

EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION POOL

Practical Guide on the ECPP certification grid (v. June 2026)

1. Scope and Objectives

This document accompanies the certification grid, which is used for the certification of response capacities offered to the European Civil Protection Pool, to ensure a standardised assessment methodology.

It explains the rationale of the certification grid and provides some practical guidance on its use.

2. Structure of the certification grid

The certification grid is conceived as a single document to assess the response capacity, and monitor changes, during the three steps of the certification process, i.e. the consultative visit, the table-top exercise and the field exercise.

This approach ensures the continuity of the certification process and gives the possibility of monitoring directly the improvements made by the capacity. The comments made are used to give a feedback to the offering country after each intermediate certification steps and to draft the final certification report.

3. Assessment criteria

The ECPP certification process aims to assess the ability of the capacity to meet the key assessment criteria that are specific to the European Civil Protection Pool, namely:

▪ Preparedness

The capacity should have all procedures in place, to ensure a smooth preparation for the capacity's deployment in international contexts. In particular:

- Logistical arrangements, necessary to plan an international mission deployment and to carry out operations in an affected country. Logistical functions include planning, procurement, transportation, supply, maintenance and logistics needs to be ensured all around the different phases of the mission cycle.
- Staff preparedness, including familiarity with the UCPM (at least at management level together with other key personnel) as well as good language skills and training on international deployments.
- Financial and legal arrangements, implying necessary agreements with national authorities and budgetary measures to ensure that the capacity can be mobilised immediately following an invitation to deploy in an international mission.

▪ **Self-sufficiency**

The capacity should be able to provide for its own needs during a given time after arrival on the deployment site. The aim is to ensure that the capacity can act in complete autonomy, without placing an additional burden on the host nation.

The main elements assuring the self-sufficiency during a deployment are: accommodation and subsistence (shelter, power generation and lighting, water and sanitation systems, waste management, kitchen facilities and food), financial independency (credit cards or petty cash) transport (own means or procured), equipment storage and maintenance, medical or paramedical staff, IT and communications, fuel.

Compliance with the self-sufficiency requirements shall be guaranteed by the offering Member State through any of the following elements: (a) including in the module the necessary staff, equipment and consumables; (b) making the necessary arrangements on the site of operations; (c) making the necessary pre-arrangements to combine a non-self-sufficient intervention team with a technical assistance and support team (...) ¹

▪ **Interoperability**

Interoperability is the capability to work with other actors, including similar or different types of modules and teams. This includes the capability to communicate/connect with other capacities, an overall flexible and problem-solving attitude, a common or comparable tactical knowledge/background of the team members, including language (English) skills and cultural awareness, sharing equipment, exchanging data and info, common terms/concepts and organizational understanding.

▪ **Coordination**

Coordination refers to how the response capacity ensures efficient coordination with other deployed capacities or response actors. The main elements are: knowledge of the other stakeholders present in an emergency response, integration in the overall emergency response coordination system, common understanding of coordination/OSOCC concept (e.g., information management, actors, tools - VOSOCC), communication and reporting skills, common UCPM training and exercises.

▪ **Technical requirements**

If applicable, as listed for Modules in Annex II of the UCPM Implementing Decision.

4. The rating system

Each item of the certification grid is rated as follows:

- **Efficient – E:** indicates that the team fully met or exceeded the requirements.
- **Satisfactory – S:** indicates that the team met the requirement. However, there is room for improvement.
- **Basic – B:** indicates that the team has not yet met the requirements for international deployment under the European Civil Protection Mechanism.
- **Not Applicable – NA:** the item cannot be assessed.

¹ See Article 12 of the UCPM Implementing Decision

A response capacity that receives more than 25% of Basic rates in one of the above assessment criteria is deemed not to meet the minimum certification requirements. It prevents the response capacity from being certified. The capacity should work with DG ECHO (ECPP capacities team) to develop a remedial plan that addresses the identified deficiencies. A repetition of the ECPP certification step can be recommended to address the recommendations made in relation to areas for improvement and to give the capacity more time to make the necessary investments to comply with the UCPM quality requirements.

5. How to fill in the certification grid

The certification grid is based on a building block approach: at each step of the process (Consultative Visit, Table-Top Exercise and Field Exercise), if applicable, each item of each assessment criteria is observed, rated and commented.

There are different possibilities depending on the rating:

- When an item is rated as **Efficient** in one of the steps of the certification process: the corresponding best practice, if relevant, is described.
- When an item is rated as **Satisfactory** in one of the steps of the certification process: if an area of improvement is identified, it is described, including, if necessary, corresponding recommendation(s). This same item should be assessed again in the following step of the certification process.
- When an item is rated **Basic** in one of the steps of the certification process: an area for improvement is described, including corresponding recommendations (compulsory). The same item should be assessed again in the following step of the process.
- The assessment of a specific item is not possible due to the characteristics of the step (CV, TTX or FX) or the type of capacity: the item is rated **NA**.

Comments should be concise and factual.

The CV focuses on preparedness, including self-sufficiency arrangements and compliance with minimum technical requirements (for modules exclusively).

The TTX focuses on interoperability and coordination. The certifier will also assess the preparedness items that were rated Basic or Satisfactory during the CV to verify if the recommendations from the CV have been properly addressed.

The FX allows to observe and assess self-sufficiency, but also interoperability and coordination, and the technical requirements (for modules only).

After each certification step (except for the last one), DG ECHO compiles a feedback message to the offering country, with best practices, areas for improvement and recommendations. DG ECHO sends it to the ECPP national focal point so that identified weaknesses and recommendations can be addressed before the next certification step.

At the end of the three-step certification process, DG ECHO prepares a final certification report based on the key findings from the certification grid, including some key recommendations for the further development and improvement of the capacity, as relevant.