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Course Curriculum

Project CivPro-LiNC

Cross-Border LIAISON

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Abbrevations

IdF NRW	Institut der Feuerwehr Nordrhein-Westfalen
KMK	Kultusministerkonferenz

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Introduction

Over the past two decades, many initiatives have been undertaken in the German-Dutch border region to promote cooperation and coordination between emergency services from both countries during large incidents and disasters in their border area. Administrative and operational arrangements have been made by regional authorities between the neighbouring regions. One aspect that has received attention is the deployment of so-called cross-border liaisons who support and promote cooperation between the two countries during disaster response. In various German-Dutch border regions arrangements have been made regarding the mutual deployment of these border liaisons. Since these are region-specific, there are differences between the various border regions (within a country and between countries) in the concrete arrangements made with the neighbouring region regarding liaison deployment. A survey that was held among German-Dutch cross-border liaisons in 2022 lead to the following findings.

1. Lack of standardisation

There are no common standards for liaison roles, training, or required competences in cross-border disaster management.

2. Ad hoc presence

The existence of liaison officers during emergencies often depends on chance rather than systematic planning.

3. Uneven knowledge

Understanding of neighbouring country's disaster management structures varies greatly.

4. Missing framework

Although the need for liaison officers is widely recognised, small communities lack a clear framework or resources to establish and maintain such roles. During many periodical (regional) cooperation meetings between bordering German and Dutch disaster relief authorities, the topic of liaisons has increasingly appeared on the agenda in recent years. The Institut der Feuerwehr Nordrhein-Westfalen (IdF NRW) in Germany and the Netherlands Institute for Public Safety (NIPV) were asked about the possibilities to jointly develop a multi-day binational course for border liaisons between the Netherlands and Germany. Driven by the desire of many involved parties to further professionalise and institutionalise the liaison role, all these discussions ultimately led to the submission of a grant proposal by a consortium led by Bezirksregierung Köln, consisting of IdF NRW, NIPV, and the International CBRNE Institute (ICI) from Belgium, to the EU's Knowledge for Action in Prevention and Preparedness (KAPP) funding. The methodological approach to curriculum development is outlined in Chapter Four. Admission requirements and the recognition of existing qualifications are detailed in Chapter Five.

The learning and teaching methods particularly suited to implementing a learning field-oriented curriculum are defined in more detail in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven addresses the development of a curriculum with bundled subjects. Chapter Eight discusses the structure of the curriculum.

This chapter presents the learning fields and provides a detailed description of the bundled subjects. Chapter Nine addresses the qualifications of the instructors who will teach the bundled subjects. The bibliography lists the literature used in the curriculum.

For ease of reading, personal nouns and pronouns are used in the masculine form. These include all genders program. The proposal was approved in early 2025.

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1 Professional background and education profile

The following describes the Liaison training profile for disaster management. First, the training objectives are explained. These are described using learning modules. From this, the desired learning outcomes are derived and summarized by area in this section.

1.1 Professional Background

When two or more organisations, each with their own organisational structure, need to collaborate, it is common to appoint one or more person(s) who connects both organisations. Such a person is often referred to using the French-English term liaison. The word liaison derives from the English verb to liaise, which dictionaries define as: to cooperate, to be in contact with, to provide the connection, to act as a link between, and to coordinate in the sense of aligning between groups. In French, the word has the same meaning. In German, the terms Verbindungsperson or Verbindungsbeamte are used, originating from the verb “verbinden” which means “connecting”.

A brief internet search reveals many types of liaisons. For example, when two companies develop a product together, it is common for employees from one company to be stationed at the other to pro-mote cooperation and resolve issues between the two organisations. This can involve two companies within the same country or companies based in different countries. Liaisons are also used in the pub-lic sector. Police organisations, for instance, often send an officer abroad for several years to act as contact person between the police forces of both nations. The same applies in the military domain. When military organisations (within a country or, for example, within NATO) need to collaborate, liaisons are exchanged between units to facilitate cooperation. In the Commander and Staff Guide to Liaison Functions of the United States Army, four core functions are assigned to the liaison: monitoring, coordinating, advising, and assisting.

Most liaison job profiles include terms such as: point of contact, information broker, mediator, advisor, observer. A liaison is expected to be well-informed about the workings of their own organisation and to have solid knowledge of the “other organisation.” Additionally, a liaison should understand organisational culture, leadership styles, decision-making processes, and professional jargon of both organisations or countries.

As outlined above, the liaison role takes many forms. This State Analysis focuses on the liaison function in disaster response during on the one hand incidents where units of two (or more) countries are involved in managing the same disaster within the same geographical area and on the other hand in situations where a region requests assistance from the neighbouring border region. Below are the characteristics that define the context in which the CivPro-LiNC liaison operates.

A. Disaster Response

The liaison discussed in this document operates within the policy domain of disaster response. Depending on how states have structured this internally, the liaison may be a representative from the fire service, police, medical services, or a civil protection organisation. This can be an operational, uniformed officer but also someone from an administrative (policy) organisation depending on the specific situation. The focus is therefore not on crises primarily occurring in other sectors (policy domains) such as transport, energy, animal welfare, public health, environment, or economic crises. However, situations may arise that intersect with these sectors, in which the liaison can also play a connecting role.

