



PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS

Natural and man-made disasters, acts of terrorism, and technological, radiological and environmental accidents can strike anywhere at any time. Awareness-raising, training and preparation are crucial requisites for an efficient response. The European Union, through its Civil Protection Mechanism, supports disaster prevention and preparedness activities throughout Europe.

Since 2007, more than 60 prevention and preparedness projects have been **co-financed by the EU**, focusing on areas where a common European approach is more effective than separate national approaches. Likewise, more than 40 joint exercises have been organised at EU level. They help build trust and common understanding of cooperation and working procedures in civil protection interventions.

These projects contribute to a better prevention of disasters and a reduction of risks through various activities: trainings, exercises, studies, public awareness initiatives, and the development of new tools such as early warning and weather forecast systems to name but a few.

AWARENESS RAISING

The European Commission supports the awareness-raising efforts of the participating States in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in order to prevent disasters from happening or to minimise their impact.

One example is the EU-funded project called **MIRTO** to raise tourists' and tourist operators' awareness of forest fires in Croatia, France, Greece and Italy. Information material was produced for summer camp visitors while multilingual information videos were broadcast on ferries connecting the Mediterranean islands.

The **'Shoreline clean-up and oiled wildlife'** project (Italy, Belgium and France) developed four manuals that aim at better preparing NGOs and volunteers to work promptly and safely to support authorities in charge of the response operation in the case of an oil spill.

The **'Aware and Resilient'** (A&R) project, developed by the Austrian Red Cross, improved individual and community resilience by combining the use of online learning possibilities with the benefits of community-based learning and engagement. 'A&R' developed a trainer's curriculum in general preparedness, set up a social learning platform and conducted community-based emergency exercises interlinking citizens with volunteers, authorities, media and response organisations.

TRAINING AND EXERCISES

The trainings and exercises co-funded by the European Commission aim at increasing the interoperability and improving the skills of experts deployed on-site. The exercises simulate as realistically as possible the deployment of resources of the participating States.

The **EU-MODEX 2013** simulation exercise took place on 22 to 25 March 2013 in Montana, Bulgaria. Under the scenario, an EU country was hit by an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.2 on the Richter scale. The most affected areas were the capital city and the surrounding villages. An EU civil protection team was deployed to support the EU country with urban search and rescue teams from the Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovenia.

'The exercise is really close to a real disaster. We have to come here. It's better to make mistakes while you're training. You learn from it. So, hopefully, when you're on a real disaster, you'll be prepared. That's what it's all about.'

SEAN MOORE,
EUCPT Deputy Team Leader
deployed to Montana, Bulgaria 2013

'Thanks to the EU Civil Protection Courses, I gained a lot of knowledge and this made it easy to find common ground with the other team members. We experienced excellent cooperation with the ERC which, for example, helped us to obtain satellite images very quickly.'

KRISTAPS EKLONS,
Latvian expert deployed to Moldova, 2011

'The course gave us a number of tips, for instance, how to organize coordination meetings in emergencies in a more effective way and how to provide information in a timely manner.'

JAANUS TEEARU,
Estonian expert deployed to Albania, 2010



DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOOLS A REINFORCED DISASTER RESPONSE CAPACITY

The EU co-funded project called **Near-field Tsunami Early Warning and Emergency Planning, (NEARTOWARN)** aims at promoting technology to warn about near-field tsunamis with travel times of the first wave to the closest shoreline being less than 30 minutes. An early warning system for near-field tsunamis will be constructed in Rhodes Island, Greece and it will serve as a pilot for other areas which are threatened by near-field tsunamis. www.neartowarmtsunami.com

The **METEOALARM** website alerts the public and government institutions to the possible occurrence of severe weather events, such as heavy rains with risk of flooding, severe thunderstorms, gale-force winds, etc. METEOALARM extends the forecast period from 24/48 hours to five days, it adds new hazards type warnings such as coastal sea areas and avalanche warnings. METEOALARM is also an indispensable instrument for the work of the EU's Emergency Response Centre. www.meteoalarm.eu

The **Improvements of Shorelines Defences Against Marine Pollution (ISDAMP+)** project aims at improving the protection of the coast by a floating barrier when marine pollution occurs. The expected output of the project is software and a methodology so that responders can optimise their skills and the usage of existing response devices. www.eigsi.fr

There has been a marked increase in natural, man-made disasters and humanitarian crises on a global level in recent years. Consequently, the EU's disaster response capacity needed to be reinforced. The EU aims at providing better protection for Europe's 500 million citizens against disasters and supporting a more effective response to catastrophes and humanitarian crisis around the world.

The European Civil Protection Mechanism relies on the assets pulled together by 32 participating countries (the 27 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Croatia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), exploiting their synergies and reinforcing their interoperability.

The European Commission addresses the whole disaster management cycle, from prevention and preparedness to fast and cost-efficient response, with the ambition to build a safer and more resilient Europe and World.

This leaflet presents just a few examples of many projects and exercises carried out by EU Member States and supported by the EU.

See more projects on:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/financial_instrument_en.htm



PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS

HELPING PEOPLE IN NEED
IN EUROPE AND WORLDWIDE

Humanitarian Aid
and Civil Protection

Better protection for all
Better training and preparation
Better coordination
Better and faster response to disasters

Humanitarian
Aid and Civil
Protection