



# Evidence for Policy in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Summer School 2026

Tallinn, 26-28 May 2026

## Class No. 5

### EU beyond its borders - Preparedness and response in the face of climate-related disasters

Class will take place in room M 136 – 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Mare building

#### Class Coordinator



**Sandra ROMERO RUIZ**

**Disaster Preparedness policy and programming (DG ECHO)**

Sandra Romero Ruiz is an experienced Emergency Response manager and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) expert, at humanitarian, conflict, post-conflict contexts, and development programs, she is working currently with DG ECHO as Disaster Preparedness policy and programming officer, and has worked IFRC and the RCRC movement, international NGOs (Oxfam GB), donor agencies (AECID, GIZ), and UN agencies (UNICEF, UNV, UNDP, IOM). She has worked in diverse contexts: Africa (Burundi and Tanzania), Asia (Cambodia, the Philippines, East Timor, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Mongolia), Latin America and the Caribbean Region (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Panama, Haiti, Paraguay, Brazil), and the Middle East (Israel, Palestine, Jordan), and Europe (Hungary and Ukraine). She has been the Regional Head of Partnership and Planning Units in IFRC Americas. Team Leader (Asia and Africa)

study for the German Government, ADB and GERES: Building Business Cases to Reach Scale: A Study on Biomass Cookstove Business Models in Asia & Africa. Currently she is the Disaster Preparedness policy and programming officer for DG ECHO in Humanitarian Aid.

### Class assistant

Maimu Hannus

### Speakers



#### **Valentina MONTESEL**

**Policy Assistant, European Commission's Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid**

Valentina Montesel is currently a Policy Assistant in the Humanitarian Policies Unit of the Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid, where she focuses on climate change, disaster risk reduction, and climate security. She has been working on climate-related issues in the European Commission since 2022, initially in the development sector and later in the humanitarian field. She is currently working on policy advocacy for climate resilience in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. She also represents the European Union at the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group. Before joining the Commission, she worked at the OECD on local and community development. She holds an academic background in diplomacy and international cooperation.



#### **Grega GROBOVSEK**

**DG ECHO Legal and Policy Officer (Deputy Team Leader), European Commission's Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid**

Grega Grobovsek is a Legal and Policy Officer and Deputy Team Leader in the Contingency Planning, Analysis and Situational Awareness Unit of the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO). He focuses on legal and policy aspects of disaster and crisis response within the framework of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). Since 2018, he has contributed to two revisions (2019 and 2021) of the UCPM legislative framework and co-authored implementing rules on rescEU, the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network, and UCPM medals. He is currently involved in legislative negotiations on the proposed new Regulation for UCPM and EU support for health emergency preparedness and response, as well as in developing policy initiatives under the EU Preparedness Union Strategy. Before joining the European Commission, he worked in law firms in the United Kingdom and Slovenia, and served as a research assistant to Professor Philippe Sands QC at University College London. He is a jurist with an LL.M. in International Law.

### Aim(s) of the Class

The class aims at understanding the preparedness mandate and mission of European Commission's humanitarian and civil protection department (DG ECHO) outside of the European Union, when working in disaster response within Humanitarian contexts.

The class also aims at clarifying what climate change is, using data and analytical tools, its multiplying effect on risks and hazards, especially in fragile and conflict contexts, and how the impacts of the climate crisis are exacerbated for vulnerable populations.

The class will have an overview on how EU Humanitarian assistance principles and how these impacts affect humanitarian organizations, and the way they have to mitigate these impacts. In addition, we will explore the four Humanitarian principles endorsed by UN General Assembly Resolution [46/182](#) and [58/114](#), the [European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid](#) enshrined the humanitarian principles upon its signature December 2007 by Council of the EU, the European Parliament and the European Commission.

As funding for Humanitarian Aid from DG ECHO is allocated on a "needs based approach", we will explore the DG ECHO partnership approach to implementation of Humanitarian Aid budget (including DP budget line for Disaster Targeted actions).

We will also explore the fundamental principles governing the functioning of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in complex emergencies and identify distinctions as well as synergies between humanitarian and civil protection tools.

### Recommended readings

All documents should be read before the class, but useful for consultation during and after the class

- [DG ECHO Guidance Note Disaster Preparedness](#)
- [Humanitarian principles - European Commission](#)
- [European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid](#)
- [Disaster preparedness - European Commission](#)

- Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism
- Relevant chapters from the Niinistö report available at [https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/5bb2881f-9e29-42f2-8b77-8739b19d047c\\_en?filename=2024\\_Niinisto-report\\_Book\\_VF.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/5bb2881f-9e29-42f2-8b77-8739b19d047c_en?filename=2024_Niinisto-report_Book_VF.pdf)
- The EU Preparedness Union Strategy (to be released around Q2) (e.g., population preparedness, preparedness-by-design) and
- The Science needs survey available at: <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/media/outcome-report-scientific-research-needs-exercise>
- EU Joint Communication on the climate and Security Nexus: [JOIN\\_2023\\_19\\_1\\_EN\\_ACT\\_part1\\_v7.pdf](#)
- Navigating Peace in a changing climate – Climate and security trend analysis: [Climate Security Trend Analysis 1102.pdf](#)