B. Cross-border (Neighbouring Countries)

The liaison's work focuses on deployment during disasters occurring in and around the border area of two neighbouring regions. This may involve a situation where the national border runs directly through the disaster area and emergency services from both countries operate side by side. It is also possible that the disaster areas do not physically touch but are close enough that coordination be-tween the emergency services of the two neighbouring regions is necessary. And finally, there is the situation that a region requests specific assistance from the neighbouring region. In theory, it is conceivable that a disaster occurs on the border of two countries where each country can independently manage the situation without cooperation. In such cases, collaboration—and thus the deployment of a liaison—may not be necessary. In reality, however, it is still possible that con-tact between the two regions is established via liaisons.

C. Emergency

The liaison's work in this project pertains to incidents that pose an immediate threat to life (human and animal) and environment, or cause significant damage. These are situations requiring urgent action under time pressure, where rapid coordination between emergency services from the involved countries is crucial. In practical terms, we are talking about emergency situations. This does not include incidents where there is very low or no urgency and decision-making can take hours or days—for example, the period after the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, even in such long-term incidents, liaisons may be deployed in urgent phases or due to their expertise.

D. Regional Disaster

Within the European Union, the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) exists. Within this mechanism emergency response teams from EU-member states can provide assistance under the EU flag at the request of a disaster-stricken country. These teams are specialised in areas such as wild-fires, floods, chemical incidents, environmental disasters, or urban search and rescue.

To activate this mechanism, several criteria must be met—collectively referred to as the "threshold." As stated in the CivPro-LiNC grant proposal, the project focuses on liaison deployment during "disasters under the threshold of UCPM activation" and "small and medium-sized local and regional disasters." However, this does not exclude the possibility that a disaster initially considered "small," where regional liaisons are deployed, may escalate into a larger.

A cross-border liaison within the CivPro-LiNC context is an experienced professional who facilitates cooperation and communication between emergency response organizations across national borders during disaster situations. This individual operates in a multi-disciplinary, all-hazards environment and is embedded within disaster teams or command groups, rather than in routine daily operations. The liaison acts as a representative of their own organization, while also serving as a connector, advisor, observer, and mediator between teams from different countries.

Fluent in the languages and cultures of both sides, the liaison is not a decision-maker but plays a crucial role in interpreting and relaying information, ensuring mutual understanding, and supporting coordination efforts. Their effectiveness relies on deep knowledge of both their own and the partner organization's structures, procedures, and operational cultures. With strong analytical skills, cultural awareness, and a well-established network, the liaison is able to navigate complex situations and contribute to a shared situational picture, ultimately enhancing cross-border disaster response.

1.2 Education profile

The training profile refers to the professional profile of a disaster management liaison. From this, the training objectives, the desired learning outcomes, the didactic structure, and the consequences for the corresponding teaching and learning methods are derived.

1.2.1 Job description

In the project a definition of liaison for disaster management has been developed.
"A cross-border liaison within the CivPro-LiNC context is an experienced professional who facilitates cooperation and communication between emergency response organizations across national borders during disaster situations.
This individual operates in a multi-disciplinary, all-hazards environment and is embedded within disaster teams or command groups, rather than in routine daily operations. The liaison acts as a representative of their own organization, while also serving as a connector, advisor, observer, and mediator between teams from different countries.

Fluent in the languages and cultures of both sides, the liaison is not a decision-maker but plays a crucial role in interpreting and relaying information, ensuring mutual understanding, and supporting coordination efforts. Their effectiveness relies on deep knowledge of both their own and the partner organization's structures, procedures, and operational cultures. With strong analytical skills, cultural awareness, and a well-established network, the liaison is able to navigate complex situations and contribute to a shared situational picture, ultimately enhancing cross-border disaster response. "In allocation to this definition the core competencies of a liaison for disaster management include the following:

Liaisons

- develop a values-based understanding of liaison,
- apply cross-border liaisons tools
- act effectively, in a structured, solution-oriented, and resilient manner in operational and disaster-related environments.
- make situation-appropriate decisions within their mandate, coordinate processes between multiple actors
- adapt flexibly to dynamic and complex operational conditions.
- develop an understanding of the importance of professional communication
- explain the importance of resilient cross-border relationship and network
- continuously develop their professional competence through reflection learning
- responsible handling of errors
- act effectively, in a structured, solution-oriented, and resilient manner in operational and disaster-related environments
- make situation-appropriate decisions within their mandate, coordinate processes between multiple actors
- adapt flexibly to dynamic and complex operational conditions.

1.2.2 Goals of the education

The training objectives relate to professional and didactic goals.

Professional goals

Being a liaison implies a certain understanding of leadership, the ability to interact effectively, to react professionally in disaster situations, flexibility, knowledge and experience in disaster management, and the competence to adapt to different scenarios and people. And all of this in a cross-border context. This curriculum aims to develop a unified understanding of the role of a liaison and to enable them to act professionally as a liaison. This is achieved through the development of professional expertise as well as a values-based approach. These values are based on the free and democratic order enshrined in the German Basic Law.

