.

A7.5.4.1 Effectiveness

With regard to the **effectiveness of the UCPM support in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic**, Member States and third countries under consideration in this case study **could rely only partially on the UCPM to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic**. So, while the UCPM supported the Members States and third countries in the response to COVID-19 in an effective way, opportunities for improvement were identified.

The **response to the pandemic was mainly managed by national authorities** according to their legal competences, with the UCPM providing only partial support to their activities.¹³¹¹ **Delays in the delivery of the UCPM support** were reportedly encountered in the initial phases of the pandemic (February - May 2020), when actors were unprepared and the supply and availability of medical equipment became scarce.¹³¹² In fact, stakeholders mentioned that the **initial response from the UCPM** was deemed to be limited in scope and insufficiently rapid.¹³¹³ As a result, Member States were simultaneously looking for medical protective equipment on the market, which resulted in general shortages.

¹³⁰⁷ Interview with national authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³⁰⁸ Interviews with national authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³⁰⁹ Interview with national authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³¹⁰ Satish Kumar and Dandu Chandra Sekhar Reddy, 'Response to COVID-19 Pandemic in India: How can we Strengthen Our Response?', Indian J Community Med. 2020 Jul-Sep; 45(3): 251–255;

¹³¹¹ Interview with EU stakeholder (1 out of 2); Interview with National authorities (2 out of 4);

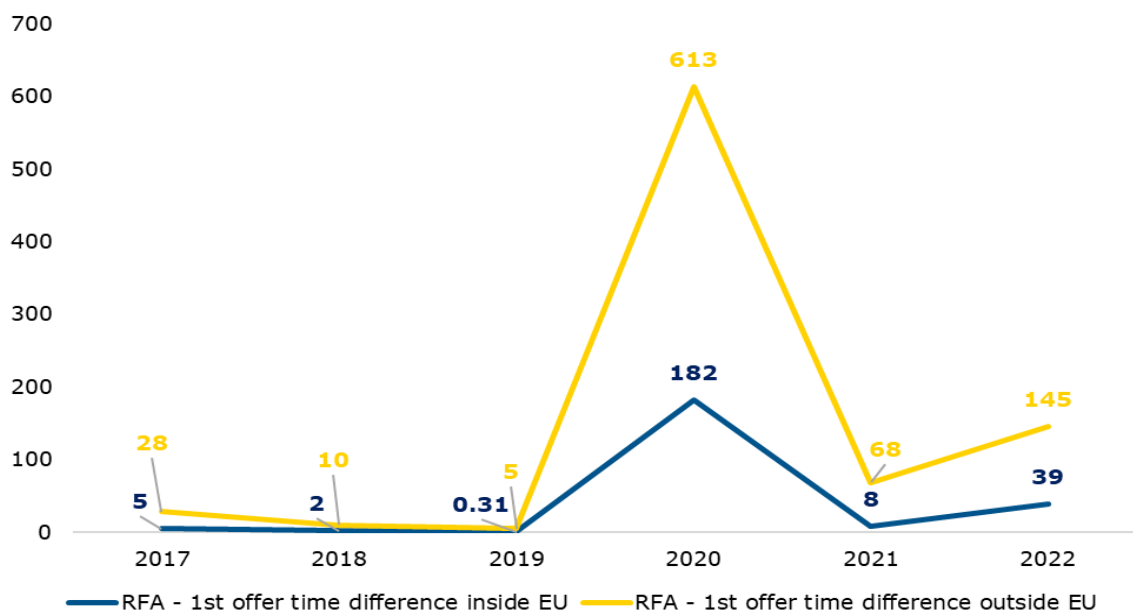
¹³¹² Interview with National authorities (1 out of 4); DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

¹³¹³ Interviews with: National authorities (1 out of 4), DG ECHO (2 out of 5); DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

Italy was one of the first countries hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore activated the UCPM earlier. However, the requests made in February/March 2020 took around one month to be addressed,¹³¹⁴ while the average response time in 2020 overall was approximately seven days. Figure 88 below shows how the average response time between a Request for Assistance (RFA) and the first offer from the UCPM was impacted in 2020.

Delays in the response were due to the general state of alert and the sudden shortages of medical equipment.¹³¹⁵ Italian authorities decided to open their request to the international community and to conclude bilateral agreements with other Member States. Starting from May 2020, however, support could be delivered again in a timely manner via the UCPM.¹³¹⁶

Figure 88. Average time (hours) between a Request for Assistance (RFA) and 1st offer for UCPM activations inside and outside EU



Source: ICF elaboration, DG ECHO internal data;

France relied on the UCPM only for a limited number of requests of equipment, but otherwise leveraged internal resources and bilateral agreements with other EU Member States to address its needs. The stakeholders consulted indicated that this happened for three main reasons:

- Lack of a unique point of contact at EU level where to address all requests;
- Lack of specific expertise within the UCPM on health pandemics and the impossibility to provide the technical advice needed;
- Pre-existing contacts developed by French authorities within other Member States' health authorities that could be more rapidly engaged in the early stages of the pandemic.

Bilateral agreements were therefore used by France. In addition, the country used the Early Warning Response System (EWRS) alongside communications with other Member States through the Health Security Committee (HSC) managed by DG SANTE.¹³¹⁷

Romania did not resort to the UCPM in the first year of the pandemic. The situation changed during the second wave, when the situation worsened in the country and Romanian authorities required the support

¹³¹⁴ The first Italian government's request for help in PPE and other medical supplies was first answered a month after the request was sent – from information provided by the Italian authorities;

¹³¹⁵ Interview with National authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³¹⁶ Interview with National authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³¹⁷ Interview with National authorities (2 out of 4);

of the ERCC (October 2021). At this point the support was provided by the by UCPM in the span of a few days.¹³¹⁸

India did not resort to the UCPM during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, when during the second wave the situation worsened, support was requested to the UCPM (April - July 2021). Medical equipment and medical oxygen were requested. Support was provided by a number of Member States and Participating States that pooled resources through the UCPM.¹³¹⁹ Resource pooling efforts and the complexity of items provided showed that the UCPM support had improved over the course of the emergency and that the UCPM coordination worked effectively.¹³²⁰ For instance, between April and May 2021 oxygen generators, oxygen concentrators, ventilators and antiviral medicines were provided by a number of UCPM Member States. Furthermore, resources were pooled to increase efficiency in delivery and distribution.

Regarding the **UCPM contribution to cooperation and coordination**, the majority of stakeholders consulted agreed that the UCPM **improved cooperation and coordination** among the different organisations and authorities involved.¹³²¹

At EU level, after the initial months of the pandemic, the **established relationships between the ERCC and Civil Protection national authorities** were considered a key enabler for the UCPM, facilitating timely provision of support.¹³²² However, it was recognised that:

- during the **first months** of the crisis (February - May 2020) the timeliness and effectiveness of **the support were suboptimal**, given the unpreparedness to the new disease and shortages of medical equipment;¹³²³
- the specificity of the COVID-19 pandemic required technical advice which could only partially be provided by DG ECHO. This was confirmed by the majority of respondents at national level who agreed that other actors such as national Ministries of Health had to be involved separately, either at a bilateral level or through the DG SANTE network (EWRS).¹³²⁴

The ERCC had a **strong coordination role** between civil protection authorities, health authorities, ministries of Foreign Affairs in Member States and Participating States, as well as between European Commission Directorates, the Secretary General, the EEAS and the Council. Difficulties were encountered when authorities at national or local level were not aware of the UCPM and of the support that could be provided by DG ECHO.¹³²⁵

With regard to the **impact of the new elements of the UCPM on Member States' and third countries' response and coordination efforts**, the modification of RescEU to include **medical stockpiling** capacity was considered a very positive element by a great majority of respondents both at national and EU level.¹³²⁶ Starting from May 2020 the RescEU stockpiling was used in the Member States in scope: Italy, France and Romania all received support through RescEU.

A minority of respondents also praised the rapidity at which the **medical stockpiling capacity** was introduced at EU level.¹³²⁷

¹³¹⁸ Interview with National authorities (1 out of 4) and data from DG ECHO - see Table 1 for more details;

¹³¹⁹ Interviews with EU Stakeholder (1 out of 2);

¹³²⁰ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 5); see Table 1 for additional details;

¹³²¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 5); EU Stakeholder (1 out of 2); National authorities (3 out of 4);

¹³²² Interview with EU Stakeholder (1 out of 2); DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

¹³²³ According to a number of stakeholders consulted, the support was provided timely only after May 2020. DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe; Interviews with: National authorities (1 out of 4), with DG ECHO (2 out of 5);

¹³²⁴ Interviews with National authorities (2 out of 4);

¹³²⁵ DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe. No additional information was provided on the specific impact these difficulties had on the effectiveness of the UCPM support overall.

¹³²⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 5): National authorities (4 out of 4); EU Stakeholder (1 out of 2);

¹³²⁷ Interview with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); National authorities (3 out of 4);

As for **national prevention and preparedness activities** (regarding health emergencies) **in place**, the majority of respondents agreed that **prevention and preparedness activities at national level** were insufficient. Given the unpredictability of the COVID-19 pandemic, Member States and Participating States were not prepared to face such a multi-sectoral crisis. The fact that all countries were struck at the same time also contributed to putting the ERCC under strain.¹³²⁸

According to a minority of respondents, the **cooperation between National Health and Civil Protection authorities** in the first months after the beginning of the crisis allowed to share knowledge and best practises. The involvement of the scientific community was also considered important to help find common solutions.¹³²⁹

A7.5.4.2 Efficiency

No data was provided regarding the cost effectiveness of the response by the stakeholders, so no information can be provided in this regard.

The **timeliness** of UCPM response was considered **inadequate in the first months of the crisis** between February and May 2020. Conversely, it improved after in subsequent months. A minority of respondents agreed that after the first months, the UCPM adapted to the situation and improved its functioning.¹³³⁰ The delay of the responses decreased significantly to an average of 7 days in 2020 (average response time inside the

Regarding the **factors that enhanced or reduced the efficiency of the UCPM support**, stakeholders consulted mentioned that the transport of items and teams was in some cases difficult due to the absence of dedicated means of transport, or to the length of the authorisation process for transport to take place.¹³³¹ Transport requirements of certain types of vaccines and legal requirements for cross-border donations were also considered as factors that reduced the efficiency of the UCPM support.

One factor that reportedly enhanced the efficiency of UCPM support was the **pooling of resources** between Member States and Participating states that was done in some instances to provide support to third countries, such as India and Nepal. This increased the efficiency in the delivery as the resources and time necessary to deliver the items was reduced.¹³³²

Analysis of the costs and benefits of the UCPM support to Italy, France and Romania

The benefits of the UCPM response to the activation requests by Italy, France and Romania in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic were mainly related to avoided loss of lives and avoided deterioration of the health condition of the population. The corresponding incremental UCPM costs relate to the cost for the UCPM to provide the response to the requests (see list in Table 22).

Following the approach used by the World Bank,¹³³³ a simplified model was developed to quantify the benefits and costs of the UCPM activations covered in the context of the case study (see Figure 89). The focus was on socio-economic benefits and costs related to the provided UCPM support as a result of the UCPM activations by Italy, France and Romania, to address COVID-19 pandemic.

¹³²⁸ Interview with EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2), DG ECHO (2 out of 5), National authorities (4 out of 4);

¹³²⁹ Interview with National authorities (3 out of 4);

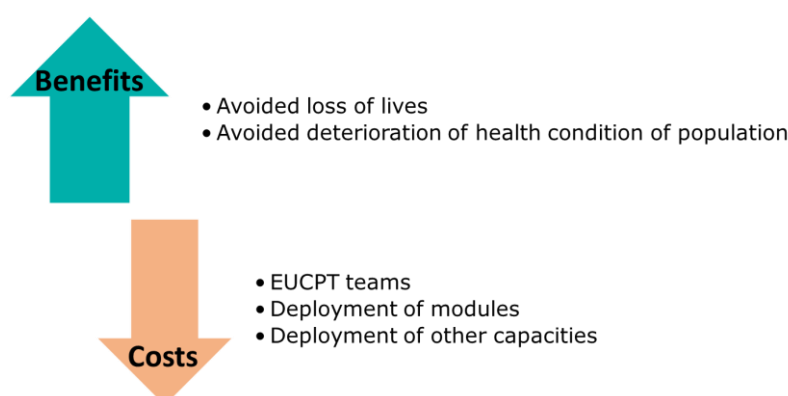
¹³³⁰ Interview with National authorities (2 out of 4); interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 5); See data in Figure 88;

¹³³¹ Interview with National authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³³² Interview with DG ECHO (2 out of 5)

¹³³³ World Bank. 2021. Investment in Disaster Risk Management in Europe Makes Economic Sense: Background Report. Economics for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness. © World Bank, Washington, DC.;

Figure 89. Simplified model for the CBA



Source: ICF elaboration

The quantification of each benefit and cost was to be done following the World bank approach to quantify loss of life and health conditions. However, after a review of the available documentation and data and after consulting relevant stakeholders, the limited evidence available did not allow for a robust quantification of benefits that could be attributable to the specific support provided by the UCPM to the countries.

The key data missing were:

- Estimation of the number of lives that would have been lost without UCPM support;
- Estimation of the number of people that would have experienced a deterioration of their health condition without UCPM support.

A7.5.4.3 Relevance

Overall, UCPM activities related to COVID-19 response **appear to be relevant to national needs**. However, only limited information could be gathered on how these needs were assessed during the crisis. Nevertheless, regular meetings took place with national stakeholders during the pandemic to discuss needs and their evolution over time suggesting that UCPM activities were formulated considering these.

With regard to the **extent to which Member States' and third countries' needs were adequately assessed in the ambit of the COVID-19 pandemic**, only limited information could be collected on the needs assessment made in the ambit of the pandemic. However, one respondent mentioned that **risks assessments** made by Member States often do not report on all risks, as doing so could require additional resources to be used to address those risks, resources that are usually lacking.¹³³⁴

A minority of respondents highlighted that during the whole duration of the crisis, **regular coordination meetings** were held by the UCPM with national authorities to understand their needs. These meetings were not limited to national Civil Protection authorities but were organised also with Health authorities and Foreign Affairs ministries.¹³³⁵

The majority of respondents agreed that the **UCPM showed great flexibility to adapt to evolving challenges**.¹³³⁶ The rapid changes made in EU legislation to adapt DG ECHO's tools, such as introducing the rescEU stockpiling capacity, were considered examples of this flexibility.¹³³⁷ The fact that the timeliness in

¹³³⁴ Interview with EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2); Regulation 2022/2371 on 'Serious cross-border threats to health', of 23 November 2022, has introduced a new risk assessment framework of all hazards, including health emergencies, where coordination among EU agencies and the EU Member States has been established.

¹³³⁵ Interview with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); Interviews with National authorities (2 out of 4);

¹³³⁶ Interviews with National authorities (2 out of 4); EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2); DG ECHO (4 out of 5);

¹³³⁷ Interview with DG ECHO (4 out of 5) with National authorities (2 out of 4); with EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2);

the UCPM response improved after the first months of the pandemic was also considered a proof of its flexibility. Also, according to a minority of respondents, the coordination role that the UCPM played during the pandemic showed that the UCPM could act as reference point for national and EU level stakeholders involved in a multi-sectoral crisis.¹³³⁸

Regarding the **main current and future emerging needs** and developments in the field of health emergencies the UCPM should account for, a minority of respondents mentioned that the risk of new health crises is very high. New infectious diseases of different kinds could appear, driven by climate change and its effects.¹³³⁹ While it is evident that the general responsibility for preparedness and prevention should lie primarily with Member States and Participating States, according to the stakeholders consulted, there is scope for the UCPM to provide added value and support in this area.¹³⁴⁰

Developing and maintaining adequate **stockpiling capacities** in the EU and the Member States will have strategic importance to be able to prepare and respond to future health crises. However, maintaining sufficient stocks for all possible future pandemics at EU level would be unsustainable in the long term. Member States and Participating States should therefore have a prominent role in developing and maintaining these stockpiles.¹³⁴¹

One of the stakeholders consulted highlighted that given that new health emergencies are highly probable in the future and to increase efficiency, a **coordination system** should be put in place for the whole EC, as the separation of tasks between DG ECHO and DG SANTE was not optimal.¹³⁴²

As for the **future impacts of the introduction of HERA**, the **European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA)** is responsible for ensuring the availability and access to critical medical countermeasures that are needed in times of crisis, such as epidemics, radiological disasters and nuclear disasters. While a few respondents reported a lack of clarity on the role of HERA,¹³⁴³ other considered that the competencies of HERA are clearly stated in its mandate, and that the new authority will be playing an important role in future health emergencies.¹³⁴⁴

Contrary to the UCPM, HERA only focuses on **medical countermeasures**. The mandate of HERA includes funding research to develop new treatments, but also dealing with manufacturers in Europe and outside to avoid medicine shortages. The only overlapping task between HERA and the UCPM is stockpiling, and for this task cooperation between HERA and the UCPM cooperation is already in place. While HERA promotes the development of medical countermeasures for tackling priority cross-border health threats (which may include first aid)¹³⁴⁵, the UCPM coordinates response to disasters, including acute health emergencies (excluding shortage).¹³⁴⁶

A7.5.4.4 Coherence

With regard to the **coherence to the UCPM activities with national/EU interventions**, there was not full alignment between UCPM and Member States actions in the first months of the crisis (February - May 2020), however **coherence improved after that initial period**. Coherence between the UCPM and other EU

¹³³⁸ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 5)

¹³³⁹ J. Smith, 'Future pandemics are inevitable, but we can reduce the risk, Horizon Th EU research and Innovation magazine', 16 Dec.2021; WHO (2022), 'Imagining the future of pandemics and epidemics: a 2022 perspective';

¹³⁴⁰ Interview with EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2), and with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁴¹ Interview with EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2). The types of stockpiling required for each crisis would be different and the amount of resources necessary to maintain those stockpiles would be onerous;

¹³⁴² Interview with DH ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁴³ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5);

¹³⁴⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); Interview with EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2);

¹³⁴⁵ First aid can be defined as basic medical treatment that is given to someone as soon as possible after they have been hurt in an accident or suddenly become ill. Cambridge Dictionary.

¹³⁴⁶ Interview with EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2);

interventions was ensured by the **collaboration of DG ECHO with different European Commission DGs**, as well as with the Secretary General, and the EEAS. Coherence with the WHO seemed to be ensured thanks to a collaboration with the UCPM where information was shared, and activities coordinated.¹³⁴⁷

Overall, **UCPM activities in the field of the COVID-19 pandemic appeared to be coherent with national interventions**. However, **in the initial phase of the crisis**, there was **no complete alignment** between the action of the UCPM and the Member States.

Indeed, between January and May 2020, the availability of medical and personal protective equipment became limited due to the simultaneous surge in demand across all Member States and Participating States. As a consequence, the **UCPM response was also constrained and a number of limitations in its architecture emerged**. Initial requests of support could not be processed quickly enough, as it was shown by the case of initial requests made by Italy. The first request from Italy came in February 2020 and a response could not be provided until more than one month later with inputs by Romania and Norway. As a consequence, Italy had to open its request at international level.

During those first months however, legislative and operational changes were made in order to improve the capacity of the UCPM and timeliness of its responses, which led to an increase in the coherence and a better alignment between the action of the UCPM and Member States.¹³⁴⁸

A lack of knowledge among certain national actors about the role of the UCPM was identified as a hindrance by a minority of stakeholders. This entailed that synergies were not fully exploited or fostered and that better collaborations could have been established at times. An increased knowledge of the UCPM among national stakeholders, especially those that do not traditionally work with civil protection authorities, was considered as key to improve coherence in future interventions.¹³⁴⁹

Regarding the **coherence of UCPM activities with other EU interventions, collaboration and coordination with other European Commission DGs** were **put in place** at the beginning of the crisis and improved over the course of the pandemic.

DG ECHO had a coordinating role between different DGs (DG SANTE, DG HOME), the Council, the EEAS, and the EC Secretary General.¹³⁵⁰ Consistently with this mandate, **regular meetings were organised by DG ECHO with other DGs** (DG SANTE, DG HOME, DG MOVE, the EC Secretary General) to coordinate the response to the pandemic and to present the activities carried out by each DG and service.¹³⁵¹ As a result, while no single actor was responding to the crisis at EU level, the coordination between different DGs seemed to perform well.¹³⁵² A few respondents highlighted however that the complementarity of action between different DGs could be improved and that having one single actor at EU level answering to all requests related to the crisis would be beneficial in the future.¹³⁵³

Regular meetings were also organised with **civil protection authorities and other competent authorities at national level**. This enabled the UCPM to be aware of the needs of Member States. As a result, while Member States were primarily responsible for the response to the pandemic, the UCPM acted as a coordinator of requests and offers of support between Member States, Participating States, and Third Countries.¹³⁵⁴

¹³⁴⁷ A memorandum of understanding was signed between the EC and WHO in 2004m which established a framework for a strategic partnership between these actors; from: Ladell Mills (2022), 'EEAS Thematic Evaluation - Combined evaluation of DG ECHO humanitarian response to epidemics, and of DG ECHO's partnerships with the World Health Organisation', 2017-2021 – Final Report;

¹³⁴⁸ DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe; Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5) and National authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³⁴⁹ Interview with DG ECHO (2 out of 5);

¹³⁵⁰ DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

¹³⁵¹ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁵² Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); interviews with National authorities (2 out of 4);

¹³⁵³ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁵⁴ Interview with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); interviews with National authorities (2 out of 4);

At the international level, collaboration was established **with the WHO**. The **activities** carried out by each actor were **coordinated** and **up-to-date information was shared** regarding the pandemic and how to manage it. The WHO was the main actor providing scientific advice at international level and setting standards on how to respond to the crisis.¹³⁵⁵

A7.5.4.5 EU added value

With regard to the extent to which UCPM's work related to COVID-19 provide an added value, according to the stakeholders consulted from two of the Member States in scope, UCPM support provided a clear added value, at least after the difficulties of the initial period (February – May 2020). Stakeholders consulted from the third Member State in scope considered that the added value of the UCPM was limited. As no consultations were conducted with the Indian authorities, the research team could only rely on the views of the EU level stakeholders on this matter.

All EU stakeholders consulted agreed that the UCPM provided a significant added value.¹³⁵⁶

Each of the Member States in scope **relied on the UCPM to a different extent**. While Italian authorities reported that they could only rely on the UCPM after May 2020, France only resorted to the UCPM to a limited extent. As for Romania, the support requested to the UCPM in 2021 was fully provided. As for India, notwithstanding the limitations in the consultations highlighted above,¹³⁵⁷ the support provided responded to the requests submitted at least in part. Further details for each of the countries in scope are provided in the following paragraphs.

Nearly all stakeholders consulted considered that **the UCPM brought a significant added value in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic**.¹³⁵⁸ Additional details are provided below.

- **Italy** was the first EU country to be hit by the pandemic. Italian authorities made first request for support to the UCPM in February 2020. As the response took some time to be addressed, the Italian authorities open the request to the international community. In April 2020 the support was finally provided through the UCPM by Norway and Romania which sent medical teams. According to a few respondents, only part of the support requested to the UCPM could be delivered. Nevertheless, the reinforcement of the UCPM and in particular of RescEU was considered as a positive element; the UCPM allowed the Member States to improve their operational standards thanks to the cooperation and sharing of good practises, so the added value was clearly demonstrated.¹³⁵⁹
- The response to the COVID-19 pandemic in **France** was managed by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While support was provided to other Member States and Participating States, for its internal response France mainly relied on its own resources and on the support from health authorities in other Member States. According to a few respondents, contacts were made from the onset of the crisis with corresponding health authorities in other Member States; bilateral agreements were put in place to receive and provide support. It was also mentioned that the UCPM did not have the necessary health-related technical experience and that the contacts with DG SANTE and other National Health authorities were more effective for this crisis. As a result, the UCPM was not considered by the French authorities as the primary instrument to receive or provide support during the COVID-19 crisis.¹³⁶⁰
- The response to the pandemic in **Romania** was led by the Ministry of Interior and supported by the Ministry of Health. The country requested support from the UCPM in October 2021. A few

¹³⁵⁵ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁵⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (5 out of 5); with EU stakeholders (2 out of 2);

¹³⁵⁷ See section **Error! Reference source not found.**;

¹³⁵⁸ Interviews with DG ECHO (5 out of 5); with National authorities (3 out of 4); with EU stakeholders (2 out of 2);

¹³⁵⁹ Interview with National authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³⁶⁰ Interviews with National authorities (2 out of 4);

respondents considered that the support provided was extremely important and it could not have been provided at national level. The coordination role of the ERCC allowed the UCPM and Member States/Participating States to be aware of the support needed and to provide help in a coordinated way. The UCPM also improved the communication between actors at national level in Romania.¹³⁶¹

- Support to **India** was provided in April and May 2021, just after the requests came through the UCPM. The support was coordinated by the UCPM, and resources were pooled between different countries. According to a few respondents, the response provided to India showed the evolution and reinforcement of the UCPM throughout the crisis. The support provided was in fact considerable given the nature and quantity of items provided (oxygen concentrators, oxygen generators, oxygen cylinders, ventilators, etc).¹³⁶² However, given that no consultations could be carried out with the Indian authorities, there is no clarity on the exact added value brought by the support provided as compared to the national interventions and international ones from their point of view.