They include appreciation, respect, neutrality, equality, justice, motivation, trust, credibility, reliability, integrity, loyalty, tolerance, a culture of learning from mistakes, commitment, and honesty. These values are reflected in communication, work style, and actions taken as a role model.
A cooperative work style, values-based communication, self-care, reflection on one's own actions, and representing one's own stance are expressions of a values-based professional understanding as a liaison officer.

Didactical goal

The question of how training can enable participants to be effective in their professional activities is a recurring concern for all educators. In this context, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) points to the concept of action competence (KMK, 2018). Action competence is primarily constituted by a balanced relationship between the competence areas of professional, social, and self-competence. A key element of this requirement is a multi-perspective understanding of objectives, which would naturally also enhance the training of liaison officers: The liaison officer should not only be familiar with the management system, disaster management, and cross-border cooperation (professional competence), but should also be resilient to stress, self-reflective, able to learn from mistakes and recognize their own limitations (self-competence), as well as ensure cross-border cooperation and communication during deployments (social competence).

Instruction that pursues this overarching objective should be organized curricularly through a learning field concept and implemented in an action-oriented manner. Typical situations from everyday professional life form the basis of the learning process. For example, increasingly activating forms of action and social interaction, such as simulations (case studies, role-playing, business games), are used, allowing participants, in this case within a "field of activity as liaison," to learn professional action as a liaison under the safe conditions of the training situation (DBRD, n.d.).

This recommendation is followed and has consequences for the didactic structure. The so-called spiral curriculum is a sensible and effective approach for structuring the curriculum. However, since the liaison training takes place within the scope of a seminar, further theoretical approaches in adult education are discussed. This should enable the development of a training concept that closely approximates the goal of developing the participants' practical skills. At the same time, the training should meet the demands of lifelong learning by adhering to current principles of teaching methods.

In addition to the subject-specific theoretical framework, it is necessary to establish a pedagogical framework to ensure that the planned educational measure is tailored to the target group. "At the qualification l, a socio-political decision-making process must be facilitated. However, when selecting appropriate curriculum elements and structuring them into teaching sequences, learning processes must be designed whose conditions and effectiveness can be tested in controlled experiments. The core problem, therefore, lies in integrating competencies in a way that corresponds to these different levels of legitimacy." (Cf. Knab, 1971, cited in Hesse/Manz, 1972, p. 86)

The participants in this continuing education program are adults of varying ages who have completed basic vocational training and some of whom have several years of professional experience. For some participants, the traditional learning process has stalled since completing their formal training. Professional socialization implies an informal learning process that significantly shapes and develops their understanding of their profession and their identification with their own role. The content presented in this professional development course will, in part, challenge and change existing norms.
Therefore, it is essential to identify suitable learning methods through the selection of relevant pedagogical theories in adult education.

Summary

The training aims to qualify participants to act professionally, responsibly, and effectively as cross-border liaison officers in disaster situations. It develops a shared understanding of the liaison role, combining professional expertise with a values-based approach rooted in the free and democratic order of the German Basic Law. Core values such as respect, neutrality, trust, integrity, reliability, tolerance, and a culture of learning from mistakes guide communication, cooperation, and professional conduct.

From a didactic perspective, the program focuses on developing action competence through the balanced integration of professional, social, and self-competence. Participants acquire knowledge of disaster management systems and cross-border cooperation, strengthen resilience, self-reflection, and learning from errors, and enhance communication and coordination across organizational and national boundaries.

The training is designed according to a learning field concept and implemented in an action-oriented manner, using realistic professional scenarios, simulations, and reflective learning methods. This approach supports adult learners with diverse professional backgrounds and promotes sustainable professional development and lifelong learning.

1.2.3 Pedagogical Theories in Adult Education

Education is an umbrella term for all organized teaching and learning activities designed to fulfill the tasks arising in a market society. In this sense, education is understood as evaluated and evaluative learning, which should be viewed as an open process focused on the subjective acquisition of essential knowledge and the ability to communicate effectively.

The focus is on informed and critical engagement with the content, the environment, and oneself (cf. Meueler, 1999, p. 683). Independent thinking, self-determination, and self-acquisition are meant to describe the learning process of utilizing one's own abilities and meeting the challenges posed by the teaching. Knowledge should be thoroughly explored and expanded through critical reflection. Recognizing one's own learning strategies should enable the identification of one's own learning style, the refinement of one's own questions, and the analysis of one's own thought processes. Learning is understood here as an internally driven selection process.

Subject-orientated theory

The subject-oriented approach in adult education, according to Meueler, understands the educational process as both the acquisition of knowledge and experience and the critical engagement with given content and the experiences of others. Through confrontation with scientific content based on their everyday knowledge and their subjective, individual interpretive frameworks, learners arrive at critical reflection. In such an educational process, independent thinking, personal decisions, and self-determined action are linked to the demands of the external world. The principle of understanding is of particular importance within this process. Additionally, the learning situation in adult education must be considered. This takes place in so-called adult education institutions. Due to the cultural sovereignty enshrined in the Basic Law, the area of adult education falls under the jurisdiction of the federal states. Several ministries, as well as the Federal Agency for Civic Education and Health Education, the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, and the Academy for Public Administration, are also tasked with adult education (see Kade & Nittel, 1995, p. 1998). This includes learning venues such as museums, memorials, and theaters.

"The didactic approach to exhibitions through interactive media, the increasing number of educational roles and professions in traditional cultural institutions, and other developments support the thesis that theaters, museums, libraries, etc., are inherently learning venues" (see Kade & Nittel, 1995, p. 201).

The multitude of adult education institutions where learning takes place cannot be comprehensively presented here.

"The theoretical discussion has not led to the development of a single theory, but rather to a pluralistic spectrum of theoretical approaches. (...) In empirical educational research, there is a growing interest in interpretive, partly constructivist-inspired studies..." (cf. Siebert, 1999). Therefore, this paper selected exemplary theoretical approaches that are relevant to the learning behaviour and learning situation of nursing staff.

Situation-Oriented Development Approach

Curriculum development must now be based on a model that addresses the above-mentioned. The curriculum's intended functions can be guaranteed. Furthermore, it serves to ensure the traceability of the development process and its determinants. In summary, the following prerequisites should be met:

- The model must be based on situations that participants encounter as caregivers and learners in their field of practice.
- It therefore draws on a subject-specific academic background.
- The subjective dimension must be constitutive of the subject-to-subject relationship, i.e., the relationship between caregivers and care recipients. To create the scope for shaping this subjective dimension, the curriculum should be designed as an open curriculum.
- Due to its situational orientation, a subject-oriented approach is not feasible and is abandoned in favour of interdisciplinary networking.

Methodologically, the curriculum development approach is based on the situational analysis approach developed by Robinsohn, which proceeds in three steps:

1. It is necessary to "find methods by which these situations and the functions required in them" can be identified (Robinsohn 1972, p. 45).
2. It is necessary to "identify the qualifications required to succeed in these situations" (Robinsohn 1972, p. 45).
3. It is necessary to identify the "educational content and objects through which this qualification is to be achieved" (Robinsohn 1972, p. 45).

Socialization-Theoretical Approach

The socialization-theoretical approach differentiates learning into three phases. The first phase relates to learning in the family and at school. The third phase defines lifelong learning and assigns adult education an important role in a rapidly changing society where the demands placed on its members are increasing. Adult socialization is understood as the prerequisite that the process of an individual's socialization does not end with childhood and adolescence.

The socialization-theoretical foundation of adult education must assume that while socialization also takes place in adulthood, it differs structurally from primary socialization in childhood and adolescence. The concept of socialization generally opposes an overly narrow understanding of education. Adult socialization is thus opposed to an overly narrow understanding of upbringing.

Assuming the analytical separation of socialization and education, the theory of subject development forms the theoretical reference point for this theory. Three socialization-theoretical approaches to adult education were identified and summarized by Dewe/Frank/Huge (1988):

- role-theoretical-functionalist approach
- symbolic-interactionist approach
- structuralist approach

In the role-theoretical-functionalist approach, socialization is defined in relation to the role concept of social action and understood as a process of integration into existing role systems. The content of adult socialization differs from that of primary socialization, as it focuses on concrete role-playing. The underlying motives and values play a less significant role here. Since society shapes its members, the acquisition of roles is the most important aspect of adult socialization. The adult socialization theory of symbolic interactionism considers the actions of adults in relation to intentions and definitions within interaction processes.
It is directly dependent on the situational context in which it takes place and is constantly renegotiated and modified by the people involved. In contrast to the role-theoretical-functionalist approach, this approach assumes the activity of those involved. The structuralist approach sees interaction as an elementary form of action. The goal of all socialization is for the individual to act competently and autonomously, to be articulate, and to be at one with themselves. Concrete forms of socialization and learning influence educational measures. These three approaches have points of overlap and, to some extent, compete with one another. There is no single, comprehensive theory of socialization. The following aspects are essential for adult education:

- The concept of the subject emphasizes the active capacity of participants to construct their own understanding.
- The concept of action captures the objective meaningfulness and social structure of interactions.
- The concept of education describes the significance of cultural reality for the development of the competent and autonomous adult.

1.3 Criterias for selected theories

In addition to the functions already mentioned, a curriculum for professional development is linked to at least two further tasks:

The theoretical part of continuing professional development is complemented by concrete practical experience.

On the one hand, participants are familiar with this practice and have internalized the established routines; on the other hand, it is precisely this practice that the participants are meant to change. To this end, they are expected to utilize the competencies and qualifications acquired in the classroom portion of the professional development program. Thus, the curriculum is ascribed the function of having a transformative or formative effect on practice.

Considering that very few curricular materials have achieved widespread dissemination in e.g., nursing education (Oelke, AKOD, Bavarian Curriculum, Hessian Curriculum), it can be assumed that the publication of a curriculum also leads to widespread dissemination and reception. A curriculum therefore also fulfils the function of setting a professional standard.

1.4 Didactical concepts in adult education

Translating identified qualification needs into continuing education programs requires decision-making and negotiation. Questions arise regarding the target group, instructors, learning times, learning locations; intentions; topics, methods, and resources. Therefore, didactic concepts of adult education must be consulted. These decision-making aids can be found in didactics and curriculum theory.

Didactics is the fundamental epistemological concept of pedagogy, encompassing all dimensions of teaching. The starting point is the target group, and subsequently, the role of the instructors—through which teaching process the target group achieves the desired learning outcome. The word "curriculum," translated from Latin, means the course of the year, the path. Applied to the field of pedagogy, it means planning what, when, and how something should be taught.