A7.5.5 Key challenges

As for the main challenges faced by the UCPM in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, the main challenges identified in the prevention and preparedness areas were the following:

- Very **limited prevention and preparedness activities** were organised before the start of the pandemic given that the crisis came as an unexpected event. Better linkages and coordination with the scientific community could have helped in addressing this issue.¹³⁶³
- The initial **lack of scientific expertise** within DG ECHO was also a factor that slowed down the response and hampered the work of the UCPM. Reorganisations were operated within DG ECHO to address this issue, and cooperation was improved with DG SANTE (and other DGs) as well as with the ECDC.¹³⁶⁴ Nevertheless, a few respondents found that the technical knowledge within the UCPM was insufficient for it to provide adequate support during the pandemic.¹³⁶⁵
- At the start of the crisis DG ECHO did not have the capacity to build **medical stockpiling**, given that the legal basis for this did not exist within RescEU. In the space of a few weeks an Implementing decision¹³⁶⁶ was adopted and RescEU could start building medical stockpiles to be used in response to the crisis. More broadly, in 2020, **preparedness activities** were limited, and trainings had to be stopped. Later in the crisis, online trainings were organised to replace in-person ones.¹³⁶⁷

As for the **response** to the crisis, a number of challenges were also found:

- When the COVID-19 crisis hit at the beginning of 2020, all Member States and Participating States were hit at the same time. In the span of a few weeks there were **shortages of medical protective equipment** on the markets, with Member States and Participating States competing against each other on the global supply market. Healthcare systems were constrained in the amount of assistance they could deliver and by a lack of knowledge of the disease. The **UCPM response was also constrained**, and the first requests of support could not be addressed in a timely manner.¹³⁶⁸
- Given the multisectoral impacts of the pandemic, different actors at EU and national level had to interact in their response efforts. However, a **lack of awareness of the UCPM** among certain actors

¹³⁶¹ Interview with National authorities (1 out of 4);

¹³⁶² Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁶³ Interviews with National Authorities (2 out of 4), DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁶⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁶⁵ Interviews with National authorities (2 out of 4);

¹³⁶⁶ Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council, 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, as of 07/06/2023 available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32019D0420>;

¹³⁶⁷ DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

¹³⁶⁸ Interviews with National Authorities, DG ECHO (3 out of 5);

reduced synergies and increased the difficulties in the response.¹³⁶⁹ To mitigate the lack of awareness and reduced coordination, a number of meetings were organised between the UCPM and national Civil Protection national authorities, as well as other national actors. The meetings helped increase the knowledge of the UCPM over the course of the crisis, and improved the effectiveness of the support that could be provided by the UCPM.¹³⁷⁰

- A number of **delays in the response** were also due to the fact that Participating States did not have **direct access to CECIS**¹³⁷¹. A new system (CECIS 2.0) is currently being built and it should provide direct access to Participating States.¹³⁷²
- **National medical capacities** that had been originally committed to the UCPM via the **ECPP** (European Civil Protection Pool) were already involved in national responses or under recovery from previous emergencies. Since then, DG ECHO has been working to **increase the dedicated capacities** of these teams to the UCPM, and to improve the exchange of information with Member States and Participating States regarding the availability of the teams.¹³⁷³

A7.5.6 Lessons learnt and good practices

The lessons learnt and good practices identified related to UCPM activities on COVID-19 were:

A7.5.6.1 Prevention

- The majority of stakeholders highlighted the **importance of prevention and preparedness** measures.¹³⁷⁴ These were very limited before the COVID 19 pandemic as the crisis came as an unexpected event. Improved connection and coordination with the scientific community and actors specialised in prevention and preparedness were highlighted as important for being prepared and able to adequately respond to future health crises.

A7.5.6.2 Preparedness

- The **collaboration with the ECDC** and with **HERA** since its creation in 2022 were considered as very positive elements. The modification of **RescEU** to be able to stockpile medical equipment was also considered as a major achievement for the UCPM by the majority of the stakeholders consulted.¹³⁷⁵

A7.5.6.3 Response

- The **modifications made to the UCPM** since 2020 showed the capacity of the UCPM to adapt to new challenges and its flexibility. However, **greater flexibility** was recommended by a minority of respondents as a key element for the future of the UCPM.¹³⁷⁶
- The main enabling success factor of the UCPM was the **coordination role** that it played during the pandemic. This could be performed thanks to its long-standing expertise and established links with stakeholders and other key actors.¹³⁷⁷

¹³⁶⁹ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 5);

¹³⁷⁰ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁷¹ CECIS is the Common Emergency Communication and Information System, a web-based alert and notification application that allows for a real-time exchange of information between the national CP authorities in the Member States and the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC);

¹³⁷² DG ECHO, UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme, Lessons from the first COVID-19 wave in Europe;

¹³⁷³ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁷⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2); National authorities (3 out of 4)

¹³⁷⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 5) ; EU Stakeholders (1 out of 2); National authorities (3 out of 4)

¹³⁷⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5), National authorities (1 out of 4), EU stakeholders (1 out of 2);

¹³⁷⁷ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); with National authorities (2 out of 4);

- A minority of respondents highlighted the importance of **cross-sectoral cooperation** in health emergencies. The **lack of awareness of the UCPM** among stakeholders was highlighted as a factor reducing the effectiveness and coherence of the response. This should be further improved in the future.¹³⁷⁸
- A few respondents highlighted that the **complementarity of actions between different** European Commission **DGs** could be improved. A single point of contact (i.e., a coordination centre) at EU level could also be created in order to streamline response to similar cross-sectoral crises. Such a coordination function could be tasked with responding to the request from external stakeholders, including Member States and Participating States, and coordinating the response between different actors at EU level.¹³⁷⁹

A7.5.7 List of references

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- DG ECHO (2022), EU-COVID-19 Requests for medical and in-kind assistance, ECHO Civil Protection Message No. 64, and Annex I;
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- Sharendra D. Sharma (2022), 'India's fight against the COVID-19 Pandemic: lessons and the Way forward', India Quarterly;
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A7.5.8 List of stakeholders consulted

¹³⁷⁸ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5);

¹³⁷⁹ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); with National authorities (2 out of 4).

Stakeholder	Type of interview (remote/field)
Officials, DG ECHO (5)	Remote
Official, HERA (1)	Remote
Official, EU Delegation in India (1)	Remote
Official, National Civil protection, Italy (1)	Remote
Official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France (1)	Remote
Official, previously working for French Ministry of Health (now HERA) (1)	Remote
Official, Ministry of Interior, Romania (1)	Remote

A7.6 Integration of UCPM preparedness activities

A7.6.1 Introduction to the case study

This case study examines the integration across Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) preparedness activities between 2017 and 2022. The rationale for the implementation of this case study is to assess change after the external evaluations¹³⁸⁰ of the UCPM, which found a need for more coherence between activities in the UCPM's preparedness pillar (particularly capacity development activities, i.e. trainings, exercises, UCPM-funded projects). In conjunction, the increase in the number of preparedness activities across the evaluation period calls for a more in-depth focus on their internal coherence and complementarity.

The aim of the case study is to evaluate the progress towards ensuring coherence between UCPM preparedness activities. The case study also measures the extent to which changes to improve the coherence between UCPM preparedness activities had an impact on the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and EU added value of the UCPM's work towards preparedness.

Please note that this case study includes an assessment of the Framework Contract on the provision of ad-hoc training that ICF recently signed on behalf of the Civitas Soteria consortium with DG ECHO, and in particular the first specific contract which took place in November 2022: a workshop on the certification process of the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP). Therefore, this analysis has been conducted by our external expert.

A7.6.2 Context

This section will provide an overview of:

- The UCPM preparedness pillar and key activities in focus of this case study;
- Evolution of the UCPM preparedness activities across 2017-2022.

A7.6.2.1 UCPM preparedness activities

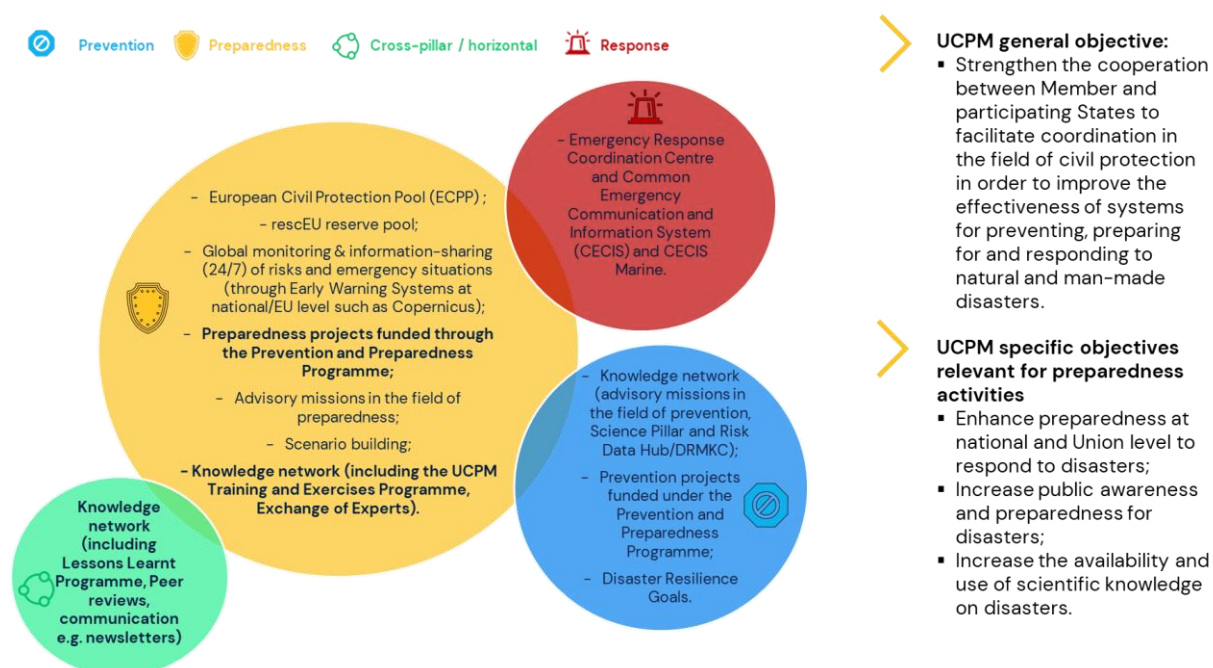
As per Chapter III of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a UCPM ('the Decision'), the majority of the Mechanism's activities consist of preparedness activities.

¹³⁸⁰ The Previous interim evaluation of the of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM); Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism's Training Programme, and; Evaluation of the European Commission's Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020))

The Decision defines preparedness as “a state of readiness and capability of human and material means, structures, communities and organisations enabling them to ensure an effective rapid response to a disaster, obtained as a result of action taken in advance”.

Figure 90 provides an overview of UCPM activities in the preparedness pillar. It also highlights activities in other UCPM pillars (i.e. prevention, response, and cross-pillar/horizontal) which are very closely interlinked with the preparedness pillar.

Figure 90. UCPM activities and objectives relevant to preparedness



Source: ICF elaboration. In **bold** are the activities in focus of the case study, i.e. ‘capacity development activities’.

After an analysis of evaluations of the UCPM (mentioned under Section 1.1) we made a selection of preparedness activities for the case study to focus on – where there was a particular need for (further) internal coherence and complementarity (see Figure 90 activities in bold). Nevertheless, the case study will also – where relevant and where data was collected – make reference to coherence with other preparedness activities too.

A7.6.2.2 Evolution of the UCPM preparedness activities across 2017-2022.

Across the evaluation, a broad series of legislative and operational changes, both within and beyond the UCPM, had an impact on UCPM preparedness activities. These include changes and a reinforcement of the UCPM’s capacity building activities and development of capacities, as well as developments of the EU-funded programme “Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters” (PPRD) with Eastern and Southern neighbourhood countries. Table 23 below provides an overview on the main legislative developments to the UCPM and other relevant activities in the field of preparedness.

Table 23. Main relevant changes across 2017-2022 to consider

Year	Main changes to the UCPM	Other relevant changes
2017		
2018	UCPM: - Integration of European Medical Corps in the Voluntary Resource pool (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/142).	PPRD East 2 stands for "Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters in Eastern Partnership countries Phase 2". It ran from 2014-2018. PPRD South III stands for "Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters in Southern Partnership countries Phase 3". It ran from 2018-2021.
2019	UCPM: - Redefinition of the European Civil Protection Pool (Decision (EU) 2019/420 and implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1310). -Adoption of new UCPM Training and Exercises Strategy by the CPC . RescEU: - Establishment and defining capacities of the rescEU reserve pool (Decision EU/ 2019/420 and Commission Implementing Decisions (EU) 2019/570, 2019/1310, 2019/1930).	
2020	rescEU: - Reinforcement of rescEU's medical stockpiling capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/414) - Definition of rescEU capacities established to respond to low probability risks with a high impact (Definition of the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/452) Other relevant changes: - Mobilisation of the Contingency Margin in 2020 to provide emergency assistance to Member States and further reinforce the UCPM/rescEU in response to the COVID-19 outbreak (Decision (EU) 2020/547)	PPRD East 3 stands for "Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters in Eastern Partnership countries Phase 3". This phase of the programme is being implemented between 2020 and 2024.
2021	UCPM: - Reinforcement of the UCPM Decision , including the following main changes: revising rescEU capacities, development of Union Resilience Goals and a more flexible UCPM budget structure (Regulation (EU) 2021/836) rescEU: - Definition of rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents (Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/88) - Definition of stockpiling rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1886) Other relevant changes: - Establishment and organisation of the Knowledge Network (Implementing Decision 2021/1956)	
2022	rescEU: - Reinforcement of rescEU shelter capacities and the modification of quality requirements for Emergency Medical Teams Type 3 capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/288) - Reinforcement of rescEU transport and logistics capacities , e.g. also to respond to low probability high impact disasters (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/461) - Definition of rescEU mobile laboratory capacities and rescEU CBRN detection, sampling, identification and monitoring capacities (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/465) - Definition of rescEU emergency energy supply capacities (Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/1198) Other relevant changes: - Establishment of criteria and procedures for recognising long-standing commitment and extraordinary contributions to the UCPM (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/706)	PPRD Med stands for "Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters the Southern Neighbourhood, Union for the Mediterranean member countries" (from October/November 2022).

The main changes to the UCPM that sought to bring further coherence to its preparedness pillar, and thus will be an area of focus of this case study are:

- The establishment and subsequent development of the UCPM Knowledge Network, including:
 - The integration of the UCPM training and exercises;
 - The merger of disaster resilience calls (also referred to as the Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness ('KAPP') umbrella call).

Most of the activities affected by these three changes (and thus their impacts) are outside the evaluation scope. Consequently, this case study concentrates on examining the design of these changes and their preliminary activities. The aim is to understand how these changes influenced, and will continue to influence the improvement of coordination and complementarity among UCPM preparedness activities in the future.

A7.6.3 Case study findings

This section provides the case study findings per evaluation criteria: coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, EU added value.

A7.6.3.1 Coherence

Overall, across the evaluation period, DG ECHO succeeded in introducing improvements to the coherence and complementarity of UCPM preparedness activities. Nevertheless, the identification of duplication of efforts and unexploited synergies show room for improvement.

The changes made to the UCPM preparedness pillar are expected to have a positive impact on the coherence of future UCPM preparedness activities, with some room for improvement. At this stage, this can be attributed to the efforts of DG ECHO to enhance the overall coherence through these activities, such as the integration of trainings and exercises, merging of disaster resilience calls and introduction and development of the umbrella initiative 'the Knowledge Network'. The majority of stakeholders agreed that the changes to the UCPM preparedness activities have shown an intention to improve coherence between the UCPM preparedness pillar.¹³⁸¹ Stakeholders noted that the activities that have so far and will likely have a positive impact on the coherence between preparedness activities are: 1) the Knowledge Network, and consequently the Network's efforts to 2) merge of funding instruments aimed at multi-country collaboration through the introduction of the KAPP calls, and 2) new Training and Exercises Programme.

The **Knowledge Network**, designed as an umbrella initiative, aims to enhance the coherence between activities. The UCPM **Knowledge Network** ('Knowledge Network') was introduced in 2021 through Implementing Decision 2021/1956 with the intention to build up the EU's overall ability and capacity to deal with disasters. The mission statement of the Knowledge Network is to¹³⁸²:

- 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); and
- Foster innovation for more efficient and effective civil protection systems (innovation catalyst).

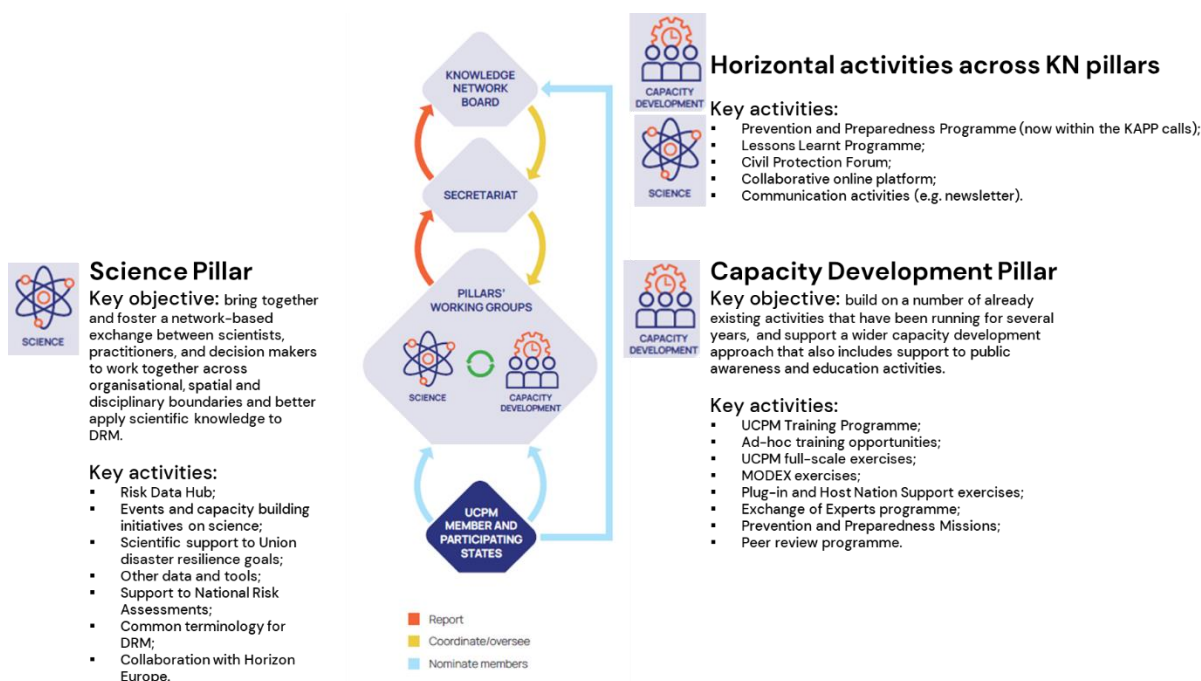
¹³⁸¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (5 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (3 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (2 out of 2).

¹³⁸² European Commission - DG ECHO. (2023). 'UCPM – STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026'

Figure 91 provides an overview of the new and long-standing UCPM activities across pillars which are now under the Knowledge Network (activities within the 'Capacity Development Pillar' are particularly relevant for this case study). Knowledge Network governance¹³⁸³ consists of:

- **Knowledge Network Board:** Strategic forum co-chaired by the Commission and the member State holding the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU;
- **Secretariat:** by the Commission to ensure effective and efficient organisation;
- **Pillar working groups:** composed of representatives of the UCPM Member and Participating States, will steer the work of the Knowledge Network's two pillars (e.g. planning, designing, implementing activities);
- **Member and Participating States** will be invited to nominate their representatives for several years to have continuous overview and ownership of the network.

Figure 91. Overview of Knowledge Network structure and activities



Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). 'UCPKN – STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026'

Stakeholders noted that the Knowledge Network has significant potential to increase coherence between UCPM preparedness activities.¹³⁸⁴ There were clear efforts across the Knowledge Network design process to make use of existing initiatives and thus build synergies across the pillar¹³⁸⁵, such as using existing working groups to build the Pillar Working groups (e.g. considering the Early Warning Systems Expert Group (EWS) for the Science pillar Working group). Stakeholders specifically emphasised that the Network's online platform, particularly its project

¹³⁸³ European Commission - DG ECHO. (2023). 'UCPKN – STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026'

¹³⁸⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (5 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹³⁸⁵ European Commission- DG ECHO. (2020). 'Concept paper on the structure of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network'; European Commission - DG ECHO. (2021). 'Concept paper: Capacity Development pillar of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network'; European Commission - DG ECHO. (2021). 'Overview and analysis of the online outreach meetings with Union Civil Protection Mechanism Member States and Participating States on the Civil Protection Knowledge Network'; European Commission - DG ECHO. (2022). 'Note to DG ECHO Management: Prevention and Preparedness Programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme'.

library that consolidates all project outputs, has the potential to significantly influence internal coherence.¹³⁸⁶

However, there are **potential enhancements** that could further maximise the Networks' impact on coherence. Whilst DG ECHO has made efforts to introduce the Knowledge Network at events, stakeholders highlighted that the UCPM could make more consistent and structured efforts to promote the Knowledge Network across activities. DG ECHO has started introducing the concept of the Knowledge Network at various events, for example in the discussion-based exercise on marine pollution, attended by the evaluation team on 2 March 2023.¹³⁸⁷ Nevertheless, stakeholders participating in UCPM activities noted that there could be a better and more systematic awareness raising on the Network activities, and especially on how these will exactly bring synergies.¹³⁸⁸ To maximise efficiencies, this could be through the distribution of material provided by the Knowledge Network coordination team, or through internal workshops to establish consistent messaging on the Network to be disseminated across the Mechanism's activities. .

The **KAPP** calls represent a concerted effort in the UCPM to address the aforementioned duplication of funding across UCPM calls for proposals. The **KAPP calls** seek to *"identify and co-finance projects aimed at strengthening cooperation among EU Member States and Participating States on disaster prevention and preparedness, as well as providing a testing environment and a learning opportunity for all actors involved in civil protection assistance interventions, through full-scale field exercises"*.¹³⁸⁹ The KAPP calls merged the calls for proposals previously under the Prevention and Preparedness Programme, the Knowledge Network Partnership projects and the full-scale exercises.¹³⁹⁰ The calls are now structured across the following 'topics': 1) KAPP-PV 'prevention', 2) KAPP-PP 'preparedness' and 3) KAPP-EX 'full-scale exercises'.

The majority of stakeholders consulted for this case study agreed that the KAPP calls will likely have a significant impact on coherence between UCPM funded activities.¹³⁹¹ Consolidating these calls together is likely to significantly reduce the risk of funding similar projects across multiple funding streams and ensure a more coherent approach to evaluating projects. Nevertheless, a stakeholder noted that, considering that the management of the calls involves different units within DG ECHO, there is a risk that each unit takes a different approach to the priorities set per call, which could ultimately lead to inconsistencies across the type of projects.¹³⁹² The first proposals submitted under the KAPP calls are currently being evaluated, thus this impact remains to be seen.

The introduction of the **new Training and Exercises Programme** is expected to foster synergies among UCPM trainings, exercises and the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) by establishing structured connections between these activities. The **new Training and Exercises Programme** designed throughout the end of the evaluation period, has been implemented since September 2023.¹³⁹³ This programme merges the to previously separate training programme and civil

¹³⁸⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹³⁸⁷ A discussion-based exercise, also known as a seminar, is a training exercise that involves a group of participants discussing a hypothetical emergency scenario (in this case using virtual reality).

¹³⁸⁸ Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹³⁸⁹ European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). 'Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) Call for proposals - Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness (KAPP)'.

¹³⁹⁰ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹³⁹¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (5 out of 5); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

¹³⁹² Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹³⁹³ European Commission – DG ECHO. (2019). '25TH MEETING OF THE CIVIL PROTECTION COMMITTEE 10 JULY 2019 ITEM 3.2: THE UNION CIVIL PROTECTION MECHANISM TRAINING AND EXERCISES STRATEGY'; European Commission – DG ECHO. (2021). 'Call for tenders ECHO/2021/OP/0006 UCPM Training Programme: Online Modules, Ad hoc Training Courses, Training of Trainers, Thematic

protection exercises. At present, the main proposed changes introduced in this new training and exercises programme are:

- A **'deployable training path'** (Lot 1) targeting experts and capacities' personal to be deployed on UCPM missions;
- A set of **'non-deployable' courses** (Lot 2) for civil protection and disaster risk management stakeholders who hold a supporting function to the UCPM at home organisations and countries (e.g. for EU Delegations and enlargement countries);
- The **better integration of exercises into trainings** (e.g. experts that undergo the deployable path must attend a MODEX exercise, to be included in a potential certified **'pool of deployable experts'**);
- High-level **'specialisation' courses for the deployable experts** aligned with the European Union Civil Protection Team (EUCPT) functional profiles – i.e. coordination & assessment experts on information management, logistics, safety and security and team leader/deputy team leader;
- A set of **'refresher' training activities** to provide the opportunity to update and refresh knowledge and skills through a Mechanism Refresher Seminar;
- **Structure of the consortia designing/implementing trainings in Lot 1** (i.e. all the trainings above), with now two national civil protection authorities (IT, DE) coordinating all partners involved in designing training courses;
- **A new Framework contract for the provision of ad-hoc trainings**, run by external contractors, aimed at addressing any new and additional training needs over and above standards of deployable contracts.

Figure 92 (at the end of the case study) provides an overview of the proposed structure for the new UCPM training and exercises programme.

The main elements of the new Training and Exercises Programme expected to bring further coherence is the introduction of a 'deployable training path', and to a lesser extent the potential 'pool of deployable experts'. The 'deployable training path' now consists of an obligatory participation of experts in a MODEX exercise. In addition, upon completion of the deployable training path, experts will potentially be included in a 'pool of deployable experts', which will be part of the ECPP. This potential creation of a 'pool of deployable experts' elicited a mixed response from stakeholders. Whilst a DG ECHO officer¹³⁹⁴ perceived it as an extension of the already close connection between these activities, a national authority¹³⁹⁵ expressed concerns that it might impose unnecessary additional burdens.

DG ECHO also implemented some measures to ensure coherence and complementarity between UCPM preparedness activities, although there is room for improvement. Table 24 presents a summary of the key measures implemented that have influenced coherence, and also highlights potential avenues for improvement or challenges that hinder their ability to promote greater coherence.

Seminars & Workshops Single Framework Contract'. As of 13/06/2023 available at: <https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/cft/cft-document.html?docId=97509>; Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); Interview with external contractor running the Framework contract for ad hoc training carried out by external expert (1).

¹³⁹⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹³⁹⁵ Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

Table 24. Overview of new DG ECHO measures to ensure coherence and areas for improvement

DG ECHO measures introduced	Room for improvement to ensure further coherence / challenges identified
DG ECHO hired new staff to implement the Knowledge Network. ¹³⁹⁶	Insufficient human resources continue to hinder the implementation of all planned activities and limit the ability to achieve optimal coherence.
Since 2019 a single Unit was established to cover trainings, exercises, and the Knowledge Network. ¹³⁹⁷	Despite the single Unit for the Knowledge Network, some activities are still split between units. Some activities are split between units (KAPP calls) and some fall in different units altogether (Lesson Learnt Programme). ¹³⁹⁸ Although the division of responsibilities Units contributes to increased resources and internal organisation, it also creates communication gaps between the Units . ¹³⁹⁹ Furthermore, this division hinders the perception of the Knowledge Network as an overarching initiative that encompasses the work of all other Units involved in Network activities. ¹⁴⁰⁰
DG ECHO introduced a directorate for preparedness and prevention to dedicate more staff and attention to the two. ¹⁴⁰¹	Preparedness activities are currently divided between two DG ECHO civil protection Directorates (Directorate A on Emergency management and rescEU and Directorate B on Disaster preparedness and prevention). The main area where division of responsibilities between Directorates can lead to potential incoherence is in the development and deployment of the ECPP and rescEU. ¹⁴⁰²

Source: ICF elaboration on the basis of KIIs

DG ECHO is currently undergoing a reorganisation of its organisational structure, which will likely have an impact on the areas of improvement noted above.¹⁴⁰³

Across the evaluation period, there were duplication of efforts and unexploited synergies between UCPM preparedness activities. The main duplication of efforts identified was related to funding similar projects across different calls for proposals. Funding was allocated to similar projects within both the Prevention and Preparedness Programme and the Knowledge Network partnership projects.¹⁴⁰⁴ DG ECHO stakeholders noted that, since the different calls were coordinated by different Units, they did not set complementary objectives and followed different selection criteria and evaluation processes – which led to duplication.¹⁴⁰⁵

The main unexploited synergies are:

¹³⁹⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5).

¹³⁹⁷ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹³⁹⁸ DG ECHO feedback.

¹³⁹⁹ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹⁴⁰⁰ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5).

¹⁴⁰¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5).

¹⁴⁰² Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 5).

¹⁴⁰³ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5).

¹⁴⁰⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 5); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴⁰⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5).

- **Knowledge Network:** Currently there is a lacking understanding within DG ECHO about the Knowledge Network's role as an umbrella initiative that can support the implementation of UCPM preparedness activities.¹⁴⁰⁶ Stakeholders noted that currently DG ECHO Units dealing with activities formally implemented under the Knowledge Network do not perceive the ownership of the Knowledge Network of these activities.¹⁴⁰⁷ Nevertheless, stakeholders noted that this could improve with time as the Network matures within DG ECHO, but that some structural and operational initiatives are necessary to facilitate this development (e.g. Units implementing Knowledge Network activities report to the Knowledge Network Unit).¹⁴⁰⁸
- **More frequent and/or systematic inclusion of other preparedness activities in trainings and exercises:** Stakeholders highlighted that the current ad hoc inclusion of other preparedness activities in trainings and exercises is valuable, and could be done more frequently and/or systematically.¹⁴⁰⁹ The following two examples were highlighted as good practices in this respect¹⁴¹⁰:
 - The discussion-based exercise ('DBX') on marine pollution included two presentations of relevant PPPs (emphasising their outputs that can be applied more widely);
 - The reference to the Copernicus Emergency Management Service (CEMS) in exercises.

There are **several factors that have been facilitating as well as hindering the coherence between UCPM preparedness activities** (Table 25). The main facilitating factors are related to the knowledge of DG ECHO and national stakeholders of the UCPM and the field. The main factors hindering coherence between UCPM activities are internal to DG ECHO (lack of resources, high staff turnover, Knowledge Network's lack of ownership), and to a lesser extent external (coordination challenges posed by new consortia structure for training and exercises programme, and change fatigue on behalf of key UCPM stakeholders).

¹⁴⁰⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 5).

¹⁴⁰⁷ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5).

¹⁴⁰⁸ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹⁴⁰⁹ Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

¹⁴¹⁰ Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

Table 25. Main factors facilitating and hindering the coherence of UCPM preparedness activities

Factors	Description of impact
The main factors that facilitated coherence between UCPM preparedness activities since 2017	
DG ECHO staff technical and field expertise	DG ECHO staff technical and field expertise, as well as knowledge on key priorities in the field of disaster management. ¹⁴¹¹
Stakeholders' familiarity with the Mechanism	Stakeholders' familiarity with the Mechanism, including national authorities involved in the consultations for the design of the knowledge Network and new Training and Exercises programme that pushed for pragmatic change and asked uncomfortable questions (e.g. what does this initiative really bring to what already exists?). ¹⁴¹²
The main factors that hindered coherence between UCPM preparedness activities since 2017	
'Change fatigue' ¹⁴¹³	The many changes to the UCPM preparedness pillar across the evaluation period affected stakeholders, who have less energy and/or interest to engage in these activities including the newly established interconnections between them. ¹⁴¹⁴
Lack of resources	As mentioned in Table 24, stakeholders noted that the lack of (human and financial) resources to implement UCPM preparedness activities has significantly hindered their potential to stimulate further coherence. ¹⁴¹⁵ Especially in times of crisis, resources are more easily taken from preparedness capacity development activities (such as the Knowledge Network) to be redirected to response. ¹⁴¹⁶

¹⁴¹¹ Interviews with experts in civil protection (3 out of 4).¹⁴¹² Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2); Interview with DG ECHO on Framework contract for ad hoc training carried out by external expert (1).¹⁴¹³ Change fatigue often occurs when individuals or teams feel overwhelmed by continuous transitions, resulting in reduced capacity to adapt or engage effectively with new initiatives or processes.¹⁴¹⁴ Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 4); Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).¹⁴¹⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 5).¹⁴¹⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

Factors	Description of impact
High staff turnover within DG ECHO	High staff turnover within DG ECHO has led to a loss of institutional knowledge, contributing to a lack of coherence. For instance, project desk officers for Prevention and Preparedness Programme projects have often changed more than once through project implementation, and some officers had more/less knowledge than others on other existing UCPM initiatives. ¹⁴¹⁷
Lack of belonging to the Knowledge Network on behalf of DG ECHO staff implementing its activities	DG ECHO staff implementing the Knowledge Network's longstanding activities (trainings, exercises, Exchange of Experts) do not feel a strong sense of their activities' belonging to the Knowledge Network. This represented an untapped synergy, as mentioned earlier, and significantly hampers its potential for coherence. The Network was specifically established to consolidate these activities under a unified framework to foster coherence, and the absence of ownership undermines this objective. ¹⁴¹⁸
The consortia structure for Lot 1 of the new Training and Exercises Programme	The consortia structure for Lot 1 of the new Training and Exercises Programme has imposed a significant additional burden on the coordinating entities. ¹⁴¹⁹ The new structure was implemented to enhance coherence among trainings by having two national authorities (IT, DE) overseeing all the entities responsible for designing various training courses. This arrangement should ensure that methodologies across courses are harmonised. However, stakeholders involved in the coordination of this consortia have emphasised that there are far too many partners in the consortia (40 entities) for them to effectively foster this coherence, and it presents a significant additional burden which they think will actually limit their oversight on the training courses. ¹⁴²⁰

¹⁴¹⁷ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 4).

¹⁴¹⁸ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); European Commission - DG ECHO. (2021). 'Overview and analysis of the online outreach meetings with Union Civil Protection Mechanism Member States and Participating States on the Civil Protection Knowledge Network'.

¹⁴¹⁹ Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

¹⁴²⁰ Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

A7.6.3.2 Effectiveness

The changes introduced to bring more coherence to the UCPM preparedness pillar also contributed to progress across the UCPM's specific and general objectives as set in Article 3(1) of the Decision (see Figure 90).

The following changes to the UCPM preparedness pillar contributed to the **UCPM specific objectives in the field of preparedness**:

- Most stakeholders agreed that the **new Training and Exercises Programme** will have a significant impact on enhancing preparedness.¹⁴²¹
 - The main contributing factor to this improvement will be the implementation of the new '**deployable training path**'. Stakeholders estimated that during the evaluation period, only around one-third of deployed experts managed to complete at least one course, and that many experts were trained but were never deployed.¹⁴²² This path will ensure that a higher number of deployed experts successfully complete all the required training courses. In addition, the more stringent selection criteria to participate in the deployable training path will ensure less experts that will likely never be deployed are trained.
 - The **new framework contract for ad-hoc training**, run by external contractors, was considered to also contribute to enhanced preparedness through taking a more practice-driven/hands-on approach and bringing new expertise that was not covered through the "traditional" training paths (e.g. on cultural awareness).¹⁴²³
- Nevertheless, stakeholders highlighted that the extent to which the **Knowledge Network Capacity Development Pillar** (which includes the Training and Exercises Programme) will enhance preparedness will depend on Member State involvement, with one national authority cautioning that this pillar could mostly enhance EU-level rather than national preparedness.¹⁴²⁴
- The **Knowledge Network Science Pillar** in particular will contribute to bringing science further into the fabric of UCPM preparedness activities.¹⁴²⁵

The following changes to the UCPM preparedness pillar contributed to the **UCPM general objective**, mostly through fostering more cross-sectoral cooperation:

- The **DBX** successfully fostered communication between a broad variety of stakeholders involved in responding to marine pollution disasters (including the private sector – ship insurers, lawyers). Stakeholders involved in the exercise highlighted this as a key success of the DBX.¹⁴²⁶
- The **new Training and Exercises programme** seeks to provide UCPM trainings to a broader range of stakeholders (EU delegations, Neighbourhood countries). This raises awareness of the Mechanism and builds communication channels with a broader range of stakeholders, laying down the foundations for further cooperation.¹⁴²⁷ The new

¹⁴²¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

¹⁴²² Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5).

¹⁴²³ Interview with DG ECHO on Framework contract for ad hoc training carried out by external expert (1); Interview with external contractor running the Framework contract for ad hoc training carried out by external expert (1).

¹⁴²⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 5); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴²⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴²⁶ Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴²⁷ European Commission - DG ECHO. (2023). 'UCPMN – STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-202 - Annex'

framework contract for ad-hoc training also brings a new and additional level of cooperation and communication – which is a good chance for stakeholders to expand their networks even further.¹⁴²⁸

- Similarly, the **Knowledge Network** engrains cross-sectoral cooperation in its design, as one of its goals is to “enhance collaboration between scientists, practitioners, policy- and decision makers in civil protection and disaster risk management”.¹⁴²⁹ Experts and national stakeholders agreed that there is potential for it to stimulate such cooperation, but that DG ECHO could reflect and make clear how this differs from previous similar UCPM efforts (e.g. Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre) in bringing additional value.¹⁴³⁰

A7.6.3.3 Efficiency

The changes to the preparedness pillar will likely have an impact on improving the cost-effectiveness of UCPM activities, as they target identified inefficiencies.

Table 26 shows the main inefficiencies identified related to the lack of coherence between UCPM preparedness activities, how the changes to the UCPM preparedness pillar seek to address them, and any (potential) remaining inefficiencies.

Table 26. How changes to the UCPM preparedness pillar could improve cost-effectiveness

Identified inefficiency	Activity that targets to reduce this inefficiency	Identified (potential) remaining inefficiencies
Similar projects receiving funding from multiple UCPM calls for proposals. ¹⁴³¹	Introduction of the KAPP call bringing under one process the design, evaluation and implementation of different UCPM-funded projects. ¹⁴³² Dedicated working spaces for projects on UCPKN platform (as opposed to separate websites) will also mitigate the potential future duplication of efforts, as it makes it easier for project applicants to check existing projects.	N/A
Mismatch of experts receiving training. The UCPM trained a high number of experts who were then not deployed. Similarly, many deployed experts had not received all	The new Training and Exercises programme “ deployable training path ” with more stringent selection criteria , and potential assessment/feedback before	N/A

¹⁴²⁸ Interview with external contractor running the Framework contract for ad hoc training carried out by external expert (1).

¹⁴²⁹ European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). ‘UCPKN – STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026’.

¹⁴³⁰ Interview with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴³¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (5 out of 5); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

¹⁴³² European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). ‘Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) Call for proposals - Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness (KAPP)’.

Identified inefficiency	Activity that targets to reduce this inefficiency	Identified (potential) remaining inefficiencies
necessary trainings to be deployed. ¹⁴³³	you proceed to the next level of training. ¹⁴³⁴	
Lack of resources and high staff turnover at DG ECHO impacts the efficiency of the projects staff are overseeing. ¹⁴³⁵	More structural attribution of desk officers to the evaluation and overseeing of projects. ¹⁴³⁶	Lack of resources remains an issue to be addressed.

Considerations on how to improve the efficiency of UCPM preparedness activities within it is engrained in the design of the Knowledge Network.¹⁴³⁷ For example:

- The Knowledge Network introduced a detailed monitoring framework, with tailored Key Performance Indicators.¹⁴³⁸ Whilst this could have an impact on improving the cost-effectiveness, stakeholders however noted that the extent to which this can have a significant impact on the overall effectiveness of the UCPM is limited, due to a lacking UCPM-wide Performance Measurement Mechanism (e.g. KPIs across pillars/ activities).¹⁴³⁹
- Following consultations with national authorities to simplify the organisational structure of the Knowledge Network to reduce the administrative burden, DG ECHO significantly revised the governance structure.¹⁴⁴⁰

A7.6.3.4 Relevance

Across the evaluation period, DG ECHO has made a significant effort to address recommendations and lessons learnt to increase coherence between UCPM preparedness activities, with some room for improvement.

The majority of identified recommendations (from external evaluations) and lessons learnt (from the Lessons Learnt Programme) are being addressed/ have been addressed (see Table 27 overleaf). The main recommendation that has been addressed across the evaluation period has been to introduce a strengthened and structural link between trainings and exercises, and with the Exchange of Experts programme (through the Knowledge Network). The main recommendations made and lessons learnt that remain unaddressed include a centralised database on experts involved in trainings, exercises and deployment (to be used across Directorates) and closer alignment between UCPM and PPRD trainings and exercises.

¹⁴³³ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

¹⁴³⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

¹⁴³⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 4).

¹⁴³⁶ European Commission - DG ECHO. (2022). 'Note to DG ECHO Management: Prevention and Preparedness Programme: findings of recent evaluations and future outlook for the programme'.

¹⁴³⁷ Interview with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); European Commission - DG ECHO. (2020). 'Concept paper on the structure of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network'; European Commission - DG ECHO. (2021). 'THE CORE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE UNION CIVIL PROTECTION KNOWLEDGE NETWORK';

¹⁴³⁸ European Commission – DG ECHO. (2022). 'Annex 1 – Performance Indicators for the UCPKN'.

¹⁴³⁹ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹⁴⁴⁰ European Commission - DG ECHO. (2021). 'THE CORE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE UNION CIVIL PROTECTION KNOWLEDGE NETWORK'; European Commission – DG ECHO. (2023). 'UCPKN – STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026'.

Table 27. Progress across main identified recommendations and lessons learnt related to coherence between preparedness activities

Relevant UCPM activities	Recommendations Lesson learnt	Progress
ECPP	Draft expert profiles/types relevant to different types of situations/deployments. ¹⁴⁴¹	Currently work on the potential ‘Pool of Experts’ includes ‘technical profiles’ by disaster type. ¹⁴⁴²
Trainings	Increase availability and deployment predictability of suitable EUCPT experts, notably team leader profile and technical experts (considerations should be given to the establishment of a voluntary pool of experts). ¹⁴⁴³	Only experts that have undergone the “deployable training path” will be able to be included in the potential ‘Pool of Experts’ in the ECPP. ¹⁴⁴⁴
Trainings Exercises ECPP	Evaluate the performance of the expert in the training/exercise and the deployments into a central database. ¹⁴⁴⁵	The new Training and Exercises programme’s deployable training path contains ‘evaluation/feedback’ of experts. ¹⁴⁴⁶
	The online platform for trainings would have significant added value if it were to be linked to the nomination for deployment process. ¹⁴⁴⁷	There are databases on the experts/ deployments, but these are not centralised (split between Directorate A and Directorate B). ¹⁴⁴⁸
Trainings Exercises EoE	Strengthen the links between the Training Programme and the exercises by raising awareness among participants and establishing mechanisms to ensure a structured exchange of information between UCPM training courses and exercises, as well as the Exchange of Experts Programme. ¹⁴⁴⁹	The establishment of the new Training and Exercises programme, and the Knowledge Network addresses this recommendation.
Trainings	Further exploit the existing mechanisms to exchange information between contractors. Contractors must carry out peer reviews to evaluate the content and delivery of other UCPM training courses. Course visits are not being carried out systematically and their contribution to the evaluation of the courses is limited. ¹⁴⁵⁰	The introduction of the new lot (Framework Contract on the provision of ad-hoc training) seeks to standardise this. ¹⁴⁵¹
PPP Knowledge Network	Increase awareness, accessibility and engagement with ongoing and past EU-funded projects on civil protection prevention and preparedness and their results. ¹⁴⁵²	The Knowledge Network online platform will include all project outputs, as well as other EU funding sources. The KAPP calls include a requirement for project websites to be directly on the Knowledge Network (rather than setting up new, dedicated websites). ¹⁴⁵³ The 2023 KAPP call has introduced the obligation for the consortium to deliver a mapping of relevant initiatives within UCPM including an evaluation of potential synergies between ongoing initiatives or incorporation of existing results within the first 6 months
Trainings Exercises PPRD	Review the participation of experts from third countries by better scrutiny of nominations and alignment with other courses (such as via PPRD). ¹⁴⁵⁴	There remain significant inconsistencies between the design of UCPM and PPRD trainings, especially for UCPM Participating States involved in both. ¹⁴⁵⁵

¹⁴⁴¹ ICF. (2017). ‘Interim evaluation of the Union Civil protection Mechanism, 2014-2016’.

¹⁴⁴² Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹⁴⁴³ European Commission – DG ECHO. (2020). ‘OUTCOMES OF THE LESSONS LEARNT MEETING ON THE 2018 UCPM ACTIVATIONS BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, 15 FEBRUARY 2019’.

¹⁴⁴⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹⁴⁴⁵ ICF. (2017). ‘Interim evaluation of the Union Civil protection Mechanism, 2014-2016’.

¹⁴⁴⁶ Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

¹⁴⁴⁷ ICF. (2019). ‘Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism’s Training Programme’.

¹⁴⁴⁸ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹⁴⁴⁹ ICF. (2019). ‘Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism’s Training Programme’.

¹⁴⁵⁰ ICF. (2019). ‘Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism’s Training Programme’.

¹⁴⁵¹ Interview with ICF by external expert.

¹⁴⁵² ICF. (2021). ‘European Commission’s Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects (2014-2020)’.

¹⁴⁵³ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

¹⁴⁵⁴ ICF. (2019). ‘Study on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism’s Training Programme’.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

Relevant UCPM activities	Recommendations Lesson learnt	Progress
Lessons Learnt Trainings/ Exercises	Embed lessons and good practices related to the programme into trainings and exercises as well as the programme. ¹⁴⁵⁶	Stakeholders pointed out that lessons learnt could be integrated more systematically across UCPM preparedness activities. ¹⁴⁵⁷

¹⁴⁵⁶ European Commission – DG ECHO. (2021). ‘OUTCOMES OF THE LESSONS LEARNT MEETING ON THE 2019 UCPM ACTIVATIONS BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, 23-24 JANUARY 2020’.

¹⁴⁵⁷ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5); Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4).

Although changes were made to the preparedness pillar, incorporating structural elements to ensure the identification and acknowledgment of national needs, national and expert stakeholders continue to express scepticism regarding the degree to which these needs are being considered.

The Knowledge Network, including the new Training and Exercises Programme foresee specific components designed to incorporate national needs, although there is still room for improvement in this regard. Both programmes were set up after a long period of consultation with Member and Participating States (e.g. two years for the Knowledge Network). This presented the following opportunities/challenges:

- **Knowledge Network:** These consultations resulted in embedding Member and Participating State ownership into the Knowledge Network governance set up (see Figure 91). The consultation period was highlighted as a good practice to be taken forward, but the length of it meant the expectations were raised and are struggling to be met.¹⁴⁵⁸
- **New Training and Exercises Programme:** Member and Participating States still drive the course content now under one large umbrella consortia led by the German and Italian civil protection authorities. As mentioned under Section 1.2.1, having two coordinating partner communicating the needs of all 40 partners in the consortia to DG ECHO will provide a challenge and a significant additional burden (rather than before there were eight coordinating partners – coordinating four-five other entities, each communicating with DG ECHO).¹⁴⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the framework for provision of ad hoc training was highlighted by a national authority as a key good practice to address national needs, as it complements existing national training needs the most.¹⁴⁶⁰ Indeed, external contractors running it highlighted how the purpose of the contract is for the UCPM to be more flexible with adapting to national needs for training.¹⁴⁶¹

Expert and national stakeholders have raised concerns about the inadequate understanding of how national needs were identified and properly considered. Stakeholders emphasised they would like more information on the rationale for the implementation of changes introduced to the UCPM preparedness pillar, specifically on how they take into account national needs.¹⁴⁶² For instance, for the new Training and Exercises Programme there are now far less slots for national experts, with potentially more stringent selection criteria and higher requirements (time/resources) – in line with the new programmes objective to be more focused on the quality rather than quantity of training.

While the **objectives** of long-standing UCPM activities (trainings, exercises, Exchange of Experts) are clear, stakeholders noted difficulties to keep up with the objectives and purposes of the many new UCPM preparedness activities.¹⁴⁶³

A7.6.3.5 EU added value

The assessment of the EU added value of the changes made to the preparedness pillar has been limited because these changes were recently introduced and implemented. Nevertheless, limited data collected on the potential future main EU added value brought by the changes introduced to the preparedness pillar to bring coherence is:

¹⁴⁵⁸ Interviews with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴⁵⁹ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 5); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴⁶⁰ Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴⁶¹ Interview with external contractor running the Framework contract for ad hoc training carried out by external expert (1).