Seibert (1996) identifies the concepts relevant to adult education that should be included in the planning process. Different approaches in didactic concepts highlight the various focal points and should be critically examined and analysed during the planning phase. The respective target groups, the company's objectives for continuing education, and the primary and desired learning process and outcomes should align with the didactic model.

A further distinction is made between micro-didactics, which encompasses the planning, implementation, and evaluation of seminars in adult education, and macro-didactics, which includes program planning.

Educational-Theoretical Didactics

Based on Kant's and Humboldt's ideas, the focus is on the developmental potential of the work environment. The education provided here is general, addressing all structures, principles, and problems that affect everyone.

Curriculum-Theoretical Didactics

According to Robinsohn, educational content is oriented towards its significance within the framework of science, its contribution to understanding the world, and its relevance to specific application situations. The orientation of learning situations within situational contexts is the central point. In corporate training, the focus is on connecting participants' learning intentions with the topics and problems of future work situations.

Identity-Theoretical Didactics

Through the "reflexive turn" in adult education, identity work through biographical and identity aspects moves to the forefront. The developmental opportunities for identity in work situations are the central point of this concept. The aim is to empower participants to shape their own life plans.

Animation-Based Didactics

An idea from leisure education has been further developed into the constructivist didactics of enabling learning within the discourse of self-organized learning.

Aspects for choosing a concept

With regard to corporate training, it is important to consider that the focus of each concept must be related to the respective subject area. This also means that the content of the learning is shaped by the interaction between teachers and learners in relation to the subject matter. When planning, the learning situation, institutional framework, and the learners themselves must be analysed as a starting point. Only in this way can learning content be placed within a meaningful context for the learners. When the learning content is successfully placed within a meaningful context for the participants, so-called expansive learning takes place. In-company training is not about persuading, instructing, or lecturing.

While the selection of content does involve didactic interventions, these are aimed at shortening learning pathways.

The learning content offered by the instructor must be acquired by the participants themselves. Thus, in-company training could be described as a "didactic approach to instruction". It is about openness, active participation, academic rigor, and the connection between theory and practice. The didactic approach to instruction is understood as a dynamic process and a reflection on action orientation.
Key tenets of the didactic approach of instruction are:

- Didactic action as a form of social action, oriented towards the actions of others
- Appropriate selection of different options
- Facilitating learning through teaching (Participants are individuals with equal rights. Adult education must be aware of its responsibility for intervening in life courses)
- Facilitators as teachers.

2 Intended learning outcomes of the course

The participants should be qualified for the activities of a liaison. The intended learning outcomes of the course cross-border Liaision are describe in this chapter.

The Cross-Border Liaison Officer training is designed to develop comprehensive action competence, enabling participants to act professionally, responsibly, and effectively in cross-border and disaster-related contexts. Upon completion of the course, participants possess the knowledge, skills, and professional attitude required to fulfil the liaison role within complex operational environments.

During the first day, participants acquire a solid understanding of the role, mandate, and core tasks of a liaison officer. They are familiar with the importance of liaison work in disaster response and cross-border cooperation and can explain their function as information providers, contact persons, and mediators. Participants gain insight into the administrative, legal, and operational structures of both countries involved and are able to compare organizational systems, identify interfaces, and recognize structural differences and similarities. They understand cross-border operational and procedural processes, including chains of cooperation and decision-making, and are able to apply basic tools for documentation, coordination, and communication.

On the second day, the focus is on communication and culture as central elements of effective liaison work. Participants develop intercultural communication skills and learn to adapt their communication behaviour to different cultural contexts. They recognize cultural implications that influence cooperation, decision-making, and trust-building in cross-border settings. Participants are able to select and use appropriate communication channels in international and disaster-related situations and communicate clearly and precisely in the operating language using relevant terminology.

They strengthen their ability to build and maintain professional networks, cooperate effectively in interprofessional and multinational teams, and handle sensitive information with discretion.

The third day emphasizes operational liaison skills and personal effectiveness under real conditions. Participants learn to coordinate tasks under time pressure and uncertainty and to act confidently and professionally in operational situations. They are able to disseminate information rapidly, accurately, and to the appropriate recipients. Participants develop skills in mediation and conflict resolution to address misunderstandings between organizations or individuals and demonstrate motivation and a proactive attitude within their mandate.

On the final day, participants apply their acquired competencies within the context of disaster management. They understand disaster management structures, roles, and coordination mechanisms and are able to integrate the liaison function into disaster teams. Through case studies and lessons learned, participants analyze real-world disaster situations and derive conclusions for effective liaison work. In a final simulation exercise, they prepare for and participate in a realistic disaster scenario, applying professional, social, and self-competencies in an integrated manner. Structured debriefing enables participants to reflect on their actions, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and derive lessons learned for future deployments.

Overall, the training enables participants to develop action competence as cross-border liaison officers. They are capable of acting in a values-based, reflective, and professional manner, ensuring effective communication, coordination, and cooperation across organizational and national boundaries in disaster situations.