¹⁴⁶² Interviews with experts in civil protection (3 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴⁶³ Interviews with experts in civil protection (3 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

- The **Knowledge Network** has significant potential, especially to provide more opportunities for national civil protection authorities to build connections and learn lessons across sectors/ Europe.¹⁴⁶⁴ The Network's online platform was also perceived a valuable resource of added EU value. In particular, by making different project outputs available will help **enhance preparedness of local civil protection authorities**, helping them sometimes circumvent complex, and strictly hierarchical national civil protection structures¹⁴⁶⁵;
- More capacity to **fund innovation** in the field of disaster preparedness (through KAPP calls).

A7.6.4 Key challenges

The key challenges identified regarding bringing closer coherence between UCPM preparedness activities were:

- Although DG ECHO has made significant efforts to bring further coherence, the **lack of human and financial resources** continues to be a challenge to effectively implement all these initiatives. This is then exacerbated by the fact that, in times of crisis the preparedness budget for capacity development is most quickly reattributed to response, leaving the resources available even more at risk.
- **DG ECHO Units lack a shared understanding regarding the ownership of activities within the Knowledge Network.** DG ECHO Units that conduct trainings, exercises, and Exchange of Experts activities operate relatively independently and lack a sense of being part of the Knowledge Network. This situation can be attributed to both the early stage of the Knowledge Network's development and a structural issue. The Knowledge Network could benefit from stronger connections to the Units responsible for its activities.
- A national authority raised that the **availability and resources of Member States have not kept pace with the growth of UCPM preparedness activities.** Although Member and Participating States desire to retain ownership of UCPM preparedness activities, the rising resource demands pose a challenge to their effective implementation.
- The emphasis on achieving coherence has predominantly centred around UCPM trainings and exercises, while comparatively less attention has been given to the **PPRD**. Nevertheless, as the number of UCPM Participating States grow, there are increasingly countries involved in preparedness through both the UCPM and PPRD. This therefore requires further action towards fostering coherence in this area.

A7.6.5 Lessons learnt and good practices

The lessons learnt and good practices identified related to bringing closer coherence between UCPM preparedness activities were:

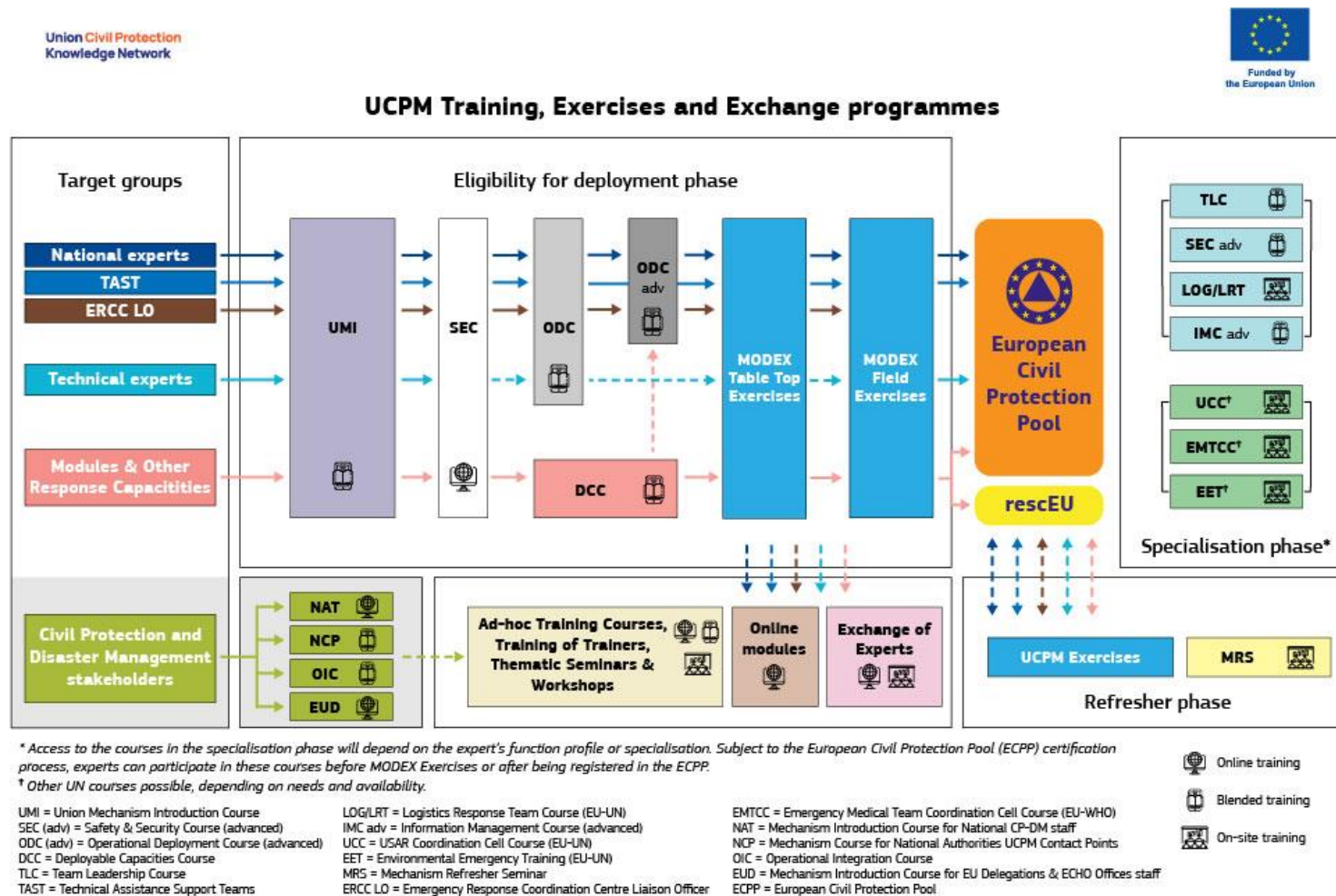
- Stakeholders highlighted the **consultations with Member and Participating States** ahead of the design of the Knowledge Network and the new Training and Exercises Programme as a good practice for activities tailored to the UCPM community's needs (See Section 1.2.5). The consultation period was considered excessively long, resulting in heightened expectations that were challenging to fulfil. The extended duration of the consultation can be partly attributed to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which reduced the priority of this contribution for the civil protection sector. Additionally, there was a shift from conducting in-person meetings to transitioning to online meetings during this period – which resulted in additional delays. Nevertheless, it was advised to shorten them in the future.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Interview with experts in civil protection (1 out of 4); Interviews with national civil protection authorities (1 out of 2).

¹⁴⁶⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 5).

- The funding for similar projects (within the UCPM and with other EU funds) was seen as a fundamental issue. Bringing all UCPM calls for proposals for projects under one umbrella (KAPP calls) was seen as crucial to establish the **same language, parameters and evaluation criteria/process across UCPM projects**. This is a step in the right direction, and further resources could be attributed to ensuring coherence between projects funded within the UCPM (and with other funds).
- Previous evaluations and consulted stakeholders highlighted the importance for disaster management stakeholders across levels (local/national/EU) to have **access to outputs from UCPM funded projects** (PPP programme/ Knowledge Network partnership projects). This was highlighted as crucial to ensure the sustainable impact and the value of such projects. The online platform's library of project outputs (and dissemination thereof) will be a valuable resource in this regard.

Figure 92. Overview of new Training and exercises programme



Source: DG ECHO. (2023).



A7.6.6 List of references


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A7.6.7 Overview of stakeholders consulted

Stakeholder	Type of interview (remote/field)
DG ECHO (x5)	Remote
DG ECHO (interview on the Framework contract for ad hoc training)	Remote interview by external expert
Contractor carrying out Framework contract for ad hoc training	Remote interview by external expert
Expert in civil protection (Training programme)	Remote
Expert in civil protection (PPP, Knowledge Network Partnership projects)	Remote
Expert in civil protection (PPRD, trainings, exercises, PPP)	Remote
Expert in civil protection (lessons learnt programme, trainings, exercises)	Remote
National civil protection authority (Trainings, exercises, PPP)	Remote
National civil protection authority (DBX)	Remote

ANNEX 8 EXAMPLE INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

Pillar	UCPM objectives	UCPM activity	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Stakeholders and target groups	Sources and tools
	To achieve a high level of protection against disasters by preventing or reducing their potential effects, by fostering a culture of prevention and by improving cooperation between the civil protection and other relevant services	NRAs	Extent to which Member and Participating States report disaster risks to DG ECHO	<p>I1 Number of DRM Summary Reports submitted to DG ECHO</p> <p>I2 Proportion of DRM Summary Reports submitted by MS/PS following DG ECHO guidelines</p> <p>I3 Proportion of stakeholders that agree the DRM Summary reports/ EU Overview of risks complements national prevention activities</p> <p>I4 Number of national programmes that included Disaster Risk Management Investments.</p>	National authorities (MS/PS)	National NRAs.
	Enhance preparedness at national and Union level to respond to disasters, and increase the availability and use of scientific knowledge on disasters	ECPP	Extent to which ECPP addresses national capacity gaps	<p>I5 Proportion of capacity goals fully met (100%);</p> <p>I6 Proportion of capacity goals partially met (50-99%)</p> <p>I7 Proportion of stakeholders that agree the ECPP complements national capacities</p>	National authorities (MS/PS)	<p>ECPP capacities</p> <p>Stakeholder consultation</p>

				<p>I8 Resources used for maintenance of capacity [per type]</p> <p>I9 Resources used for development of new capacities [per type]</p> <p>I10 Proportion of UCPM requests for assistance where ECPP capacities were considered added value</p>		
	Facilitate rapid and efficient response in the event of disasters or imminent disasters and mitigate their immediate consequences	Delivery of assistance	Extent to which UCPM delivered a fast response	<p>I11 Number of requests to sudden onset emergencies inside/outside Europe within [number of hours]</p> <p>I12 Number of requests to slow onset emergencies inside/outside Europe within [number of hours]</p> <p>I13 Proportion of stakeholders that agree the UCPM was sufficiently quick in supporting response efforts</p>	<p>National authorities (MS/PS)</p> <p>International organisations</p>	<p>CECIS response times/respo nse rates</p> <p>Stakeholder consultation</p>
			Extent to which UCPM responded to requests for assistance	<p>I14 Number of requests fully met</p> <p>I15 Number of requests partially met</p> <p>I16 Number of requests not met</p>		

				I17 Proportion of stakeholders that agree the UCPM provided sufficient response to response		
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A9.1 Introduction

This Stakeholder Synopsis report provides an overview of the results from the stakeholder consultation carried out within the **study to support DG ECHO’s interim evaluation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), in the 2017-2022 period**. The study supporting the evaluation was carried out by ICF on behalf of the European Commission between September 2022 to December 2023. The goal of consultations conducted during the evaluation was to ensure that all relevant stakeholders were given an opportunity to express their views on the UCPM. This report accompanies the Final Evaluation Report and should be read in conjunction with it.

This section describes consultation activities undertaken and stakeholder groups targeted. Section A9.1.1 presents findings from stakeholder consultations. Section 3 presents the findings from the Public Consultation. Section **Error! Reference source not found.** draws conclusions based on the outcomes of consultations.

A9.1.1 Approach to the stakeholder consultation

A9.1.1.1 Consultation strategy and stakeholder types

The consultation strategy relied on several methods to ensure a comprehensive and representative collection of views. Methods used include:

- Key Informant Interviews (both for the overall evaluation and case studies);
- Online surveys;
- Focus groups; and
- Public Consultation.

A9.1.1.2 Key Informant Interviews

The purpose of **Key Informant Interviews** was to gather inputs from key stakeholders across evaluation criteria. Key Informant Interviews started in October 2022 and ended in May 2023, targeting stakeholder groups outlined in Table 28. The evaluation team developed multiple questionnaires, tailored to the specificities of stakeholder groups.¹⁴⁶⁶ Key informant interviews were conducted in two phases:

- Scoping interviews were conducted with EU-level stakeholders (namely, representatives from DG ECHO, HERA, and the JRC) to refine the evaluation’s areas of focus and expectations, and to map stakeholders to consult and documentation to review in subsequent phases.
- Semi-structured interviews with a wider range of stakeholders were used to gather more in-depth information about the UCPM performance between 2017 and 2022.

The evaluation team carried out 108 Key Informant Interviews (see Table 28**Error! Reference source not found.** for an overview).

Table 28. Key Informant Interviews conducted

Stakeholder	Interviews conducted
DG ECHO desk officers	24 interviews
Other EU stakeholders	27 interviews

¹⁴⁶⁶ For this reason, the interview questionnaires for EU and international stakeholders did not include questions on Efficiency.

	DG CLIMA (2), DG ECFIN, DG ENERGY, DG ENV, DG HOME (4), DG MOVE, DG RTD, DG SANTE (2), EC Secretariat General, ECDC, EEAS, EIB, EMSA, EU Council, EU Delegation to Turkey, HERA (3), JRC (2), DG TAXUD; Cabinet for the Commissioner for Crisis management
International stakeholders	8 interviews Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for Southeast Europe (DDPI); European Space Agency (ESA); International Organisation of Migration (IOM), NATO Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC); Italian Red Cross; Red Cross EU Office; United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR); World Health Organisation (WHO)
National authorities including civil protection, marine pollution, and other relevant authorities¹⁴⁶⁷	36 interviews <i>Member States:</i> Austria, Belgium (2), Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark (2) Estonia, Spain (2), Finland, France (2), Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta (2), Netherlands, Poland (3), Portugal, Romania, Sweden (2), Slovenia (2), Slovakia <i>Participating States:</i> Bosnia and Herzegovina, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia
Experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities	10 interviews Experts deployed (5); UCPM-funded project managers (e.g., Prevention and Preparedness Programme project managers, Knowledge Network partnership projects) (3), Other (2)
Professional organisations supporting the implementation of UCPM activities	3 interviews Bit Media e-solutions GmbH; CN APELL -RO (2)

The evaluation team conducted interviews to inform the preparation of **case studies**. Interviews focused on specific UCPM activities relevant to the scope of each case study. Stakeholders consulted for case studies were selected, in collaboration with DG ECHO, based on their expertise, familiarity or relation to the activity being examined and the geographic area of work. Table 29 presents an overview of the interviews conducted for case studies.

Table 29. Case studies interviews conducted

Case study	Interviews carried out and stakeholders consulted
Forest fires	12 interviews DG ECHO (1); Civil Protection authorities from IT (4); PT (2), and Chile (1); PT Ministry of Home Affairs (1); CZ Ministry of Interior (1); Other (2)
Floods	9 interviews DG ECHO (2); National Civil protection authority from BE (1); Regional civil protection authority from BE (1); Regional Emergency Planning BE (1); Federal Agency for Technical Relief – DE (1); Ministry of Interior – Crisis Management and Civil Protection Department – DE (1); Federal Agency for Civil Protection (1); Joint Research Centre Disaster Risk Management Unit (1)
Beirut's port explosion	16 interviews DG ECHO (1), UCPM module Team Leader/ Deputy TL (4), EUCPT Team Leader (1), Lebanese Armed Forces (7), Lebanese Office of the Prime Minister (1), Lebanese Civil Defence (2)
COVID-19	11 interviews DG ECHO (5); HERA (2); National civil protection authority from IT (1); Ministry of Foreign Affairs from FR (1); Ministry of Interior from RO (1); EU Delegation in India (1)

¹⁴⁶⁷ These include 33 national civil protection/marine pollution authorities, as well as one representative from the private donations hub established in Belgium, one representative from the Governmental Strategic Reserve Agency in Poland, and one representative from the PL Ministry of Health.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine	17 interviews DG ECHO (11); ERCC (1); EUCPT Leaders (2); National civil protection authorities (2); Donor (1)
Integration between preparedness activities	13 interviews DG ECHO (5); DG ECHO (Interview on the Framework contract for ad hoc training (1); Expert in civil Protection (Training programme) (1); Expert in civil protection (PPP, Knowledge Network Partnership projects) (1); Expert in civil protection (lessons learnt programme, trainings, exercises (1); National civil protection authorities (2); Contractor carrying out Framework contract for ad hoc training (1)

A9.1.1.3 Online surveys

The evaluation team developed **four online surveys**, which were launched on 14 February and closed on 2 May 2023. Surveys collected data from four stakeholder groups to inform analysis across evaluation criteria. Survey questionnaires were tailored to the context and knowledge of different target groups. Table 30 presents the stakeholder groups consulted and responses received to surveys.

Table 30. Survey responses

Survey	Responses received
DG ECHO desk officers ¹⁴⁶⁸	38 responses
National authorities	58 responses Member States: AT (2), BE (2), HR (1), CY (2), CZ (1), DK (2), EE (3), FI (2), FR (2), DE (3), EL (1), HU (1), IE (1), IT (1), LV (1), LT (1), MT (2), PL (4), PT (2), SK (1), SI (3), ES (1), SE (2), NL (3) Participating States: NO (2), TR (2) Third Countries: TN (2), XK (1), EG (1), AZ (1), MD (2), GE (1), JO (1), DZ (1)
Trainers/Training/Exercise Contractors/National training coordinators	59 responses
Experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities	21 responses

A9.1.1.4 Focus groups

The evaluation team held **three focus groups** in May 2023:

- The first focus group engaged national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection.
- The second focus group engaged DG ECHO officers.
- The third focus group engaged researchers from academic institutions, the Joint Research Centre, and World Bank and focused on the cost-effectiveness of civil protection interventions.

The goal of focus groups was to explore specific areas of interest identified during interviews and which warranted further exploration due to data scarcity or gaps. Discussion points for each focus group were selected based on participants' expertise.

A9.1.1.5 Public consultation

To capture the view of the general public on the UCPM, the evaluation team developed a tailored questionnaire for a **Public Consultation**. The Public Consultation was launched by DG ECHO on the

¹⁴⁶⁸ The survey questionnaire for DG ECHO desk officers did not include questions on the EU added value criterion.

European Commission's website, and remained open between 14 April and 21 July 2023. The 'Have your say' portal provided the opportunity for entities to respond to the questionnaire upload position papers. A total of 64 respondents from across seven respondent groups replied to the consultation. A full analysis of the responses received to the Public Consultation is provided in the Public Consultation Factual Summary Report.

A9.2 Findings from the stakeholder consultation

This section discusses findings of consultations by stakeholder group and evaluation criterion.

A9.2.1 DG ECHO

A9.2.1.1 Effectiveness

As regards prevention, DG ECHO desk officers considered that UCPM activities contributed to preventing and reducing the potential effects of disasters by fostering a culture of prevention.¹⁴⁶⁹

DG ECHO stakeholders suggested that risk mapping through the collection and consolidation of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Summary Reports contributed to enhancing disaster prevention.¹⁴⁷⁰ Additionally, they agreed that prevention projects within the Prevention and Preparedness Programme contributed to enhancing the level of disaster prevention at Member and Participating State levels.¹⁴⁷¹ A minority of DG ECHO desk officers highlighted opportunities to improve the extent to which UCPM prevention activities raise awareness of disaster prevention at civilian level.¹⁴⁷² Additionally, they underlined that the outcomes of prevention efforts take place over a long-term period, which makes them less visible and challenging to quantify and measure.¹⁴⁷³

As regards preparedness, DG ECHO stakeholders considered that UCPM activities enhanced preparedness at national and Union level to respond to disasters.¹⁴⁷⁴ A minority of DG ECHO stakeholders noted that the UCPM was more effective in enhancing preparedness by supporting capacity development, rather than through the sharing and use of scientific knowledge.¹⁴⁷⁵ For instance, stakeholders agreed that rescEU, the ECPP, and preparedness projects within the Prevention and Preparedness Programme were successful in enhancing preparedness for disasters in Member and Participating States.¹⁴⁷⁶ However, they suggested that the development of capacities in the ECPP and rescEU could be better informed by findings from DRM Summary reports and scenario building.¹⁴⁷⁷

A large majority of DG ECHO stakeholders agreed that the Training and Exercises Programme, peer reviews, exchange of experts, and Lessons Learnt Programme were successful in increasing preparedness among relevant stakeholders.¹⁴⁷⁸ A minority of DG ECHO desk officers underlined that UCPM trainings are still targeting experts that are not deployed, while not all experts deployed have received all necessary trainings.¹⁴⁷⁹ They also highlighted that the current web-based platform CECIS

¹⁴⁶⁹ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (78%, or 21 out of 27); Interviews with DG ECHO (10 out of 24).

¹⁴⁷⁰ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (90% or 9 out of 10); Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 24).

¹⁴⁷¹ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (100%, or 19 out of 19); Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 24).

¹⁴⁷² Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 24).

¹⁴⁷³ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 24).

¹⁴⁷⁴ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (91%, or 30 out of 33 responses); Interviews with DG ECHO (11 out of 24)

¹⁴⁷⁵ Developing capacities: Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (30 out of 33); Sharing knowledge: Survey with DG ECHO Desk officers (28 out of 33).

¹⁴⁷⁶ rescEU: survey with DG ECHO desk officers (100%, or 12 out of 12 responses); Interviews with DG ECHO (11 out of 24); ECPP: survey with DG ECHO desk officers (82%, or 9 out of 11 responses); Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 24); preparedness projects: survey with DG ECHO desk officers (95%, or 18 out of 19 responses)

¹⁴⁷⁷ Focus group with DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

¹⁴⁷⁸ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers. Training and Exercises Programme (79% or 11 out of 14 responses); peer reviews (100%, or 6 out of 6); exchange of experts (100%, or 4 out of 4); Lessons Learnt Programme (50%, 9 out of 18 responses).

¹⁴⁷⁹ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 24)

for information exchange between DG ECHO and national authorities could be improved,¹⁴⁸⁰ for instance by including new functionalities and enhancing its user friendliness. Additionally, stakeholders reported the potential for the Knowledge Network and Disaster Resilience Goals to increase preparedness.¹⁴⁸¹

On response, a large majority of DG ECHO desk officers agreed that the UCPM contributed to a rapid and efficient response to disasters, and to mitigating the immediate consequences of disasters.¹⁴⁸² For instance, the coordination by the ERCC of requests for assistance and offers made, as well as the financial assistance for deployments and transport of response capacities, were perceived as effective response activities.¹⁴⁸³ A minority of stakeholders reported that the tracking of assistance delivered could be improved.¹⁴⁸⁴

According to DG ECHO stakeholders, efforts to increase cross-sectoral cooperation, especially with non-conventional civil protection actors, was a critical enabler for achieving DG ECHO's objectives.¹⁴⁸⁵ The main crises that the UCPM dealt with across 2017-2022 (the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine) had a substantial impact on its activities. Stakeholders also noted however that they stimulated engagement with other actors, improving cross-sectoral cooperation. Concerns were raised though about the future sustainability of the ERCC in light of the increasing scope, complexity, and frequency of disasters occurring within and outside the Union requiring such cooperation.¹⁴⁸⁶ The main factors that hindered the achievement of the UCPM's objectives included the changing threat and risk landscape, DG ECHO's limited human and financial resources, as well as the complexity of processes and administrative requirements as regards co-financing transport costs.¹⁴⁸⁷

A9.2.1.2 Efficiency

Nearly half of DG ECHO desk officers considered that the UCPM's results between 2017-2022 were achieved in the most efficient way.¹⁴⁸⁸ They agreed that the reinforcement of the UCPM Decision (revision of rescEU capacities, development of the Union Disaster Resilience Goals and a more flexible budget structure) had a positive impact on the cost-effectiveness of the UCPM.¹⁴⁸⁹ On the Knowledge Network, DG ECHO desk officers considered that it was too early to assess its impact on cost-effectiveness.

DG ECHO stakeholders highlighted some inefficiencies that affected UCPM activities. A minority of stakeholders highlighted inefficiencies in the Prevention and Preparedness Programme, such as the limited capitalisation of project results and complementarity among UCPM calls for proposals.¹⁴⁹⁰ The Lessons Learnt Programme was perceived as being efficient and cost-effective, but one officer suggested that having a platform continuously collecting and sharing lessons learnt could increase efficiency and effectiveness.¹⁴⁹¹ Another inefficiency reported concerned the fact that many experts

¹⁴⁸⁰ Interviews with DG ECHO (6 out of 24).

¹⁴⁸¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 24).

¹⁴⁸² Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (94%, or 16 out of 17 responses); Interviews with DG ECHO (7 out of 24).

¹⁴⁸³ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers: ERCC coordination (92%, or 12 out of 13); financial assistance (100%, or 10 out of 10 responses).

¹⁴⁸⁴ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (11%, or 3 out of 9).

¹⁴⁸⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (14 out of 24).

¹⁴⁸⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (7 out of 24).

¹⁴⁸⁷ Interviews with DG ECHO (14 out of 24); Focus group with DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

¹⁴⁸⁸ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (45%, or 15 out of 33).

¹⁴⁸⁹ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (55%, or 17 out of 31 responses); Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 24).

¹⁴⁹⁰ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 24).

¹⁴⁹¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (1 out of 24).

trained in the 2017-2022 period were never deployed.¹⁴⁹² A minority of DG ECHO stakeholders highlighted the restricted scope and timeframe of the Next Generation EU budget and its temporary nature as a factor that hindered the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of rescEU.¹⁴⁹³ Furthermore, the inadequacy of CECIS to deal with the volume of requests was noted as a cause for inefficiencies.¹⁴⁹⁴ Other inefficiencies shared by DG ECHO stakeholders were related to the administrative burden for response activities.¹⁴⁹⁵

DG ECHO desk officers consulted had mixed views regarding the adequacy of the allocation of budget per pillar, but they generally agreed that a stronger focus on prevention would have been desirable.¹⁴⁹⁶ Only a minority of desk officers considered that the budget allocation for prevention activities was appropriate, while almost half of respondents agreed on the adequacy of the budget allocation for preparedness and response activities.¹⁴⁹⁷ A minority of desk officers also highlighted that the lack of predictability of the budget on prevention had an impact on the effectiveness of the UCPM.¹⁴⁹⁸

Around half of DG ECHO desk officers agreed that the UCPM budgeting was sufficiently flexible to adapt to evolving needs on the ground and unanticipated events inside and outside the EU.¹⁴⁹⁹

However, budget flexibility was sometimes achieved through reshuffling of resources.¹⁵⁰⁰ This had negative consequences on prevention and non-operational preparedness activities.¹⁵⁰¹ Additionally, a minority of DG ECHO stakeholders reported that the narrow scope of Next Generation EU, lack of reserve funds, and timeframe of budget adoption (i.e., yearly) hindered budget flexibility.¹⁵⁰²

Consultations with DG ECHO officers revealed a lack of awareness of monitoring activities despite some limited advancements (e.g., use of Key Performance Indicators).¹⁵⁰³ Consultations also showed limitations related to the existing KPIs and to the extent to which they are fit for purpose (e.g. KPIs on speed of response do not distinguish between different disaster types).¹⁵⁰⁴ A minority of stakeholders indicated the need to improve existing KPIs and develop additional ones.¹⁵⁰⁵ On the other hand, a few expressed concerns about the workload connected with monitoring KPIs in a context of limited human resources.¹⁵⁰⁶

A9.2.1.3 Relevance

A majority of DG ECHO respondents agreed that UCPM objectives and activities were sufficiently flexible to adapt to emerging needs and developments.¹⁵⁰⁷ In particular, they noted that proof of flexibility and adaptability included: i) DG ECHO's cooperation with the private sector, ii) UCPM

¹⁴⁹² Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 24).

¹⁴⁹³ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 24).

¹⁴⁹⁴ Interviews with DG ECHO (2 out of 24).

¹⁴⁹⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (5 out of 24).

¹⁴⁹⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (8 out of 24).

¹⁴⁹⁷ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers. Prevention (21%, or 7 out of 34); Preparedness (33%, or 11 out of 33); Response (45%, or 15 out of 33).

¹⁴⁹⁸ Interviews with DG ECHO (7 out of 24).

¹⁴⁹⁹ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers: Inside the EU: (51%, or 17 out of 33 responses); Outside the EU (40%, or 13 out of 32 responses).

¹⁵⁰⁰ Interviews with DG ECHO (11 out of 24).

¹⁵⁰¹ Developing capacities: Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (90%, or 30 out of 33); Sharing knowledge: survey with DG ECHO desk officers (84%, or 17 out of 20); Non-operational preparedness activities include UCPM activities beyond capacity development, such as the sharing, availability, and use of (scientific) knowledge and best practices.

¹⁵⁰² Interviews with DG ECHO (8 out of 24).

¹⁵⁰³ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (55%, or 17 out of 31 did not have a strong opinion on the effectiveness of Key Performance Indicators to measure the UCPM performance). Findings from the interviews revealed a similar outcome.

¹⁵⁰⁴ Survey with DG ECHO (27%, or 8 out of 31); Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 24).

¹⁵⁰⁵ Interviews with DG ECHO (3 out of 24).

¹⁵⁰⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 24).

¹⁵⁰⁷ Survey with DG ECHO (77%, or 12 out of 17); Interviews with DG ECHO (15 out of 24).

activations in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and iii) activations for the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁵⁰⁸

DG ECHO officers expressed concerns about the future sustainability of the UCPM, and whether response activities are sufficiently flexible to adapt to emerging needs after the period evaluated.¹⁵⁰⁹ This was due to the intense workload within the ERCC accompanied by the increased complexity, large-scale nature, and occurrence of disasters.

DG ECHO stakeholders generally agreed that the UCPM successfully incorporated recommendations from the Lessons Learnt Programme and advisory missions.¹⁵¹⁰ A minority of consulted stakeholders highlighted that there is scope to streamline the quantity of identified lessons to focus on the most critical and impactful ones and enhance the uptake of lessons identified at EU and national level.¹⁵¹¹

A9.2.1.4 Coherence

DG ECHO desk officers indicated that UCPM activities across pillars were coherent among each other.¹⁵¹² However, the internal re-organisation of DG ECHO somewhat hindered coordination and coherence across UCPM prevention and preparedness activities.¹⁵¹³

DG ECHO respondents generally considered UCPM activities to be coherent with other relevant EU-level policies and initiatives.¹⁵¹⁴ For instance, DG ECHO desk officers agreed that the UCPM was effective in creating synergies and complementarities with the humanitarian aid field and with EU-level initiatives on CBRN threats.¹⁵¹⁵ Similarly, they agreed that the UCPM established synergies with EU research and innovation initiatives, particularly via cooperation between DG ECHO and the JRC. Beyond specific EU-level policies and initiatives, DG ECHO stakeholders agreed that cross-sectoral cooperation should be strengthened, and that the UCPM should reinforce the cooperation with the private sector.¹⁵¹⁶

DG ECHO officers indicated that UCPM activities were overall coherent with other international-level interventions in the field of civil protection and other policy fields.¹⁵¹⁷ However, a minority of stakeholders highlighted that there is scope to create further synergies, both with the Sendai Framework of Disaster Risk Reduction, and as regards cooperation with NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC).¹⁵¹⁸

A9.2.1.5 EU added value

DG ECHO stakeholders agreed that the results achieved through the UCPM activities could not have been attained via national, regional, or local level initiatives.¹⁵¹⁹ The main elements of the

¹⁵⁰⁸ Interviews with DG ECHO (11 out of 24).

¹⁵⁰⁹ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers (47%, or 7 out of 15); Interviews with DG ECHO (9 out of 24).

¹⁵¹⁰ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers. Lessons Learnt Programme (70%, or 7 out of 10); Advisory missions in the field of preparedness (60%, or 6 out of 10); Advisory missions in the field of prevention (60%, or 6 out of 10).

¹⁵¹¹ Interviews with DG ECHO (7 out of 24).

¹⁵¹² Survey with DG ECHO (59%, or 18 out of 32).

¹⁵¹³ Interviews with DG ECHO (10 out of 24); Focus group with DG ECHO on 10 May 2023.

¹⁵¹⁴ Survey with DG ECHO (77%, or 23 out of 31).

¹⁵¹⁵ Survey with DG ECHO Desk officers (65% or 20 out of 31); Interviews with DG ECHO (5 out of 24).

¹⁵¹⁶ Interviews with DG ECHO (10 out of 24); Focus group with DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; Case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

¹⁵¹⁷ Survey with DG ECHO desk officers: coherence with prevention and preparedness activities (71%, or 20 out of 28); coherence with response activities (82%, or 22 from 23 responses).

¹⁵¹⁸ Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 24).

¹⁵¹⁹ Interviews with DG ECHO (10 out of 24).

UCPM that brought particular added value included enhanced coordination, the pooling of resources, and the sharing of knowledge and expertise.

A9.2.2 EU and international stakeholders

A9.2.2.1 Effectiveness

EU and international level stakeholders agreed that the UCPM contributed to preventing and reducing potential disasters by fostering a culture of prevention.¹⁵²⁰ A minority of stakeholders highlighted that UCPM prevention activities generated momentum in the field of prevention, prompting further activities in the area. Some stakeholders noted that there are margins to improve the extent to which UCPM prevention activities effectively raise awareness of disaster prevention at civilian level.¹⁵²¹ Stakeholders also highlighted limitations to the comparability of DRM Summary reports due to different methodologies used.¹⁵²²

On preparedness, EU and international stakeholders indicated that UCPM activities played a significant role in enhancing preparedness (e.g. rescEU and the ECPP).¹⁵²³ Additionally, they indicated that moving forward the Knowledge Network and Disaster Resilience Goals are expected to enhance preparedness. A minority of stakeholders also expressed their positive outlook on the scenario building exercises conducted so far.¹⁵²⁴

EU and international stakeholders agreed that the UCPM's contributions in the field of response stand out as its primary strength and the most visible aspect of the mechanism.¹⁵²⁵ In particular, stakeholders noted that UCPM's support was particularly effective to respond to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic. Stakeholders agreed that the financial support provided by the UCPM for transport and logistics contributed towards more rapid and efficient response, especially outside the Union. A minority of stakeholders reported that sometimes too little time is taken to assess requests for assistance and consider whether UCPM activation would be beneficial.¹⁵²⁶

A9.2.2.2 Relevance

Overall, EU and international stakeholders agreed that UCPM activities in prevention, preparedness and response effectively identified and addressed EU and national needs.¹⁵²⁷ For instance, two EU stakeholders noted how the study commissioned by DG ECHO on "Understanding the needs of civil protection agencies and opportunities for scaling up Disaster Risk Management Investments" helped national authorities provide grounding for investments in prevention. Additionally, Disaster Resilience Goals are perceived as an important initiative that will increase the visibility of disaster prevention initiatives. On preparedness, stakeholders agreed that the development of rescEU was relevant to address both EU and national needs.¹⁵²⁸ They also underlined the relevance of Early Warning Systems. Stakeholders indicated that UCPM activities in response

¹⁵²⁰ Interviews with EU stakeholders (9 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (2 out of 8).

¹⁵²¹ Interviews with EU stakeholders (9 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (2 out of 8).

¹⁵²² Interviews with EU stakeholders (4 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (1 out of 8).

¹⁵²³ Interviews with EU stakeholders (9 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (3 out of 8).

¹⁵²⁴ Interviews with EU stakeholders (2 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (1 out of 8).

¹⁵²⁵ Interviews with EU stakeholders (14 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (5 out of 8).

¹⁵²⁶ Interviews with EU stakeholders (2 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (1 out of 8).

¹⁵²⁷ Interviews with EU stakeholders (7 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (4 out of 8).

¹⁵²⁸ Interviews with EU stakeholders (11 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (6 out of 8).

addressed national and EU needs.¹⁵²⁹ However, a small minority of stakeholders underlined the need to have more clarity on the future role of third countries in the UCPM.¹⁵³⁰

Stakeholders considered that the UCPM proved to be flexible enough to address emerging needs, but concerns were raised about its future sustainability given the increasingly complex threat and risk landscape.¹⁵³¹ To address new challenges, stakeholders indicated that the UCPM should strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation, resilience, and strategic foresight capabilities. Systematic involvement of technical and scientific experts in deployments was also recommended. Five EU stakeholders advocated for an expansion of the UCPM to respond to so-called hybrid threats.¹⁵³²

A9.2.2.3 Coherence

According to EU and international stakeholders, the UCPM contributed to improving cross-sectoral cooperation at national and Union level.¹⁵³³ For example, the UCPM's involvement in the COVID-19 response significantly increased collaboration with health authorities. The UCPM increasingly formalised cross-sectoral cooperation with other EU level services and international actors (such as the WHO). EU stakeholders underlined how the UCPM demonstrated effective cross-sectoral cooperation with other European Commission initiatives, for instance in the fields of CBRN, health emergencies and marine pollution.¹⁵³⁴ Additionally, stakeholders indicated that further synergies had been established with humanitarian aid actors and that cooperation with international organisations is ongoing.

Stakeholders mentioned that cooperation with sectors beyond civil protection could be enhanced.¹⁵³⁵ For instance, there is scope to further promote cooperation with other relevant European Commission DGs and agencies to enhance the dissemination and accessibility of prevention and preparedness outputs.¹⁵³⁶ A minority of stakeholders noted that DG ECHO should further cooperate with DG RTD, DG ENV, and DG CLIMA to promote relevant research, mobilise the academic sector, and fund relevant joint projects.¹⁵³⁷ Some stakeholders stressed the importance of coherence with agricultural and land management policies.¹⁵³⁸

Stakeholders agreed that the UCPM established synergies with international interventions in the civil protection field and other relevant policy fields.¹⁵³⁹ They expressed positive views concerning alignment with the UNDRR work on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. On response, they noted that the UCPM effectively cooperated with other international actors, such as NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre and UN OCHA. However, a minority of stakeholders mentioned that there is a need to enhance the understanding of humanitarian aid actors among civil protection actors, and to untap potential synergies on the respective initiatives on resilience.¹⁵⁴⁰

A9.2.2.4 EU added value

¹⁵²⁹ Interviews with EU stakeholders (6 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (1 out of 8).

¹⁵³⁰ Interviews with EU stakeholders (2 out of 27).

¹⁵³¹ Interviews with EU stakeholders (9 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (4 out of 8).

¹⁵³² Interviews with EU stakeholders (5 out of 27).

¹⁵³³ Interviews with EU stakeholders (11 out of 27); Interviews with international stakeholders (4 out of 8).

¹⁵³⁴ Interviews with EU stakeholders (8 out of 27).

¹⁵³⁵ Interviews with EU stakeholders (7 out of 27); Case study on floods; Case study on COVID-19.

¹⁵³⁶ Focus group on cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023.

¹⁵³⁷ Interviews with EU stakeholders (2 out of 27); Focus group on cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023.

¹⁵³⁸ Interviews with EU stakeholders (2 out of 27); Focus group on cost-effectiveness on 26 May 2023; Case study on Forest fires.

¹⁵³⁹ Interviews with international stakeholders (4 out of 8).

¹⁵⁴⁰ Interviews with EU stakeholders (2 out of 27); Interviews with international organisations (2 out of 8).

Stakeholders agreed that a significant added value of the UCPM is its effective and efficient cooperation across disaster management phases.¹⁵⁴¹ They regarded the UCPM as an effective and efficient coordination system to channel resources of Member and Participating States as compared to individual action and/or bilateral or regional agreements. Additionally, stakeholders underlined that the added value of the UCPM stems from knowledge and expertise sharing, particularly on risk assessment and awareness. They also reported that a hypothetical discontinuation of the UCPM would have detrimental consequences for Member States, Participating States, and third countries, as well as the civil protection community at large.

A9.2.3 National authorities

A9.2.3.1 Effectiveness

A majority of national authorities agreed that UCPM activities contributed to preventing and reducing the potential effects of disasters by fostering a culture of prevention.¹⁵⁴² Specifically, national authorities considered that risk mapping obligations stemming from the UCPM Decision contributed to establishing a culture of prevention.

A minority of national authorities observed that the outcomes of prevention efforts are difficult to track and challenging to quantify due to their long feedback loops.¹⁵⁴³ Two national authorities emphasised that prevention efforts are fragmented across several fields (e.g. agriculture, environment, and civil protection) and that for this reason the UCPM alone cannot achieve significant, measurable impacts over a short timeframe.

On preparedness, national authorities considered that the UCPM activities enhanced preparedness at national and Union level to respond to disasters.¹⁵⁴⁴ For instance, they agreed that Early Warning Systems, UCPM-funded Preparedness Projects, Host Nation Support Guidelines, and the Training and Exercises Programme were effective to enhance preparedness. They also expressed positive views on scenario building exercises conducted so far, highlighting their potential in enhancing preparedness. National authorities considered that rescEU and the ECPP have been instrumental in supporting and complementing national capacities and preparedness. Nevertheless, it was noted that they would like to see a better use of strategic and analytical assessments to inform decision-making in both the ECPP and rescEU.¹⁵⁴⁵ Additionally, the CECIS platform, procedures related to co-financing transport costs, and the tracking of offered and delivered assistance were noted as areas for improvement.¹⁵⁴⁶

A majority of national authorities agreed that the UCPM made a significant and positive contribution in the field of disaster response.¹⁵⁴⁷ For instance, in order of impact, UCPM activities which mostly contributed to achieving response objectives were the ERCC's coordination of requests for assistance and offers received, the introduction of logistical hubs in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and the establishment of rescEU.¹⁵⁴⁸

A9.2.3.2 Efficiency

¹⁵⁴¹ Interviews with EU stakeholders (10 out of 27); Interviews with international organisations (2 out of 8).

¹⁵⁴² Survey with national authorities (83%, or 41 out of 49 respondents); Interviews with national authorities (14 out of 36).

¹⁵⁴³ Interviews with national authorities (8 out of 36).

¹⁵⁴⁴ Survey with national authorities (90%, or 45 out of 50); Interviews with national authorities (21 out of 36).

¹⁵⁴⁵ Interviews with national authorities (5 out of 36); Focus group with national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

¹⁵⁴⁶ Interviews with national authorities (8 out of 36).

¹⁵⁴⁷ Survey with national authorities (82%, or 41 out of 50); Interviews with national authorities (30 out of 36).

¹⁵⁴⁸ Survey with national authorities (90%, or 45 out of 50); Interviews with national authorities (23 out of 36).

National authorities considered that the UCPM contributed to a more rapid and efficient response to disasters.¹⁵⁴⁹ A majority of national authorities agreed that benefits of the UCPM across its pillars outweighed costs incurred during the evaluation period.¹⁵⁵⁰

The efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the UCPM was hindered by the high administrative burden for national authorities (e.g. overlapping calls for proposals and complex procedures on co-financing obligations).¹⁵⁵¹ National authorities also voiced concerns on the limited availability of resources at national level for compiling DRM Summary reports.¹⁵⁵²

As regards the allocation of budget per UCPM pillar, some national authorities highlighted the need to increase the budget for prevention¹⁵⁵³ whilst others believed the UCPM might not be the best framework/forum for financing and enhancing prevention initiatives, because it involves other non-civil protection actors.¹⁵⁵⁴ Another minority underlined the need for greater transparency about the cost of different UCPM activities.¹⁵⁵⁵

A9.2.3.3 Relevance

National authorities indicated that their country's civil protection needs were identified and addressed during the period evaluated.¹⁵⁵⁶ A minority of stakeholders underlined that prevention initiatives under the UCPM did not completely meet their needs.¹⁵⁵⁷ This was due in part to the lack of alignment between the development of capacities in the ECPP and rescEU with the results of needs assessments. On preparedness, national authorities considered the establishment of rescEU as being particularly relevant to strengthen national preparedness, but raised concerns about the prioritisation of rescEU over the ECPP.¹⁵⁵⁸ Other preparedness activities that successfully met national needs included Early Warning Systems, Host Nation Support guidelines, and the Training and Exercises Programme. Opportunities to improve the relevance of CECIS were identified as the platform was found not to fully meet national needs.¹⁵⁵⁹ Additionally, a minority of national authorities underlined that the rate of implementation of lessons learnt identified in the Lessons Learnt Programme could be improved.¹⁵⁶⁰ On response, national authorities agreed that UCPM activities addressed national needs.¹⁵⁶¹

National authorities experienced "change fatigue", facing difficulties in keeping up with the numerous new initiatives and activities of the UCPM during the period evaluated.¹⁵⁶²

¹⁵⁴⁹ Survey with national authorities (76, or 38 out of 50).

¹⁵⁵⁰ Survey with national authorities (93%, or 37 from 41).

¹⁵⁵¹ Interviews with national authorities (6 out of 36).

¹⁵⁵² Interviews with national authorities (3 out of 36); Focus group with national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

¹⁵⁵³ Interviews with national authorities (7 out of 36).

¹⁵⁵⁴ Interviews with national authorities (2 out of 36); Focus group with national civil protection authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023;

¹⁵⁵⁵ Interviews with national authorities (4 out of 36).

¹⁵⁵⁶ Survey with national authorities (45%, or 22 out of 48); Interviews with national authorities (12 out of 36).

¹⁵⁵⁷ Interviews with national authorities (7 out of 36).

¹⁵⁵⁸ Focus group with national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023; Focus group with DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; Interviews with DG ECHO (4 out of 24); Interviews with national authorities (8 out of 36).

¹⁵⁵⁹ Interviews with national authorities (8 out of 36).

¹⁵⁶⁰ Interviews with national authorities (5 out of 36).

¹⁵⁶¹ Interviews with national authorities (15 out of 36).

¹⁵⁶² Interviews with national authorities (12 out of 36).

Albeit the UCPM was regarded as being flexible to adapt to evolving needs, national authorities raised concerns about its future sustainability. They expressed concerns about the dilution of the UCPM's identity as a forum primarily focused on civil protection.¹⁵⁶³

A9.2.3.4 Coherence

According to national authorities, UCPM activities under the prevention, preparedness, and response pillars were overall coherent among each other.¹⁵⁶⁴ The Training and Exercises Programme, and the Lessons Learnt Programme were noted as examples of this. However, on prevention, the comparability of DRM Summary reports could be improved.¹⁵⁶⁵

Complementarities were identified as regards the development of capacities at rescEU, ECPP, and national level.¹⁵⁶⁶ Response activities within the UCPM were coherent and complementary with national interventions in the civil protection field. Overall, cooperation between national authorities and DG ECHO was found to be effective.¹⁵⁶⁷

According to national authorities, there were synergies and complementarities between UCPM activities and other EU, and international level interventions related to civil protection and other policy fields.¹⁵⁶⁸ Examples included the UCPM's efforts to enhance synergies with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, CBRN-relation policies, humanitarian aid interventions, and cooperation with NATO. However, stakeholders expressed concerns about increased complexity of coordination requirements with other EU level stakeholders, such as HERA.¹⁵⁶⁹ The UCPM has also made progress towards building cross-sectoral cooperation at national level. For example, the UCPM's involvement in the COVID-19 response increased collaboration with health authorities.¹⁵⁷⁰

A9.2.3.5 EU added value

A majority of national authorities agreed that the results achieved through the UCPM could not have been attained by their country on their own or through bilateral and multilateral collaboration, or through other networks and instruments.¹⁵⁷¹ The elements of the UCPM that brought added value to national civil protection activities included ERCC coordination of response activities, pooling of resources through rescEU, knowledge sharing through the Knowledge Network, capacity development through the Training and Exercise Programme, and awareness raising and disaster risk prevention through DRM Summary reports. National authorities mentioned that the absence or discontinuation of the UCPM would reduce the ability of Member States to effectively respond to domestic and international disasters in a coordinated, coherent, and harmonised way.¹⁵⁷²

A9.2.4 Experts in civil protection involved in UCPM activities

A9.2.4.1 Effectiveness

¹⁵⁶³ Focus group with national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023; Interviews with national authorities (12 out of 36); Survey with national authorities (16%, or 8 out of 49).

¹⁵⁶⁴ Survey with national authorities (56%, or 27 out of 49).

¹⁵⁶⁵ Focus group with national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023; Interviews with national authorities (4 out of 36).

¹⁵⁶⁶ Interviews with national authorities (17 out of 36).

¹⁵⁶⁷ Interviews with national authorities (20 out of 36).

¹⁵⁶⁸ Survey with national authorities (79%, or 34 out of 43); Interviews with national authorities (4 out of 36)

¹⁵⁶⁹ Focus group with national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023; Interviews with national authorities (8 out of 36).

¹⁵⁷⁰ Interviews with national authorities (4 out of 36).

¹⁵⁷¹ Survey with national authorities (74%, or 36 out of 49). Survey with national authorities: bilateral cooperation (71%, or 35 out of 49); multi-lateral cooperation (63%, or 30 out of 48).

¹⁵⁷² Interviews with national authorities (21 out of 36).

The large majority of experts consulted agreed that UCPM activities contributed to preventing and reducing the potential effects of disasters by fostering a culture of prevention.¹⁵⁷³ They also expected the Knowledge Network and Disaster Resilience Goals to play a significant role in enhancing awareness on prevention and the disaster management cycle.

Experts also indicated that UCPM activities enhanced preparedness at national and Union level to respond to disasters.¹⁵⁷⁴ Specifically, they highlighted the role of the Training and Exercises Programme in enhancing preparedness through the sharing of knowledge and best practices.¹⁵⁷⁵ According to experts, EU Civil Protection Teams (EUCPT) members who participated in trainings and exercises developed experience of working together, making their collaboration easier and more effective in the field. The establishment of rescEU was considered an important innovation that contributed to enhancing national and EU level preparedness.¹⁵⁷⁶ The Prevention and Preparedness Programme, Advisory missions in the field of preparedness, and Peer Reviews were also highlighted as effective tools to increase awareness and preparedness.