From these competencies, three areas of learning outcomes were identified: knowledge, competencies and skills, and attitudes and values. This systematization is important because the different taxonomy areas are addressed with corresponding taxonomy levels of learning outcomes.

Table 1 Overarching learning outcomes in the combined subject of human resource management for the field of activity as a liaison

Areas of learning outcomes		Contents
Knowledge	Communication strategies / techniquies	Describes an in-depth understanding of communication techniques and their application in different situations.
	Disaster management	Describes a deep understanding of disaster management. Disaster management tools are described in everyday situations. Sufficient knowledge and application in disaster staff work.
	Cross border interaction	Sufficient knowledge and application of cross-border cooperation, the involvement of institutions or individuals to manage disaster situations.
Competencies and skills	Communication and Culture	Development of an understanding of the importance of professional communication.
	Operational liaison skills	Application of liaison tools and •application of effective, in a structured, solution-oriented, and resilient manner in operational and disaster-related environments.
	Self organisation	Act flexible to dynamic and complex operational conditions and
Attitude and Values	Professional understanding	Development of a values-based understanding of liaison

3 Didactical consequences

This curriculum aims to incorporate the development of action competence. Such an orientation is beneficial for the Liaison for Disaster Management seminar, as the Liaison's field of activity is geared towards action. When a curriculum is action-oriented, teaching no longer follows the systematic structure of a single topic or subject, but rather focuses on so-called bundled subjects. These are preceded by learning fields that describe the typical areas of activity for the Liaison. Within these fields, the competencies to be developed are described. A core competency is at the forefront of each learning field. When describing the learning fields, it is important to ensure that the competencies are described in a spiral fashion, meaning that individual competencies are progressively enhanced throughout the training until the core competency of the respective learning field is achieved. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) (2018) developed a recommendation for this approach. Therefore, these recommendations are taken into account in the development of this curriculum.

The bundled subjects are derived from and described within the learning fields. The core subjects are necessary for curriculum development. These subjects define the content, operationalized learning outcomes, recommended methods, etc.

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) recommends that appropriate learning methods be formulated for vocational training programs in order to sustainably implement the learning field-oriented approach, taking care that these methods are not formulated in such a way as to indirectly affect the resources of the educational institution (KMK, 2018, 27).

Because of the short-term education of Liaison, this curriculum will focus only one learning field and two bundled subjects. Additionally, it will follow the principle of the didactic approach of instruction, because the participants of this education are adults with different educations, different profession and different experiences. With both concepts the curriculum will consider the development of action competencies and will take the varicosity of participants into account.

4 Methodology of curriculum development

The focus of this curriculum is on action-oriented learning. The principle of learning by doing emerged with the so-called work-oriented turn (Herkner, Pahl, 2020). A key aspect of an action-oriented approach is that the didactic principles within the curriculum are formulated in sufficient detail, and that, according to the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK, 1997), participants learn to plan, implement, and evaluate work situations in their future professional lives. The authors believe this should even be expanded to include the aspect of information gathering, in the sense of complete action, as the KMK also affirmed in 2018. According to the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK, 2018), if a curriculum is geared towards action-oriented learning, the following points should be considered:

- “Didactic reference points are situations that are relevant to professional practice.
- Learning takes place through complete actions, ideally performed by the learner themselves or at least mentally re-enacted.
- Actions promote a holistic understanding of professional reality in an increasingly globalized and digitalized world of life and work (for example, economic, ecological, legal, technical, safety-related, vocational, subject-specific, foreign language, social, and ethical aspects).
- Actions incorporate the learners' experiences and reflect on them in relation to their societal impact.
- Actions also take into account social processes, such as expressing interests or resolving conflicts, as well as different perspectives on career and life planning” (KMK, 2018, 17).

Following the critique by Herkner and Pahl (2020) that action-oriented approaches often result in a theoretical deficit, this must be addressed. Learning field orientation focuses on situations and actions encountered in everyday professional life. Therefore, it is essential that professional theory and workplace practice are considered constitutive elements (Tramm & Naeve-Schoß, 2020). Tramm and Naeve-Schoß (2020) thus advocate for complex teaching and learning arrangements (Tramm & Naeve-Schoß, 2020, p. 313). The learning fields should relate to problems and work and business processes that participants should ideally work through sequentially.

"The sequence of learning modules, which should be interrelated in the sense of a spiral curriculum, is to be understood as a developmental sequence of professional competencies (e.g., Rauner 1999; Tramm and Naeve-Schoß 2016)" (Tramm, Naeve-Schoß, 2022, 313). For this reason, the learning modules are developed multidimensionally.

Based on the recommendations of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) (2018) and Tramm and Naeve-Schoß (2020), and taking into account our own experience, the curriculum development proceeds as follows:

1. **Description of the initial situation**
   The initial situation is defined based on the legal framework.
2. **Description of the occupational profile**
   The occupational profile is described based on the requirements of the future field of activity.
3. **Derivation of the learning modules based on action orientation**
   The learning modules are developed from the occupational profile and based on the draft of the training concept.
4. **Differentiation of Learning Fields**
   The learning fields are given a name. This is followed by a differentiation of the core competence that should be developed for each learning field by the end of the training. Next comes the operationalized description of the professional activities, structured according to the complete action method, including the necessary specialist knowledge, skills, and suitable learning and problem-solving strategies. The spiral structure of the curriculum also becomes clear, in which competencies are progressively increased through the different taxonomy levels, culminating in the achievement of the described core competence. According to Hacker (1986), the theory of complete action divides professional work processes into various steps: informing, planning, differentiating, executing, controlling, and evaluating.