The UCPM enabled Member, Participating States and third countries to respond more efficiently to disasters.¹⁵⁷⁷ In particular, experts highlighted that UCPM's support was particularly effective to respond to forest fires.¹⁵⁷⁸ The role of ERCC Liaison Officers (LO) was noted as a critical enabler, facilitating communication between the ERCC and stakeholders engaged in emergency response efforts.¹⁵⁷⁹

A minority of experts indicated that occasionally the coordination of assistance was not as effective in third countries.¹⁵⁸⁰ This was reportedly due to the necessary political decision-making to be made and to the fact that response and coordination would often take place in complex security situations. In addition, they highlighted that too little time is taken to assess requests for assistance and consider whether and where it makes sense for the UCPM to intervene.¹⁵⁸¹ Some experts argued that this applies to the planning and selection of experts as these are sometimes selected and deployed too hastily, leading to a mismatch between expertise available and that which would be required for response efforts.¹⁵⁸²

A9.2.4.2 Efficiency

Overall, a majority of experts in civil protection agreed that UCPM prevention and preparedness activities were conducted in the most cost-effective manner and did not identify any major inefficiency.¹⁵⁸³ A minority of experts underlined that the cost-effectiveness of the Prevention and Preparedness Programme was hindered by lack of exploitation of projects results, overlaps or insufficient complementarities with other EU funding instruments, and complex reporting requirements.¹⁵⁸⁴

¹⁵⁷³ Survey with experts in civil protection (86%, or 18 out of 21).

¹⁵⁷⁴ Survey with experts in civil protection (90%, or 17 out of 19).

¹⁵⁷⁵ Interviews with experts in civil protection (6 out of 10).

¹⁵⁷⁶ Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 10).

¹⁵⁷⁷ Survey with experts in civil protection (77%, or 13 out of 17).

¹⁵⁷⁸ Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 10); Feedback from EU Delegations (AL, TR, MK) to DG ECHO, shared on 09/12/2022. Case study on Forest Fires.

¹⁵⁷⁹ Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 10).

¹⁵⁸⁰ Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 10).

¹⁵⁸¹ Interviews with experts in civil protection (3 out of 10).

¹⁵⁸² Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 10); Case study on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

¹⁵⁸³ Survey with experts in civil protection [e.g., Prevention and Preparedness Programme: (93%, or 12 out of 13); Advisory missions (100%, or 13 out of 13); European Civil Protection Pool (100%, or 13 out of 13); Exchange of experts (100%, or 13 out of 13)].

¹⁵⁸⁴ Survey with experts in civil protection (46%, or 6 out of 13); Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 10); Case study on integration of UCPM preparedness activities.

A9.2.4.3 Relevance

A majority of experts were not aware of the extent to which the UCPM effectively covered national needs, while others indicated that certain civil protection needs remained unaddressed.¹⁵⁸⁵ On prevention, a minority of experts expressed a need to improve alignment between the development of capacities in the ECPP and rescEU with the results of systematic needs assessments.¹⁵⁸⁶ On preparedness, experts agreed that the establishment of rescEU and the Training and Exercises Programme addressed national needs. However, a minority of experts indicated a need to increase the knowledge of humanitarian aid actors and practices among the civil protection community.¹⁵⁸⁷ Some also reported that the share of experts deployed out of the total number of experts trained is low, and that many deployed experts did not undergo necessary trainings to be deployed.¹⁵⁸⁸ On response, experts agreed that UCPM activities in the field of response addressed national needs.¹⁵⁸⁹

A9.2.4.4 Coherence

Experts in civil protection did not have specific views on whether UCPM activities were coherent with other EU and international level interventions. Nevertheless, they expressed positive views on the UCPM cooperation with international organisations in the field of disaster response, but stressed a need to ensure a better understanding of humanitarian aid actors (such as OCHA, UNICEF, and WFP) among UCPM team members deployed.¹⁵⁹⁰ Additionally, they highlighted that recent and more complex emergencies have shown the importance of embedding specialised scientific expertise during crises and the need to improve operational links with the scientific community in response activities.¹⁵⁹¹

A9.2.4.5 EU added value

Experts agreed that the results achieved through the UCPM could not have been attained by each Member or Participating State on their own,¹⁵⁹² nor through bilateral cooperation.¹⁵⁹³ According to experts, the main added value of the UCPM include the coordination of requests for assistance, the strengthening of solidarity and cooperation at EU level, the exchange of expertise, and identification and dissemination of lessons learnt.¹⁵⁹⁴

A9.2.5 Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders

A9.2.5.1 Effectiveness

A majority of stakeholders involved in the Training and Exercises Programme agreed that in-person and online trainings, module exercises, and table-top exercises were effectively implemented.¹⁵⁹⁵ The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on in-person training, module and table-top exercises. Some in-person activities were not implemented, while others were conducted remotely

¹⁵⁸⁵ Survey with experts in civil protection (33%, or 6 out of 18).

¹⁵⁸⁶ Interviews with experts in civil protection (2 out of 10); Focus group with DG ECHO on 10 May 2023; Focus group with national authorities and experts in civil protection participating in UCPM activities on 9 May 2023.

¹⁵⁸⁷ Interviews with experts in civil protection (3 out of 10).

¹⁵⁸⁸ Interviews with experts in civil protection (3 out of 10).

¹⁵⁸⁹ Interviews with experts in civil protection (6 out of 10).

¹⁵⁹⁰ Interviews with experts in civil protection (3 out of 10).

¹⁵⁹¹ Interviews with experts in civil protection (6 out of 10).

¹⁵⁹² Survey with experts in civil protection (75%, or 12 out of 16).

¹⁵⁹³ Survey with experts in civil protection (69%, or 11 out of 16).

¹⁵⁹⁴ Interviews with experts in civil protection (5 out of 10).

¹⁵⁹⁵ Survey with training and exercises programme stakeholders: in-person trainings (92% or 46 out of 50 responses), module exercises (84%, or 36 out of 43), table-top exercises (76%, or 31 out of 41), online training (72% or 34 out of 47).

or in a hybrid mode. According to Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders, the number of participants to trainings and exercises was satisfactory. Member States, Participating States and eligible third countries were adequately represented. Nevertheless, a minority of stakeholders raised concerns regarding participants' insufficient English language skills and prior knowledge and understanding of the UCPM.¹⁵⁹⁶

Training and Exercises Programme Stakeholders also agreed that the skills and experience level of trainers and the methodology used were appropriate.¹⁵⁹⁷ Internal briefings on potential improvements to trainings and internal capacity development strategies were put in place to increase the quality of the sessions provided.¹⁵⁹⁸ Trainings and Exercises were evaluated systematically.¹⁵⁹⁹

A9.2.5.2 Efficiency

A large majority of Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders agreed that training courses and exercises were achieved in the most cost-effective way.¹⁶⁰⁰ No specific inefficiencies were identified.

A9.2.5.3 Relevance

Around a third of stakeholders indicated that there were national civil protection needs that remained unaddressed.¹⁶⁰¹ These included the practical use of CECIS, aerial coordination and evacuation procedures, geological risks, safety and security within UCPM deployments, and better awareness of the humanitarian aid actors.¹⁶⁰²

Stakeholders indicated that lessons learnt and recommendations from external evaluations, participants' feedback, and trainers' feedback were adequately reflected.¹⁶⁰³ The recent design of the new UCPM Training and Exercises Programme incorporates a substantial number of elements derived from external evaluations. A majority of stakeholders agreed that recent changes to the Training and Exercises Programme are expected to ensure better coverage of national training needs.¹⁶⁰⁴

A9.2.5.4 Coherence

Courses and exercises within the Training and Exercises Programme were coherent with and complementary to each other.¹⁶⁰⁵ Stakeholders agreed that the training path design ensured a high level of coherence and complementarity and recent changes to the Training and Exercises Programme are expected to enhance coherence among different activities offered.¹⁶⁰⁶ Half of respondents agreed that UCPM trainings and exercises were coherent with exercises implemented

¹⁵⁹⁶ Interviews with professional organisations (2 out of 3).

¹⁵⁹⁷ Survey with training and exercises programme (93%, or 41 out of 44).

¹⁵⁹⁸ Survey with Training and Exercises programme: internal briefings (92%, or 35 out of 38); internal capacity development strategies (79%, or 30 out of 38).

¹⁵⁹⁹ Survey with Training and Exercises programme: online trainings (92%, or 34 out of 37), in-person training (93%, or 37 out of 40); table-top exercises (75%, or 21 out of 27), module exercises (86%, or 25 out of 29).

¹⁶⁰⁰ Survey with training and exercises programme: training courses (94%, or 28 out of 30); exercises (86%, or 24 out of 28).

¹⁶⁰¹ Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders: (33%, or 11 out of 33) indicated that there were national civil protection needs that remained unaddressed; (21%, or 7 out of 33) did not think there were needs that remained unaddressed; (46%, or 15 out of 33) replied that they do not know.

¹⁶⁰² Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (33%; or 11 out of 33).

¹⁶⁰³ Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders: external evaluations (56%, or 18 out of 32), participants' feedback (84%, or 27 out of 32), trainers' feedback (94%, or 31 out of 33).

¹⁶⁰⁴ Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (74%, or 23 out of 31).

¹⁶⁰⁵ Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (69%, or 22 out of 32).

¹⁶⁰⁶ Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (77% or 23 out of 30).

by other international organisations. A minority of stakeholders noted that they had no awareness about the level of coherence or overlap between trainings and exercises conducted at UCPM and international level.¹⁶⁰⁷

A9.2.5.5 EU added value

A majority of stakeholders indicated that the Training and Exercises Programme was a necessary supplement to the national trainings, (e.g., providing participants basic training for international deployments).¹⁶⁰⁸ Stakeholders indicated that, in the absence of the Training and Exercises Programme, civil protection training activities across the Union would likely be more fragmented, duplicated in different countries,¹⁶⁰⁹ or even cease to exist. Furthermore, most respondents expressed doubts about whether civil protection training activities would continue at the same scale with national or regional funding in the event that the UCPM was discontinued.

A9.3 Findings from the public consultation

Overall, **a majority of Public Consultation (PC) participants were aware of the EU's activities in disaster management**.¹⁶¹⁰ Participants were most familiar with the idea that EU Member States and non-EU countries can seek EU support for disaster response through the UCPM.¹⁶¹¹ However, they were least familiar with EU Early Warning Systems¹⁶¹² and EU-funded projects on disaster prevention and preparedness.¹⁶¹³ PC participants expressed an interest in learning more about EU's work in disaster management through websites and social media profiles of national/ local/ regional civil protection authorities and DG ECHO's own website.¹⁶¹⁴ PC participants expressed varied views on how the EU could best support Member States in disaster management, with a few mentioning enhanced preparedness measures, heightened coordination, and educational campaigns to help inform the public.¹⁶¹⁵

All PC participants were asked **general questions on the EU's work on disaster management in the coming years**. When questioned about the most significant disasters anticipated in the near future, PC participants highlighted that floods and heatwaves were the primary threats.¹⁶¹⁶ Floods and heatwaves were also noted as the disaster types PC participants felt most informed about.¹⁶¹⁷ Conversely, respondents felt least informed about civil unrest, space weather events, and marine events.¹⁶¹⁸ For the future, PC participants highlighted a desire for more warning/information on human pandemics/epidemics, heatwaves and CBRN or mining accidents.¹⁶¹⁹ Nevertheless, most PC participants considered that they were adequately informed and aware about future disaster risks.¹⁶²⁰

¹⁶⁰⁷ Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (21% or 13 out of 30).

¹⁶⁰⁸ Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders (90%, or 26 out of 29).

¹⁶⁰⁹ Survey with Training and Exercises Programme stakeholders: training activities would be more fragmented (93%, or 28 out of 30); training activities across the Union would cease to exist (59%, or 17 out of 29).

¹⁶¹⁰ Very familiar (27%); Familiar (47%), Not familiar (10%), Not familiar at all (16%).

¹⁶¹¹ High familiarity (58%); Moderate familiarity (27%); Low familiarity (15%).

¹⁶¹² High familiarity (44%); Moderate familiarity (38%); Low familiarity (18%).

¹⁶¹³ High familiarity (44%); Moderate familiarity (41%); Low familiarity (15%).

¹⁶¹⁴ National CP authority websites – 63%; Local/regional CP authority websites – 39%; National CP authority social media profiles – 42%; DG ECHO website – 34%.

¹⁶¹⁵ Enhanced preparedness measures – 24%; Enhanced cooperation – 8%; Educational campaigns for the general public – 5%.

¹⁶¹⁶ Floods – 62%; Heatwaves – 51%.

¹⁶¹⁷ Floods – 55%; Heatwaves – 45% .

¹⁶¹⁸ Civil unrest – 3%; Space weather events – 2%; Marine events – 2%.

¹⁶¹⁹ Human pandemics/epidemics – 38%; Heatwaves – 31%; Radiological, nuclear, biological, chemical or mining accidents – 29%.

¹⁶²⁰ Well informed - 35%; Somewhat informed - 35%; Unsure - 17%.

The majority of PC participants with a strong familiarity with the UCPM agreed that the Mechanism was successful in progressing toward its general and specific objectives.¹⁶²¹ The agreement rate was lower for the statement regarding the UCPM's success in enhancing cooperation between civil protection authorities and other relevant services.¹⁶²² Over half of PC participants with a high familiarity of the UCPM agreed that it is relevant and adaptable considering current and future threats.¹⁶²³ Most agreed that the UCPM addresses critical risks and challenges in disaster management that Europe faces.¹⁶²⁴ More limited agreement emerged on whether the UCPM addresses and is sufficiently flexible to continue addressing expected future disasters and challenges.¹⁶²⁵ PC participants highlighted that the EU's support strengthened national civil protection response activities for floods, human pandemics/epidemics and earthquakes.¹⁶²⁶

A9.4 *Conclusions based on the outcomes of the consultations*

Overall, the feedback obtained through consultation activities regarding the UCPM's performance from 2017 to 2022 was largely positive. Consultation activities revealed that stakeholders generally agreed that the UCPM has progressed towards its general and specific objectives in the field of prevention, preparedness, and response. Stakeholders highlighted the increased focus on prevention activities, as well as the UCPM's ability to enhance preparedness at national and Union level through rescEU and the ECPP. They also broadly agreed that the UCPM has made significant contributions in the field of response, which stands out as its primary strength.

Stakeholders also mentioned challenges that affected UCPM's performance during the period evaluated. These include the effects of recent large-scale crises (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic; Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine), limits of the CECIS platform, the administrative burden placed on national authorities, and shortcomings in ensuring synergies with other national, EU or international level interventions. Last, while the UCPM helped increase cross-sectoral cooperation in addressing complex emergencies, stakeholders raised concerns about its future sustainability in a context of increasingly frequent and simultaneous cross-sectoral crises.

¹⁶²¹ Agree/strongly agree: The UCPM contributed to preventing and reducing the effects of disasters by promoting a culture of disaster prevention – 70%; The UCPM contributed to preventing and reducing the potential effects of disasters by improving cooperation between relevant services – 63%; The UCPM contributed to an increased sharing, availability and use of (scientific) knowledge and best practices on disaster response – 69%; the UCPM improved national and EU disaster preparedness – 60%; The UCPM supported countries in improving their capacity to quickly respond to disasters – 71%; the UCPM supported third countries in easing the immediate consequences of disasters – 69%; the UCPM contributed to improving cooperation and coordination between the EU, MS, PS, TC – 65%.

¹⁶²² Agree or strongly agree – 53%; Disagree or strongly disagree – 16%.

¹⁶²³ Agree/strongly agree: The UCPM addresses critical disasters and challenges in disaster management that Europe needs to cope with today – 57%; the UCPM addresses critical disasters and disaster management challenges that Europe will need to cope with in the future – 52%; the UCPM supports trans-national early warning systems addressing the biggest risks for Europeans – 52%; the UCPM is sufficiently flexible to cope with changing and/or emerging civil protection priorities – 56%.

¹⁶²⁴ Agree or strongly agree – 57%; Disagree or strongly disagree – 9%; Neutral/no opinion – 34%.

¹⁶²⁵ The UCPM addresses critical disasters and disaster management challenges that Europe will need to cope with in the future – Agree/strongly agree – 52%; Disagree/strongly disagree – 14%; Neutral/no opinion – 34%. The UCPM is sufficiently flexible to cope with changing and/or emerging civil protection priorities – Agree/strongly agree – 56%; Disagree/strongly disagree – 16%; Neutral/no opinion – 28%.

¹⁶²⁶ Floods – 76%; Human pandemics/epidemics – 49%; Earthquakes – 41%.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID
OPERATIONS (ECHO)

Disaster Preparedness and Prevention

Civil Protection Horizontal Issues

Terms of Reference
for the Interim Evaluation of
the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a
Union Civil Protection Mechanism, 2017-2022

A10.1 Evaluation subject and background

A10.1.1 EU Mandate

The European Union ('the EU') plays a key role in coordinating the prevention, preparedness and response to disasters in the European Union and beyond. Disasters have affected every region of Europe in recent years, causing hundreds of casualties and severe damage to infrastructure, property and the environment. Epidemics, flash floods, storms, forest fires, earthquakes, and human-induced disasters are continuously putting countries' prevention, preparedness and response capabilities under pressure. Additionally, security concerns have become more complex and climate change is expected to further worsen the impact of disasters in the future.

Large-scale, cross-sectoral and cross-border crises have, at times, overwhelmed the ability of EU Member States to help each other, revealing vulnerabilities and underlining the need for enhanced cooperation and coordination at EU level. This is particularly true when several countries are confronted with the same type of emergency simultaneously, and therefore, specific response capacities are scarce to assist each other. In those circumstances, action at EU level can ensure a faster and more comprehensive response.

With the advent of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, Civil Protection became a self-standing policy area with its own legal basis enshrined in Article 196 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. According to that Article, EU action in the field of civil protection shall aim to:

"a) support and complement Member States' action at national, regional and local level in risk prevention, in preparing their civil-protection personnel and in responding to natural or man-made disasters within the Union;

b) promote swift, effective operational cooperation within the Union between national civil-protection services;

c) promote consistency in international civil-protection work".

Based on the above, and in order to ensure the continued protection of people, the environment and property in a world in which the number, severity and complexity of disasters was increasing, the Council and the European Parliament repealed previous legislation and adopted [Decision No 1313/2013/EU](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (herein 'UCPM' or 'Mechanism'). This legal act, herein 'UCPM Decision' or 'the Decision', is currently in force and defines the activities within the UCPM framework (see *also Annex 3.*).

A10.1.2 The Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)

The [Union Civil Protection Mechanism](#) ('the UCPM') aims to strengthen the cooperation between the Union, the 27 EU Member States and the six Participating States currently taking part in the UCPM (North Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey), as well as to facilitate coordination in the field of civil protection in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters (General Objective)¹⁶²⁷.

The UCPM promotes solidarity between the Member and Participating States through practical cooperation and coordination, without prejudice to the Member States' primary responsibility to protect people, the environment, and property, including cultural heritage, on their territory against disasters, and to provide their disaster-management systems with sufficient capabilities to enable them to cope adequately and in a consistent manner with disasters of a nature and magnitude that can reasonably be expected and prepared for.

¹⁶²⁷ Article 1(1) of Decision No 1313/2013/EU

Finally, the UCPM facilitates the cooperation throughout the entire Disaster Risk Management cycle among the Member/Participating States, coordinating through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) the provision of assistance to countries all over the world¹⁶²⁸. The support provided through the UCPM can take the form of in-kind assistance, deployment of specially equipped teams, and/or assessment and coordination experts sent to the field.

The **specific objectives** as laid out in Article 3(1) of the Decision further detail the UCPM's aim to "support, complement and facilitate coordination of Member States' action" as follows:

to achieve a high level of protection against disasters by preventing or reducing their potential effects, by fostering a culture of prevention and by improving cooperation between the civil protection and other relevant services;

to enhance preparedness at Member State and Union level to respond to disasters;

to facilitate rapid and efficient response in the event of disasters or imminent disasters, including by taking measures to mitigate the immediate consequences of disasters and encouraging Member States to work towards removing bureaucratic obstacles;

to increase public awareness and preparedness for disasters;

to increase the availability and use of scientific knowledge on disasters; and

to step up cooperation and coordination activities at cross-border level and between Member States prone to the same types of disasters.

A10.1.3 UCPM activities

The UCPM covers all phases of the disaster management cycle, and thus, is divided in three strands of activities: **prevention**¹⁶²⁹, **preparedness**¹⁶³⁰ and **response**¹⁶³¹.

UCPM **prevention** activities aim at reducing risks or mitigating adverse consequences of a disaster. They have been instrumental in fostering an EU-wide culture of prevention among EU Member States and Participating States to the UCPM. Over the past years, several Member States have undertaken reforms in their national civil protection structures to emphasise the role of prevention. This is in line with the commitments contained in the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the UCPM has accompanied and supported such measures.

Further, the prevention activities encourage cooperation and coordination of civil protection and risk management activities at cross-border level. An important tool in this aspect are UCPM prevention and preparedness grants. Projects largely focus on the development of cross-border risk assessments, improved regional and cross-sectoral coordination and preparation for marine pollution accidents. Attention to cross-border cooperation issues has also been strengthened as a result of the revision of the UCPM Decision in 2019: in line with the new reporting provisions, Member States are required to share regularly information on priority prevention and preparedness measures taken to address disaster risks with cross-border impacts.

Preparedness activities constitute the largest pillar of the UCPM. The number and diversity of registered capacities in the European Civil Protection Pool is the highest ever. A training programme for civil protection experts from EU Member States and Participating States, now part of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network, ensures compatibility and complementarity between intervention teams, while large-scale field and table-top exercises train response capacities for specific disasters. The UCPM supports and complements preparedness efforts of its Member and Participating States by focusing on areas where a joint European Union approach is more effective

¹⁶²⁸ Article 1(2) of Decision No 1313/2013/EU

¹⁶²⁹ Article 5ff of Decision No 1313/2013/EU

¹⁶³⁰ Article 7ff of Decision No 1313/2013/EU

¹⁶³¹ Article 14ff of Decision No 1313/2013/EU

than separate national actions. One of the key innovations of the 2019 legislative revision was the creation of a dedicated reserve of civil protection capacities, the “rescEU reserve”. It constitutes a European Union reserve of capacities to be mobilised as a last resort and to provide a safety net in case national capacities are overwhelmed. The revision of the UCPM Decision in 2021 further strengthened this initiative, allowing the Commission to directly acquire, rent, lease and stockpile identified rescEU capacities. It aims at serving all Member States across different sectors¹⁶³² by offering a wide range of ready to deploy rescEU capacities, depending on the situation. Having own logistical capacities is aimed to enable the transfer of goods, medical staff and patients to a degree needed by any overwhelmed State, bringing a tangible EU added value in a timely manner. Moreover, the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network was launched in December 2021 to support the better connection between the various related work streams and also to link up with other existing structures such as the Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC). It aims at bringing together civil protection and disaster management experts and organisations, encouraging them to work together to increase knowledge within the UCPM and to support the Union’s ability and capacity dealing with disasters. Currently, DG ECHO is in the process of establishing a recommendation for Union disaster resilience goals and scenario building in the area of civil protection.

Concerning the external dimension of **prevention** and **preparedness** activities, the focus remains on strengthening the cooperation with the immediate neighbourhood, notably with the EU candidate countries or potential candidate countries as well as the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhoods. Cooperation with these countries is done via the tools under the UCPM (trainings, exercises, projects, peer reviews, exchange of experts etc.) and the regional programmes financed by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ESI). New phases of regional programmes in the Balkans and in the Eastern neighbourhood were launched with the aim to continue bringing these countries closer to the UCPM. Moreover, the dialogue with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) has been revamped in support of those activities. In addition, the UCPM finances prevention and preparedness projects in third countries with a cross-border dimension. Such initiatives have been instrumental in promoting cooperation at technical level, developing networks and promoting capacity building.

DG ECHO, working together with the Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC) and other partners, continuously strengthens early warning and information systems for natural disasters (e.g., droughts, floods, forest fires, tropical cyclones or severe weather), making extensive use of services and information provided via the Copernicus programme for emergency management, climate change, and security, as well as the interfaces between these three areas. Consequentially, DG ECHO expands its Geographic and Information System (GIS) capacity to support operations by means of cartographical and geospatial products. Such services have supported the activities of the UCPM both inside and outside the EU.