5. **Description of Cluster Subjects**

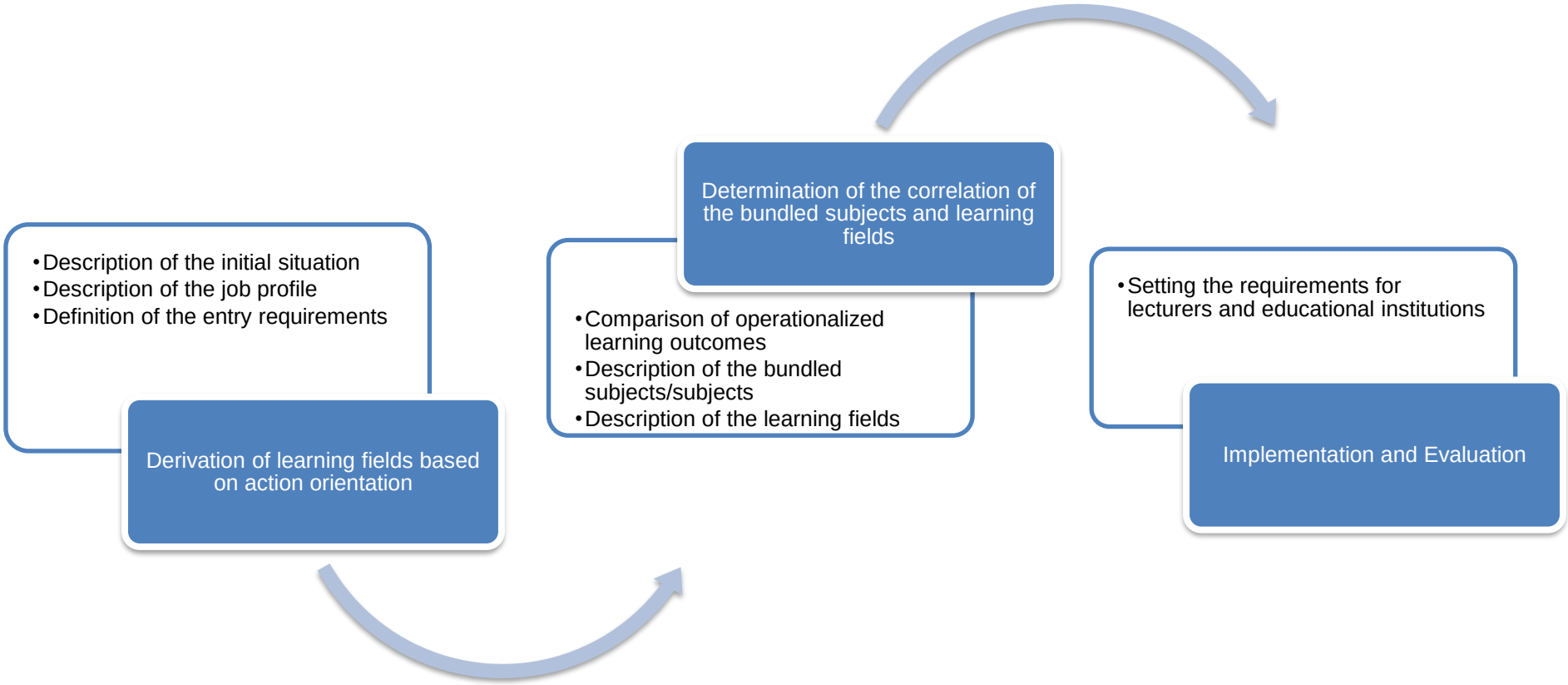
   To facilitate the implementation of the training, the cluster subjects are described. These are defined as cluster subjects, in which the necessary learning situations, content, learning outcomes, teaching methods, and literature recommendations are described. Furthermore, the content is assigned to the corresponding learning fields.

   This step appears necessary so that the lecturers responsible for the various subject areas can gain an overview of the learning situations and corresponding content to be taught, and so that it becomes clear that not all content of a single discipline and its associated system will be followed, but rather that the content to be taught must be oriented towards professional fields of activity.

6. **Transfer into a framework curriculum based on learning field orientation and bundled subjects**

   The framework curriculum, which will subsequently be developed, will outline the learning areas and the core subjects as a timetable distribution plan, from which the detailed planning in the form of a timetable can then be derived. This will be carried out by the implementing institutions.

Figure 1 Steps of the curriculum development



5 Entry requirements - Recognition of existing qualifications

The entry requirements for the liaison course are as follows:

- Disaster team member
- Firefighter - at least group leader
- Desirable bilingual
- Motivated for cross border networking

6 Teaching and learning methods

For years, educational institutions have been developing the teaching skills of their instructors. Particular emphasis has been placed on digital methods designed to support classroom instruction and participants' self-study phases. Methods such as flipped classrooms are increasingly being used for this purpose. These methods are not yet implemented in all modules and courses. Furthermore, regular discussions on new methods and evaluations of existing methods should take place to identify necessary training needs.