Various UCPM deployments and operations offered unprecedented opportunities for raising public awareness for preparedness. DG ECHO works closely with EU Delegations and Commission Representations as well as multipliers in UCPM Member and Participating States to increase the level of awareness of both the UCPM and of the need for local preparedness measures. These efforts are complemented by awareness campaigns. In 2020¹⁶³³, a campaign on enhanced EU Civil Protection, with online advertising in six EU Member States (Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain), reached more than 65 million online views on Facebook/Instagram, YouTube and premium news sites.

¹⁶³² e.g. aerial firefighting capacities, including firefighting planes and helicopters; emergency medical capacities, including medical evacuation capacities; stockpiles of medical equipment, as well as field hospitals; and CBRN-related capacities, such as for instance decontamination. Capacities to cover other areas are also to be developed.

¹⁶³³ A similar campaign was conducted in 2018: https://ec.europa.eu/echo/eu-saves-lives-europe-and-worldwide-2018_en

Under **response**, following a request for assistance by a Member State, a third country, UN and its agencies or relevant international organisation through the UCPM, the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) mobilises assistance or expertise. In addition, the ERCC monitors events around the globe 24/7 and ensures rapid deployment of emergency support through a direct link with national civil protection and maritime authorities as well as with the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). Specialised teams and equipment, such as forest firefighting planes, search and rescue and medical teams can be mobilised at short notice for deployments inside and outside Europe. Approximately 2/3 of UCPM activations originate from non-EU countries.

The revision of the UCPM Decision in 2021 enhanced further the ERCC providing for its access to operational, analytical, monitoring, information management and communication capabilities to address a broad range of emergencies within and outside the Union and to promote a cross-sectoral approach to disaster management¹⁶³⁴. Bridging preparedness and response activities, the ERCC further strengthens its position as the EU's primary crisis coordination hub.

Furthermore, since 2016 the European Medical Corps (EMC) gathers all certified health related response capacities which Member States commit to the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP), including internationally recognised ones by the World Health Organization (WHO), in the framework of the UCPM. Since 2019, rescEU health related capacities complement the ECPP component of the EMC. All EMC response capacities can be used in times of epidemics, provided that a State expresses a request for assistance to the UCPM.

A10.1.4 Response to Covid-19

The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic have had a significant impact on the UCPM activities. This has required constant and rapid adaptation to the situation, leading generally to two main scenarios: a) finding flexible approaches in order to carry out activities foreseen in DG ECHO's work plan and b) rapidly adapting to new events and setting up new activities/initiatives not initially planned. Concerning new initiatives not initially planned, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in an unprecedented number of activations of the UCPM requesting the provision of medical equipment, as well as support for the repatriation of EU citizens (and others) stranded in third countries. This required working jointly across sectors. Enhanced cooperation between civil protection, health and consular authorities proved to be key to addressing multidimensional consequences of the pandemic.

In this context, further budgetary reinforcement was necessary and additional financial resources were allocated under the UCPM through two amending budgets (for rescEU medical stockpile and repatriations of EU citizens). Other areas that have been particularly affected by the pandemic are the ones related to training courses and exercises, given the restrictions in place and the challenges of conducting such events by virtual means. Another area whose normal development has been disrupted is the submission of prevention-related information. Given the crucial role that civil protection authorities play in the response to the pandemic, the management of this health crisis has forced some Member States to redirect all resources to response and coordination operations, at the expense of other less urgent tasks, such as reporting.

Finally, due to the Coronavirus outbreak, many of the initially planned communication actions had to be revised or postponed, while a large share of the delivered work focused on showing and explaining the EU response to the pandemic (including rescEU preparedness measures and deployments, repatriations, Humanitarian Air Bridge operations).

A10.1.5 Response to Russia's war against Ukraine

¹⁶³⁴ Article 7 of revised Decision No1313/2013/EU

The response to Russia's war against Ukraine triggered the largest UCPM activation to date¹⁶³⁵, including a complex logistical operation.

On 15 February, Ukraine activated the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in preparation for a large-scale emergency and updated this initial request consecutively. Requests included but are not limited to medical supplies, food, shelter items, fire-fighting equipment, IT and communications equipment, cultural heritage protection apparatus, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) countermeasures, and agricultural supplies (seeds).

All 27 EU Member States and two UCPM Participating States (Norway and Turkey) have offered assistance to Ukraine through the UCPM. Furthermore, the ERCC mobilised assistance from the rescEU medical stockpiles hosted by Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands. Additionally, rescEU medical stockpiles in Greece and Germany were activated to deliver countermeasures against chemical agents.

The ERCC supported Poland, Romania and Slovakia to established UCPM logistics hubs¹⁶³⁶ in which incoming assistance was received and consolidated before being sent on to Ukraine. Until 28 April, more than 23,800 tonnes of assistance have been channelled to Ukraine via the UCPM logistics hubs.

Furthermore, in response to the large number of contacts by private companies following the "Stand for Ukraine" campaign of the EC, DG ECHO established the first rescEU stockpile for specialized private sector donations, which is hosted by Belgium.

Besides the request for assistance by Ukraine, the neighbouring countries Moldova¹⁶³⁷, Slovakia¹⁶³⁸, Poland¹⁶³⁹, as well as The Czech Republic¹⁶⁴⁰ activated the UCPM to request support in the management of the migration flow.

Furthermore, in response to increasing needs for medical treatment the European Commission (DG ECHO and DG SANTE) set up a standard operating procedure for the medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) of displaced people from Ukraine. Ukraine, Poland, Moldova and Slovakia have requested support for medical evacuation operations from their respective countries to other European countries with available hospital capacity. As of 28 April, 196 Ukrainian patients have been transferred to Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Romania, Portugal and Norway. The evacuations are financially and operationally supported by the UCPM.

In addition to the above request for assistance North Macedonia activated the UCPM for consular support to repatriate its citizens from Ukraine, on 27 February.

European Union Civil Protection Teams (EUCPT) have been deployed to Poland (since 3 March) and to Slovakia (since 16 March). The team in Poland has reinforced its medical component with two experts from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and five health experts. Furthermore, to support local authorities in facilitating the arrival of the incoming UCPM assistance and the timely delivery to Ukraine, ERCC Liaison Officers (LO) have been deployed to Poland and Slovakia since 27 February.

¹⁶³⁵ all information as of 15 May 2022. Response ongoing. Updated information may be requested on ad hoc basis

¹⁶³⁶ Funding-support of goods channelled through hubs

¹⁶³⁷ activation on 25 February

¹⁶³⁸ activation on 27 February

¹⁶³⁹ activation on 28 February

¹⁶⁴⁰ activation on 11 March

1 Table 31. overview of UCPM activities¹⁶⁴¹ // *since 2019; **since 2021

Prevention	Specific Objectives 1, 4, 6	<u>Main activities:</u> Disaster prevention framework, Cross-border risks assessment (incl. maritime emergencies)	Peer reviews // Advisory missions Prevention and preparedness call (Track 1 and 2 grants) // Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network*
Preparedness	Specific Objectives 2, 4, 5, 6	<u>Main activities:</u> The European Civil Protection Pool* // The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) // rescEU capacities* (incl. development) // Global monitoring & information-sharing (24/7) // Management of CECIS and CECIS Marine// Training and Exercises Programme // Establishment of Union Disaster Resilience Goals for CP** // Scenario building ** // Early warning and anticipation** //	
Response	Specific Objectives 3, 4, 6	<u>Main activities:</u> Activation of the UCPM (inside and outside the EU) // Coordination of the response through ERCC // Transport and logistics // Deployment of expert teams // European Medical Corps	

2

¹⁶⁴¹ Not conclusive. List of activities can be found in the annual Work Programmes 2017-2022

A10.1.6 Legal basis

The UCPM legal framework has evolved significantly over the past years. Annex 3 states a conclusive overview of the **UCPM legal basis**.

A10.1.6.1 Legal reference – changes since 2017

In the aftermath of the devastating 2017 forest fires, a legislative proposal to strengthen the UCPM was tabled at the end of 2017¹⁶⁴² and entered into force in March 2019 as Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism. By the creation of the “rescEU reserve” and the “Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network” as well as the revision of the “Voluntary Pool” the amended Decision addressed the limitations identified by the Interim Evaluation conducted in 2017 and conclusions drawn from operations.

While showing the added value that the 2019 reform brought to the UCPM, notably with the creation of rescEU, including its first ever emergency stockpile of medical equipment, strengthening of prevention and risk management, the large-scale and unforeseen nature of the Covid-19 pandemic put the UCPM to the test and revealed some areas for improvement. As such, in the aftermath of the first wave of the pandemic a new legislative proposal was tabled [COM(2020)220 final] with targeted changes, for which a political agreement was reached by the co-legislators in early February 2021 and entered into force in May 2021 as Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism. The legislative review was also aiming at aligning the financial envelope of the UCPM with the figures of the next Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF). The areas of this adaptation are related to three main domains:

With regards to rescEU capacities, [the revised legal base](#) grants the Commission with additional elements of initiative, such as the possibility to directly procure capacities in the area of transport and logistics and other capacities in certain exceptional cases. In addition, it lays out full Union funding for the development of such capacities.

The development of Union Resilience Goals, assessing the risks, capability gaps and proposing elements to fill these, was established. The ERCC analytical, monitoring, and anticipatory capabilities were enhanced.

Finally, a more flexible budget structure (carry-over for response activities) is aimed at increasing the efficiency of the UCPM in fulfilling its mandate.

¹⁶⁴² COM/2017/0772 final - 2017/0309 (COD)

A10.1.7 Overview of the UCPM budget¹⁶⁴³

The timeframe of this Evaluation covers two Multiannual Financial Frameworks (MFF), namely MFF 2014 – 2020 and MFF 2021 – 2027. The budgetary allocation for the UCPM over these two financial cycles illustrates the increase in the frequency and variety of crises to which the Mechanism reacted. Furthermore, the continuous evolution is also reflected in the revision of the legal basis in May 2021, the linked access to external assigned revenues through resources allocated under Next Generation EU, and in the programming (shift from an annual work programme to a multi-annual work programme covering three, four or five years). A detailed overview of the UCPM budgetary allocation, as well as a breakdown of funds corresponding to the three pillars (prevention, preparedness and response) is laid down in Annex 5.

Under the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014 -2020, the initial UCPM budget amounted to 368 mio EUR and was split under two headings (internal [Heading 3]/ external [Heading 4]), thus allowing a clearer monitoring of investments inside and outside the EU. In 2019, following the decision introducing rescEU, the budgetary allocation increased with a total of 206 mio EUR bringing the overall total for the period 2014 – 2020 to 574 mio EUR. In 2020, in the context of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic the budget has doubled due to two amending decisions aimed to reinforce medical stockpiling capacities (370 mio EUR) and repatriation flights (45 mio EUR). Also, a redeployment between instruments within Heading IV has reinforced the budget by an additional EUR 27 million for repatriation flights.

Under the current MFF 2021-2027 the UCPM budget amounts to 3,562 mio EUR and is placed under one single heading ('Heading 2: Cohesion, Resilience and Values'). Compared with the previous MFF financial cycle, the financial envelope for 2021 - 2027 is composed by two budgetary sources: a) the MFF allocation of 1,571¹⁶⁴⁴ mio EUR and b) an allocation of 2,056 mio EUR stemming from the 'European Union Recovery Instrument' (NGEU) funds¹⁶⁴⁵ as part of the comprehensive recovery instrument adopted to face the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic (of which 1,266 mio EUR have been allocated to the UCPM under the responsibility of DG HERA). Although access to NGEU credits was initially perceived as a strong reinforcement of the UCPM budget, particularly under rescEU, it is important to note that it came with additional conditionalities by underlining that "funding from the European Union Recovery Instrument shall only be used if the following cumulative conditions are met for each individual financing decision:

The funding shall be used for preparedness measures clearly related to the difficulties faced during the COVID-19 crisis, and that aim to address the risk of further waves of COVID-19 and of major crises of a similar nature as well as to allow for capacity building at Union level to enhance preparedness for future major crises of a similar nature;

Funding of activities in third countries or benefitting third countries is only possible where those activities increase the crisis preparedness of the Union."

The increased UCPM budget and its amendments underline the volatile and highly challenging environment the UCPM operates in. Despite this operational unpredictability, recent events have shown the limit of flexibility of the UCPM, partly due to the strict budget execution rules. One example are carried-over appropriations which currently may be used for response actions¹⁶⁴⁶ only. This limits the flexibility and adaptability of the UCPM since the budgetary allocation for activities under prevention and preparedness is significantly higher than for response activities and, furthermore, deal with longer-term, strategic activities that proved crucial in the past years. Against this background, some flexibility was introduced in the programming of the UCPM through the shift

¹⁶⁴³ All figures used in this section are indicative and rounded. The Evaluation shall be based on the figures of the official financial reports.

¹⁶⁴⁴ After reinforcements. Initially 1,263 mio EUR

¹⁶⁴⁵ Article 19a of Decision No 1313/2013/EU

¹⁶⁴⁶ Article 12(4) Decision No 1313/2013/EU

from an annual to a multi-annual work programme as of 2021 and the use of annual instalments under rescEU capacities (e.g. AFF capacities).

A10.2 Reporting and monitoring

The monitoring of the UCPM is mainly carried out by DG ECHO around the reports presented in Table 2 below. Most reports are publicly available on the websites of DG ECHO and other EC websites. Further reports may be provided to the Evaluator in the Inception Phase of this evaluation support study.

An independent [interim evaluation](#) of the activities implemented under the Union Mechanism was finalized in 2017.

A progress report on the implementation of article 6 (Risk management) will be published in December 2022 and cover an analysis of reports submitted by Member States and Participating States on risk assessment and risk management capabilities¹⁶⁴⁷ as well as peer reviews.

Further, evaluations on [Civil Protection Prevention and Preparedness Projects](#) and Transport and Logistics¹⁶⁴⁸ are available. Several studies have also been carried out, such as a [study on the UCPM training programme](#); a [study of definitions, gaps and costs of response capacities for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism](#); and a [prospective study on a network of European hubs for Civil Protection and Crisis Management](#);

Additionally, DG ECHO published the third edition of the Staff Working Document on the '[Overview of risks that the Union may face](#)' in 2020, following the previous editions of 2014 and 2017 reports. The report presents the latest available evidence on disaster risks that threatens the EU, drawing on the DRM Summary reports developed by the EU Member States and on the Commission's cross-sectoral policy and scientific work.

Table 32. Reports on the implementation of the UCPM

Report Name	Frequency of reporting	Comments
DG ECHO Strategic Plan (2016-2020)	Multi-annual planning exercise (Strategic Planning and Programming [SPP] cycle).	Prepared at the beginning of the multi-annual period (i.e. Feb 2016). Its specific objectives and result indicators are those of the Decision's. Public document.
DG ECHO Strategic Plan (2020-2024)	Multi-annual planning exercise (SPP cycle).	See above
DG ECHO Management Plan 2021 / 2020 / 2019 / 2018	Beginning of year. Planning exercise (SPP cycle).	Prepared at the beginning of the year, forward looking document with expected achievements for the year. Includes monitoring of some objectives and indicators from Decision. Public document.
DG ECHO Annual Activity Reports 2021 / 2020 / 2019 / 2018	End of year (SPP cycle).	Reports on progress towards some of the Decision's specific objectives/indicators. Public document.

¹⁶⁴⁷ COMMISSION NOTICE Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management, Art. 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU (2019/C 428/07)

¹⁶⁴⁸ 2013-17 available. Currently, an evaluation is ongoing (2018-2022)

DG ECHO Mid-Term Review/Bi-Annual report	Mid-year	Internal document. Includes financial disbursement information. (Will be made available to the contractor once the evaluation support study starts).
DG ECHO Financial Program Statement	Beginning of year (SPP cycle).	Annual forward looking programming document; carried out with DG BUDG.
Other sources		
European Parliament questions	Ad hoc	Public document.
Court of Auditors	Ad hoc	Ad hoc performance audits; Public document.
ERCC Analytics (data and reports)	Ad Hoc	Internal reports.

The revised certification and re-certification guidelines of the certification process of the European Civil Protection Pool may be handed out on an ad hoc basis.

Additional information on the prevention, preparedness and response activities of the UCPM can also be found on the Civil Protection [fact sheets](#) and [publications](#) available on the [DG ECHO](#) website. Evaluators will receive the latest statistics on UCPM activations, administrative documents, cost statements, project reports etc. in the course of this evaluation support study.

A10.3 Purpose and scope of the Evaluation support study

A10.3.1 Purpose

Article 34 of the Decision requires the Commission to evaluate the application of the Decision and submit a communication on the results of the Evaluation to the European Parliament and the Council no later than 31 December 2023.

The Evaluation should assess the effectiveness, cost efficiency and continued implementation of all of the provisions of the Decision. Article 34 specifically states that in particular as regards Article 6(4),) rescEU capacities and the degree of coordination and synergies achieved with other Union policies, programmes and funds, including medical emergencies, should be included. The evaluation will take into account that some provisions, notably article 6.4 only entered into effect mid-2021 and the effects of the provision will not yet have been materialised by the end date, so a full evaluation will not be possible at this stage. The communication shall be accompanied, if appropriate, by proposals for amendments to the Decision.

Based on an analysis of the actions performed the Evaluation should provide a clear indication of whether the general and specific objectives laid down in Articles 1 and 3(1) of the Decision are being met. Actions performed in relation to third countries, including in accordance with Article 28(2), shall be covered as well.

Findings of the evaluation support study should support the Commission to:

identify any gaps or shortcomings in the current legislative framework¹⁶⁴⁹;

¹⁶⁴⁹ Decision 1313/2013/EU of 17 December 2013, amended by Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 October 2018, Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 and by Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021.

improve the implementation of existing legislative provisions;

provide inputs for any possible proposal to amend Decision No 1313/2013/EU or implementing acts thereof;

inform, if appropriate, the review of the financial breakdown of the UCPM as set out by Article 19(5) (see section 1.4 above).

Based on the Commission's [Better Regulation Guidelines](#), a Call for Evidence has been prepared and [published](#) for this Evaluation. A Public Consultation will also be carried out during the course of the Evaluation.

A10.3.2 Scope of the Evaluation

The Evaluation will cover activities carried out under the UCPM in the timeframe **January 2017 to December 2022**¹⁶⁵⁰. In particular, the Evaluation will encompass actions carried out under the framework of the UCPM and spanning across the three fields of prevention, preparedness and response to natural and human-induced disasters.

All Implementing Decisions listed in Annex 3 are to be covered. The geographical scope must include the UCPM Member¹⁶⁵¹ and Participating States as well as third countries with UCPM activations (where relevant).

To provide a basis for the evaluation support study, the evaluator should provide a **description of the situation in 2017 as well as a description of the current situation**¹⁶⁵², taking into account the findings of the interim evaluation ([SWD\(2017\) 287 final](#)), progress made in implementing the Decision and the changes introduced in each of its amendments, and further, how the intervention has affected the UCPM stakeholders (see Annex 1). The evaluator shall also provide an intervention logic, taking into account external coherence links.

The main subject of this evaluation support study is framed by the evaluation questions listed below. These are linked to the five mandatory evaluation criteria under the European Commission's Better Regulations Guidelines¹⁶⁵³.

Effectiveness

Efficiency

Relevance

Coherence

EU added value

Based on the evaluator's response to the evaluation questions, and on their assessment of what worked and what did not work, they will provide a set of **lessons learnt** that can be useful for improving the future implementation of the UCPM. On that basis, **recommendations** should be provided, as appropriate, on how the implementation of the Decision could be improved and what changes to the Decision might be needed.

Furthermore, the evaluator should carry out a set of **additional tasks** that are specified in a dedicated section below.

A10.4 Evaluation questions

¹⁶⁵⁰ As per implementation plan the study will be completed by mid-2023 (December '22 thus will be "past")

¹⁶⁵¹ United Kingdom (UK) was an EU Member State until 2020 (inclusive).

¹⁶⁵² However, when evaluating such issues as the results and EU added value of the intervention, the assessments will be made against the absence of the UCPM, not against the situation in 2017

¹⁶⁵³ http://ec.europa.eu/info/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox_en

In order to ensure the evidence-based nature of the Evaluation, each of the evaluation criteria will be assessed on the basis of a set of evaluation questions. Each question is broken down into more specific sub-questions, which will help guiding the response. The response to each of the below questions will need to encompass the three fields of action of the UCPM, i.e. prevention, preparedness and response and draw evidence from the different activities supported by the Mechanism (see Table 1). Additional clarification and guidance will be provided to the evaluators during the Inception phase of the Evaluation.

(a) Effectiveness

Effectiveness analysis considers how successful EU action has been in achieving or progressing towards its objectives. The success shall be measured by the effect the implementation has achieved in the relevant time scope. Further, Article 3(2) of the Decision spells out the expected results and related indicators (see Table 3) that shall be used for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing, as appropriate, the application of the Decision. It is important to note that the Evaluation will have to describe the expected outcome of the intervention and highlight the causal relationship between the activities carried out under the UCPM framework and the results obtained, in order to distinguish from potential external factors. Quantitative terms should be used to the extent possible when analysing the benefits achieved.

Question 1: To what extent have the objectives set out in the Decision been achieved¹⁶⁵⁴?

To what extent has progress been made in relation to achieving the general and the specific objectives? Are the results different depending on the type of disaster (e.g. natural disasters, health crises, conflicts etc.)? The reply should cover all provisions of the Decision.

To what extent was the strengthened capacity building following the revision of the legal basis, in particular rescEU, effective toward achieving the objectives related to preparedness and response?

What factors (internal and external) have driven/hindered effectiveness? Have there been any unintended effects (positive or negative)?

(b) Efficiency

Efficiency considers the relationship between the resources used by an intervention and the changes generated by the intervention. Differences in the way an intervention is approached and conducted can have a significant influence on the effects, making it interesting to consider whether other choices would have achieved the same benefits at less cost (or greater benefits at the same cost). Considerations should be different for the prevention, preparedness and response pillars of the Mechanism and should be supported by examples. The proportionality of costs versus the benefits needs to be assessed.

Question 2: To what extent are the costs of the activities performed under the UCPM justified when compared to their benefits?

To what extent were actions under the UCPM cost-effective? What main factors influenced the cost-effectiveness of the actions? To address both questions the evaluator is invited to propose a dedicated, overall approach and use quantitative terms to the extent possible.

To what extent is the size of the budget allocated to each of the three pillars¹⁶⁵⁵ of the UCPM appropriate and proportionate to what the actions are meant to achieve, including under the changing climate conditions?

¹⁶⁵⁴ Current indicators do not cover all the provisions adequately. The evaluator will fill any gaps found in the evidence obtained through the monitoring system of the UCPM with the primary and secondary research activities carried out for this evaluation support study

¹⁶⁵⁵ see 1.3 and Annex 5

Question 3: To what extent have the reporting and monitoring arrangements contributed to an efficient and effective implementation of the intervention?

Are the indicators currently set by the Decision adequate and sufficient to monitor a successful implementation of the Decision? Has data been properly collected and monitored? Are there any data gaps that hinder the monitoring of whether the intervention is implemented effectively?

What are the administrative and other costs and burdens to UCPM stakeholders, caused by different UCPM activities? To what extent are they proportionate to the benefits/outcomes? How complex are the procedures? Where is the scope for simplification?

(c) Relevance

Relevance looks at the relationship between the needs and the problems in society and the objectives of the intervention. In particular, relevance analysis aims at assessing whether the intervention helps addressing needs or problems still present at the time of the evaluation as well as likely future needs and problems (considering also elements of foresight).

Question 4: To what extent are the Decision's objectives still relevant to the needs identified and to the European Commission's priorities for 2021-2027?

Has the UCPM been flexible enough to address emerging/unanticipated critical issues in the EU disaster management system inside and outside Europe (e.g. Covid-19 Pandemic; Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine)?

To what extent has the UCPM integrated the results, lessons learnt and recommendations of the 2017 mid-term evaluation of the UCPM?

To what extent has the UCPM integrated in its functioning as well as in its activities scientific and technological research and development that has become available since its creation?

To what extent do the general and specific objectives of the Decision still correspond to current and future needs and trends inside and outside of the EU

Question 5: To what extent is the current institutional UCPM set-up equipped to ensure a sustainable and long-lasting service to Member States?

How adequate are the arrangements in place (governance, financial, capacity, technical, human resources, etc.) to ensure sustainability of current and future interventions?

In which way did the development of the UCPM impact relevant activities of Member States?

(d) Coherence

The evaluation of coherence involves looking at how well (or not) different actions work together. This includes both *internal* coherence (i.e., how the various components of an EU intervention operate together to achieve its objectives) and *external* coherence (i.e., coordination and synergies between different EU interventions in the same policy field or in areas which may have to work together). External coherence also includes compliance with international agreements and coherence with Member States policies and approaches.

Question 6. To what extent is the UCPM internally and externally coherent?

How well are the different activities of the UCPM articulated, interlinked, and mutually supportive? Are there significant gaps or overlaps?

How coherent are the UCPM activities with Member State efforts? Can further synergies be sought? Are there any missed opportunities or overlaps/duplication of efforts?

To what extent are synergies between the UCPM and other EU policy areas being exploited? To what extent has the UCPM managed to engage with actors outside of the civil protection authorities (e.g. other Commission DGs, other (non-CP) national ministries etc.)? Can missed opportunities be

identified? To what extent did the UCPM activities (i.e. rescEU capacities, coordination role of the ERCC, Knowledge Network, Disaster Resilience Goals, scenarios, climate change considerations, prevention and disaster risk management and reporting) achieve efficient synergies with other Union policies, programmes and funds? Among others, areas to be considered are listed in Annex 4.

To what extent has the coordination of UCPM activities with the actions of other relevant actors (i.e. Annex 1) created synergies and what results has it produced? In which areas should cross-sectoral cooperation be further enhanced to achieve better effectiveness or efficiency on EU level?

(e) EU added value

The evaluation should consider arguments about the value resulting from EU interventions that is additional to the value that would have resulted from interventions initiated at regional or national levels by both public authorities and the private sector.

Question 7. What is the EU added value of the UCPM? To whom did it make a difference? The answer may be based on a counterfactual analysis.

Are there any results of the UCPM that could not have been achieved as effectively and/or efficiently by EU Member and Participating states acting alone?

Does the UCPM's cooperation with partners outside the EU bring any added value to its Member States?

A10.5 Additional Tasks

The evaluator should:

Provide a final **Consultation Strategy** (Inception phase) according to the requirements of Tool #52 of the [Better Regulation Toolbox](#);

Support the European Commission with the preparation, implementation and analysis of a **Public Consultation**, which is scheduled to be launched by the Commission in January 2023, and which will be open for at least 12 weeks; the Contractor will:

draft a consultation questionnaire and introduce it in EU Survey;

analyse and synthesise its results, and integrate them, as appropriate, in the evaluation support study;

provide a factual summary report according to the requirements of Tool #54 of the Better Regulation Toolbox.

The Public Consultation will be launched in English only, but the Contractor should take into account the responses submitted in other official EU languages.

Information on the consultation activities will be published on:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en

(c) Provide a **Synopsis Report** of all consultation activities (public and targeted) carried out during the evaluation, according to the requirements of Tool #54 of the Better Regulation Toolbox;

(d) Identify and assess the risks that the objectives set will not be achieved within the timeframe of the Decision. What mitigating measures have been put in place to address such risks?

(d) Identify the main **Lessons Learnt** (positive and negative) in the three fields of action from the implementation of the Decision;

(e) Make a proposal for dissemination of the evaluation results;

(f) Provide a German and a French (in addition to the English version) of the executive summary of the Final Report;

(g) As a separate deliverable, provide all the elements, based on the external evaluation support study, that the Commission will need to write its **Evaluation Report (Staff Working Document)**, including all its annexes, as described in Tool #49 of the Better Regulation Toolbox. This deliverable will strictly follow the format and respond to the questions and requirements stated in the mentioned Tool.

Table 33. UCPM specific objectives and related indicators as set out in the Decision Art.3 (1)

General Objective	To strengthen the cooperation between the Union and the Member States and to facilitate coordination in the field of civil protection in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters.		
Monitoring area	Specific Objective	Indicator 2021	Indicator 2019
Progress in implementing the disaster prevention framework	1, 4, 5, 6	Number of Member States that have made available to the European Commission a summary of risk assessments and assessment of risk management capability	Number of Member States that have made available to the Commission a summary of their risk assessments.
			Number of Member States that have made available to the Commission an assessment of their risk management as referred to in Article 6 of the Decision.
			Number of projects financed for prevention within the Union
Progress in increasing the level of readiness for disasters	2, 4, 5, 6,	Number of committed and certified capacities included in the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP)	Number of response capacities included in the voluntary pool in relation to the capacity goals
			Number of standard response units (modules) registered in the EU's Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS)
			Number of projects financed for preparedness
Progress in improving the response to disasters	3, 5, 6	Response time of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism to a request of assistance (inside and outside the EU)	Average speed of interventions under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (from the acceptance of the offer to deployment).
		Adequacy of response of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (inside and outside the EU)	
Progress in increasing public awareness	2, 4, 5, 6	Level of awareness of Union citizens of the risk of their region	The level of awareness of Union citizens of the risks in their region.

and preparedness for disasters:			
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A10.6 Management and supervision of the evaluation support study

DG ECHO's Evaluation Function in Unit E.2 and Unit B.1 are responsible for the management and the monitoring of the evaluation support study. The internal managers assigned to the Evaluation should therefore always be kept informed and consulted by the contractors and copied in all correspondence with other DG ECHO staff.

The DG ECHO Evaluation managers are the contact persons for the contractors and shall assist the team during their mission in tasks such as providing documents and facilitating contacts.

A steering group, made up of Commission staff involved in the activity evaluated, will provide general assistance to and feedback on the evaluation support study, and discuss the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation support study.

A10.6.1 Team requirements

The tenderer must propose an evaluation Core Team, covering the following competences:

Documented strong expertise in European Disaster Management and coordination. Corresponding strong experience in policy development at EU and/or MS level is mandatory.

Documented experience in assessing disaster prevention capabilities, including disaster risk assessment, (natural and man-made disasters), policies and legislation;

Documented technical knowledge of disaster risk management (natural and man-made disasters), at minimum in the following areas: geological risks (earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, etc.) and hydro-meteorological and climate risks (extreme heat and drought, forest fires, floods, windstorms, etc.);

Documented experience of assessing disaster preparedness and response policies/plans, teams and assets;

Documented experience with Monitoring & Evaluation of large, multi-annual programs;

Familiarity with cost-effectiveness assessments and/or other methods for assessing efficiency of programs;

A sufficient work capacity dedicated to editing of the interim draft and final reports and other deliverables requested in these ToR with short feedback circles.

Fluency in several EU languages.¹⁶⁵⁶

A10.7 Content of the offer

A.The administrative part of the bidder's offer must include:

The specific tender submission form (annex C to the model specific contract);

¹⁶⁵⁶ Although the Public Consultation questionnaire will be in English, responses may be provided in any other EU language. Thus, the Contractor should be prepared for analysing the response in other EU languages than English. As these languages are not yet known, a general approach to be presented for ensuring that required knowledge skills are available once the response to the Public Consultation has been received.

A signed Experts' declaration of availability, absence of conflict of interest and not being in a situation of exclusion (annex D to the model specific contract).

B. The technical part of the bidder's offer should be presented in a maximum of **30 pages** (including annexes, but excluding CVs), and must include:

A description of the understanding of the Terms of Reference, their scope and the tasks covered by the contract. This should include the bidder's understanding of the evaluation questions, and a first outline for an evaluation framework that provides judgement criteria and the information sources to be used for answering the questions. The final definition of judgement criteria and information sources will be agreed with the Commission during the inception phase;

The methodology the bidder intends to apply for this evaluation for each of the phases involved, including a draft proposal for the number of case studies to be carried out. The methodology will be refined and validated by the Commission during the desk phase;

A description of the distribution of tasks in the team, including an indicative quantification of the work for each expert in terms of person/days;

A detailed proposed timetable for its implementation with the total number of days needed for each of the phases.

C. The CVs of the experts proposed.

D. The financial part of the offer (annex E to the model specific contract) must include the proposed total budget in euros, taking due account of the maximum amount for this evaluation. The price must be expressed as a lump sum for the whole of the services provided. The expert fees as provided in the Financial Offer for the Framework Contract must be respected.

A10.8 Amount of the Contract

The maximum budget allocated to this evaluation support study is **450 000€**.

A10.9 Timetable

The indicative duration of the evaluation support study is **8 months**. The duration of the contract shall be no more than **12 months** (includes additional support in drafting the Staff Working Document).

The indicative starting date of the contract is **October 2022**.

The evaluation support study starts after the contract has been signed by both parties, and no expenses may be incurred before that. The main part of the existing relevant documents will be provided after the signature of the contract.

The final report and the rest of the evaluation deliverables (except inputs for the Staff Working Document) must be submitted no later than **June 2023**.

In the offer, the tenderer shall provide an indicative schedule based on the table below:

Indicative timing	Deliverable	Meeting
October 2022		Kick-off meeting
T+3 weeks		Inception workshop

T+4 weeks	Draft Inception Report, including final Consultation Strategy	
T+5 weeks		Inception meeting
T+10	Draft Public Consultation questionnaire	
T+14 weeks	Draft Interim Report	
T+15 weeks		Interim Report meeting
T+23 weeks	Draft Final Report, including Public Consultation factual summary report and synopsis report	
T+25 weeks		Draft Final Report meeting
T+30 weeks	Final Report with all remaining deliverables	
T+42 weeks	Support in writing the Staff Working Document	Ad-hoc

A10.10 Provisions of the framework contract specifications

Team composition: The Team proposed by the Tenderer for assignments to be contracted under the Framework Contract must comply with Criterion T4 (see Section 3.2.3 of the Tender Specifications for the Framework Contract).

Procedures and instructions: The procedures and instructions to the Tenderer for Specific Contracts under the Framework Contract are provided under Section 5 of the Tender Specifications for the Framework Contract.

However, those provisions relating to meetings and reports could be modified in a Request for Services or discussed and agreed during the Inception Phase under a Specific Contract.

EU Bookshop Format: For easy reference, the official template for evaluation reports is attached to these ToR. Reports produced by external contractors do not need the official font of the Commission (EC Square Sans Pro) or professional graphic design.

ANNEX 1 - Draft Consultation Strategy

The objectives of the consultation activities will mainly be to gather information and opinions on the implementation of the Decision as well as to test analysis and findings. To the extent possible, the methodology should promote the participation in the evaluation exercise of all actors concerned, when relevant and feasible.

The main stakeholders are:

National Civil Protection agencies of EU MS and UCPM PS,

Other national stakeholders (e.g. other ministries) that have been managing crises,

National Contact Points of Civil Protection and Maritime authorities,

Trainers active in the UCPM training (including from private contractors), EUTM team leaders, participants, experts in civil protection,

EU agencies, in particular the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC),

Relevant services within the Commission (HERA, SANTE, JRC, ENER, ENV, HOME, MOVE, DEFIS, MARE, CLIMA),

Relevant services within EEAS, Heads of EU Delegations in countries with UCPM activations,

International partners, in particular the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), Secretariats of the Regional Sea Conventions¹⁶⁵⁷ NATO (working on resilience, civil protection, etc.),

DG ECHO Field Network colleagues (HoO, Emergency Response, Admin),

Relevant national authorities of countries outside the EU that activated the UCPM,

Professional organisations involved in running of the Mechanism,

Floods Directive competent authorities.

As indicated above, an internet-based public consultation will be open for 12 weeks during the course of the evaluation. The questionnaire will be available on the European Commission's central [public consultations page 'Have your Say' portal](#). It will be published in English and replies can be made in any of the 24 official EU languages.

In addition, targeted consultations with the main stakeholders should be organised by the contractor.

The detailed and final consultation strategy should be presented by the contractor in the Inception report.

ANNEX 3 –UCPM legal framework¹⁶⁵⁸

Primary legislation – EU treaties

Art. 196 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>

Secondary legislation – the UCPM legal basis and its amendments

¹⁶⁵⁷ Helsinki Commission, Bonn Agreement, Barcelona Convention (REMPEC).

¹⁶⁵⁸ Updated on 1 April 2022. The contractor shall check for latest updates.

Description	Official title of the legal act	Adopted on	Weblink
UCPM legal basis (act I)	Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	17 December 2013	EUR-Lex - 32013D1313 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
UCPM legal basis amendment – ‘rescEU reform’ (act II)	Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	13 March 2019	EUR-Lex - 32019D0420 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
UCPM legal basis amendment – ‘2021 reform’ (act III)	Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	20 May 2021	EUR-Lex - 32021R0836 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
UCPM legal basis – <u>consolidated version</u> (containing act I and amendments introduced by acts II and III)	Consolidated text: Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	/	EUR-Lex - 02013D1313-20210101 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)

Tertiary legislation - rescEU

Description	Official title of the Legal/implementing act	Adopted on (date) / estimated date of the adoption	Weblink
Aerial forest firefighting using planes and helicopters (1 st rescEU implementing act)	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 of 8 April 2019 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards rescEU capacities and amending Commission Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU	8 April 2019	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019D0570

rescEU operationalization (2 nd rescEU implementing act)	Commission implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1310 of 31 July 2019 laying down rules on the operation of the European Civil Protection Pool and rescEU	31 July 2019	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2019.204.01.0094.01.ENG
Medical aerial evacuation (MEDEVAC) for highly infectious disease patients and MEDEVAC for disaster victims (3 rd rescEU implementing act)	Commission implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1930 of 18 November 2019 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU capacities	18 November 2019	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32019D1930
Medical stockpiling (4 th rescEU implementing act)	Commission implementing Decision (EU) 2020/414 of 19 March 2020 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards medical stockpiling rescEU capacities	19 March 2020	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32020D0414
Criteria to define capacities to respond to ‘low probability – high impact’ (LO-HI) risks (5 th rescEU implementing act)	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/452 of 26 March 2020 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards capacities established to respond to low probability risks with a high impact	26 March 2020	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/impl/2020/452/oj
CBRN Decontamination capacities (6 th rescEU implementing act)	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/88 of 26 January 2021 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents	26 January 2021	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2021.030.01.0006.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2021%3A030%3ATOC
CBRN stockpiling (7 th rescEU implementing act)	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1886 of 27 October 2021 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards stockpiling	27 October 2021	https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32021D1886

	rescEU capacities in the area of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents		
Temporary Shelters + Emergency Medical Teams type II (8 th rescEU implementing act)	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/288 of 22 February 2022 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU shelter capacities and the modification of quality requirements for Emergency Medical Teams Type 3 capacities	22 February 2022	EUR-Lex - 32022D0288 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
Transport and Logistics (9 th rescEU implementing act)	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/461 of 15 March 2022 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU transport and logistics capacities	14 March 2022	EUR-Lex - 32022D0461 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
Mobile laboratory capacities and CBRN detection, sampling, identification and monitoring capacities (10 th rescEU implementing act)	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/465 of 21 March 2022 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 as regards rescEU mobile laboratory capacities and rescEU CBRN detection, sampling, identification and monitoring capacities	21 March 2022	EUR-Lex - 32022D0465 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
Consolidated version of rescEU implementing Decision 2019/570 as amended by the 3 rd , the 4 th , the 5 th , the 6 th , the 7 th , the 9 th and the 10 th implementing act (<u>please note that at the moment the consolidated version is not up-to-date and does</u>	Consolidated text: Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/570 of 8 April 2019 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards rescEU capacities and amending Commission Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU	/	EUR-Lex - 02019D0570-20211029 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)

not contain the 10 th implementing act).			
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Tertiary legislation – Other

Description	Official title of the legal/implementing act	Adopted on	Weblink
Original UCPM implementing decision on the application of the UCPM in prevention, preparedness and response actions	Commission Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU of 16 October 2014 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and repealing Commission Decisions 2004/277/EC, Euratom and 2007/606/EC, Euratom	16 October 2014	EUR-Lex - 32014D0762 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
Amending Implementing Decision of Decision 2014/762/EU	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/142 of 15 January 2018 amending Implementing Decision 2014/762/EU laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.	15 January 2018	EUR-Lex - 32018D0142 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
Implementing decision – <u>consolidated version</u> (containing original UCPM implementing decision 2014/762 and amendments introduced by Decision 2018/142)	Consolidated text: Commission Implementing Decision of 16 October 2014 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and repealing Commission Decisions 2004/277/EC, Euratom and 2007/606/EC, Euratom	/	EUR-Lex - 02014D0762-20190410 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)
Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network	Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1956 of 10 November 2021 on the establishment and organisation	10 November 2021	EUR-Lex - 32021D1956 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)

	of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network		
UCPM medals implementing act	Still to be adopted	Still to be adopted	Still to be adopted

ANNEX 4 – List of reference frameworks/ areas

Humanitarian Aid (including dedicated support to disaster preparedness - ref. to [DG ECHO Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note](#));

The European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA)

The 2020 EU Security Union Strategy;

The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund;

The Internal Security Fund;

Decision 1082/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 October 2013 on serious cross-border threats to health and repealing Decision No 2119/98/EC;

Council Directive (EU) 2015/637 of 20 April 2015 on the coordination and cooperation measures to facilitate consular protection for unrepresented citizens of the Union in third countries and repealing Decision 95/553/EC;

The EU's work on critical entities resilience (CER) and cybersecurity (NIS2);

The EU's work on hybrid preparedness (e.g. Hybrid Toolbox);

The EU's regulatory framework for managing bodies of water, forests, etc.

The Maritime area (e.g. complementarities with the work of the European Maritime Safety Agency);

The Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction;

The 2015 Paris Climate Conference (COP 21) & The 2021 Glasgow Climate Conference (COP 26).

2020 Communication on EU Enlargement policy (COM(2020) 660 final), 2021 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy, COM (2021) 644 final

Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance II, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance III,

European Green Deal related policies like Climate Change adaptation, Sustainable Finance, Forestry strategy, Farm to fork, Soil, Biodiversity, etc.;

Environmental legislation such as the 2007 Floods Directive and 2000 Water Framework Directive (for droughts), SEVESO III (industrial accidents), etc.;

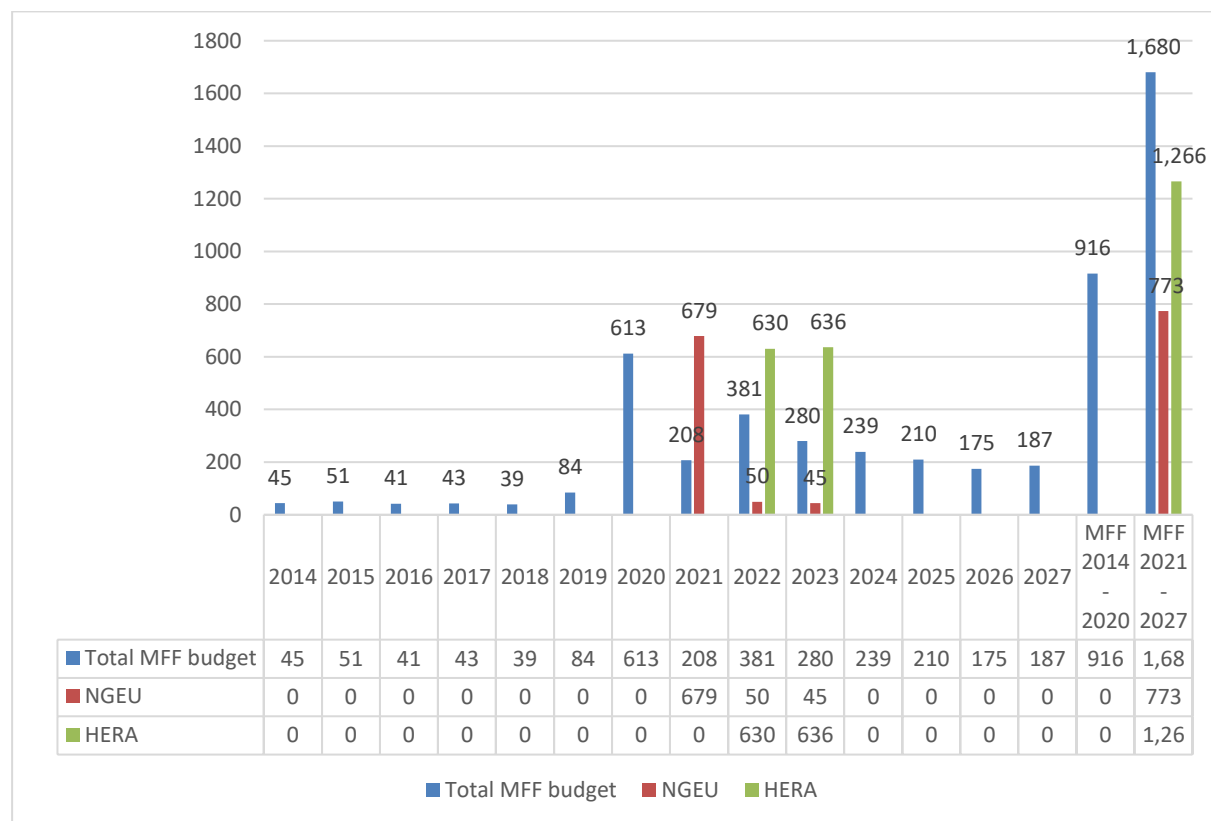
Neighbourhood policies

EU funding programmes and Regional policy, NDICI (former ENI)

Instrument for Contributing to Stability and Peace (CBRN centres of Excellence)

ANNEX 5 – Overview of UCPM budget¹⁶⁵⁹

Table 34. Table 1 - Summary of results and outlook MFF 2014-20 & MFF 2021-27, in mEUR¹⁶⁶⁰



¹⁶⁵⁹ All figures used in Annex 5 are indicative and rounded. The Evaluation support study shall be based on the figures of the official financial reports.

¹⁶⁶⁰ Figures indicated in 2022 correspond to the funds received by 30/06. Figures as from 2023 are indicative, it includes the annual amounts foreseen in the MFF profile (2023-2027).

Table 35. Summary of results and outlook MFF 2014-20 & MFF 2021-27, in mEUR

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	MFF 2014- 2020	MFF 2021- 2027
Voted budget	48	46	48	52	47	54	158	90	101	188	230	203	168	180	453	1.161
Amending budget	-4	0	0	0	0	82	415	58	139	0	0	0	0	0	494	196
Redeployments	-1	3	-9	-11	-10	-56	21	35	115	65	0	0	0	0	-64	214
EFTA	1	1	2	1	1	3	14	20	22	25	8	7	7	7	24	97
PS fees	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	2	8
<i>Recovered</i>		0	1	1	1	0	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	4
Total MFF budget	45	51	42	43	39	84	613	208	381	280	239	210	175	187	916	1.680
NGEU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	679	46	45	0	0	0	0	0	769
HERA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	630	636	0	0	0	0	0	1.266

Table 36. MFF 2014 - 2020 – based on Commitments, in EUR

Budget line	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
23 03 01 01- Disaster prevention and preparedness within the Union	27.863.560	29.328.834	29.125.751	29.107.518	30.055.819	64.758.527	521.631.133	731.691.143

23 03 01 02- Disaster prevention and preparedness in third countries	4.385.780	5.593.760	5.702.542	5.758.152	5.115.908	4.119.009	5.150.925	35.826.075
Response within the EU	1.352.013	871.563	2.671.638	1.552.302	2.535.534	6.651.974	2.329.525	17.964.549
Response outside the EU	11.405.075	14.866.719	3.845.125	6.454.641	1.396.656	9.121.260	83.425.403	130.514.879
TOTAL	45.006.428	50.660.876	41.345.055	42.872.613	39.103.918	84.470.770	612.536.986	915.996.646

Table 37. MFF 2021 - 2027 – based on Commitments, in EUR

Budget line		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Prevention and Preparedness	MFF	132.451.748	231.805.163	137.854.435	222.078.403	179.170.128	142.516.927	155.220.167	1.251.096.972
	NGEU	678.618.678	44.793.652	44.841.260	-	-	-	-	768.253.590
	NGEU-HERA	-	630.000.000	636.000.000	-	-	-	-	1.266.000.000
Response	MFF	75.315.986	149.500.000	92.500.000	15.000.000	30.000.000	30.000.000	30.000.000	422.315.986
	NGEU	-	5.000.000	-	-	-	-	-	5.000.000
TOTAL		886.386.412	1.061.098.815	961.195.695	237.078.403	209.170.128	172.516.927	185.220.167	3.712.666.548

Table 38. allocation of funds for the three pillars of the UCPM

	2021	2019	2013
Prevention	5 % (+/- 4)	20 % (+/- 8)	20 % (+/- 8)
Preparedness	85 % (+/- 10)	50 % (+/- 8)	50 % (+/- 8)
Response	10 % (+/- 9)	30 % (+/- 8)	30 % (+/- 8)

The Commission must assess the breakdown in the light of the outcome of this interim evaluation.

The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - ECHO

ECHO Mission

The primary role of the Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) of the European Commission is to manage and coordinate the European Union's emergency response to conflicts, natural and man-made disasters. It does so both through the delivery of humanitarian aid and through the coordination and facilitation of in-kind assistance, specialist capacities, expertise and intervention teams using the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)

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