Based on the orientation of educational institutions, the following teaching and learning methods are recommended for this curriculum. A combined teaching and learning approach have been chosen, enabling participants to optimally utilize their own experiences, skills, and knowledge in the learning process.

Lecture-based learning: The fundamentals of employee management, etc., are explained in an interactive discussion environment. The classroom setting will also provide a supportive environment in which participants are expected to give and receive feedback and learn from the experiences and knowledge of other participants and instructors.

Problem-based learning: Participants work in small groups to investigate scenarios or case studies. The idea is that participants work cooperatively as a team to achieve both subject-specific learning outcomes and transferable teamwork skills. This emphasizes self-directed learning.

Simulation-based learning: Conversational exercises with other participants, acting as public service practitioners, are common practice in vocational training. Simulation provides a relatively safe context in which participants can practice skills and receive feedback in ways that would not be possible in real-life operational situations as group leaders. More complex role-playing exercises can also be used when participants assume their professional roles, for example, by participating in a simulated case conference.

Think-Pair-Share: Think-Pair-Share is a method for developing, working through, or reviewing learning material provided by the instructors. Participants solve this material individually within a limited time, then compare and discuss their solutions in pairs within a set time limit. The results are discussed and/or presented in plenary sessions.

The partner work can alternatively lead to group work in groups of four. This method allows for the stimulation of decision-making processes, critical thinking, and problem-solving. These competencies are important for the activities of a group leader and for operational situations in disaster situations.

Practice-oriented learning: The program offers participants the opportunity to assume responsibility for the activities of a group leader as members of a team, under guidance. Additionally, this gives participants the opportunity to analyze and reflect on their practical work as a group leader.

Inquiry-based learning: Course participants are expected to apply the knowledge gained in the course in practice. The greatest challenge in the course is conveying the knowledge and procedures in a real-world operational situation within a group leader's field of activity. Schubarth and Speck (2013) note that inquiry-based learning is associated with various expectations and goals, which are linked to an increased desire for relevance to the professional field.

The aim of research-based learning is to strengthen a critical and reflective attitude towards professional practice and one's own role. These skills are considered essential for future professional careers.

In addition, research-based learning fosters the development of interdisciplinary skills and abilities. "In summary, research-based learning proves to be a particularly productive teaching and learning format for familiarizing students with research-related contexts and a research-oriented mindset, while simultaneously imparting professional field knowledge as well as subject-specific, personal, and social competencies for their future careers. The research-based learning format has particular strengths in promoting practical relevance in studies and the employability of students" (Schubarth, Speck, 2013, 79).

Case studies: The use of case studies improves the transfer of knowledge into practice. Bonney (2015) found that case studies are considered effective because the presentation of content in a narrative format is accompanied by questions and activities that encourage group discussions and the solving of complex problems. Case studies facilitate the development of the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive learning. Beyond the mere recall of knowledge, they involve analysis, evaluation, and application (Bonney 2015, 21).

It should also be noted that the term case studies also encompass business games or simulations, which are considered essential for this course. "The case study method is expressed in various sources using different terms such as case work, case method, business game, simulation game, and decision-making game (Hesapçıoğlu, 2011)" (Cazmak, Äkgün, 2017, 96).

Reflective Learning: Encouraging participants and teams to reflect on and meta-think about their activities and collaborative processes, with a focus on staff management and the coordination of complex operational situations, can foster an understanding of one's own role and values, as well as those of other professions.

Learning Portfolio: Learning portfolios provide accompanying support for participants in the learning process. These are designed in a variety of ways. Wattenberg (2017) states that a learning portfolio is a process- and product-oriented record of achievement, in which, for example, results and reports are stored to document the learning outcomes of an educational unit. Furthermore, learners should critically reflect on these (Wattenberg, 2017). "A portfolio is a structured collection of student activities oriented towards predefined learning objectives, with planned self-reflection" (Schmidt & Hahn, 2009, p. 2). The activities can vary widely. A learning portfolio can be the documented completion of specific tasks.

Peer consultation: Tietze (2015) defines peer consultation as the consultation between colleagues. "Peer consultation is a structured consultation session in a group, in which one participant is advised by the other participants according to a fixed procedure with assigned roles, with the aim of developing solutions for a specific key professional question" (Tietze, 2016, p. 11). The impetus for peer consultation lies in a specific case, problem, challenge, etc., arising in everyday professional practice. Fiege and Dollase (1998) conducted a study on peer consultation among teachers. According to their findings, peer consultation also serves the purpose of self-reflection. Lippmann (2011) emphasizes, among other things, the promotion of professionalism through the expansion of reflective competence. Thus, peer consultation can achieve significantly more, such as:

- Increased sense of group belonging
- Increased openness to one's own problems and the problems of others
- Increased autonomy and self-responsibility
- Development of alternative courses of action
- Increased intrinsic motivation and initiative
- Mutual support, encouragement, and feedback
- Opportunities to learn and refine new methods and techniques (communicative and consulting skills)

- Promotion of self-observation, self-reflection, and self-supervision (professional, personal, and systemic)
- Prevention of workplace isolation, stress, and burnout

These results show that peer consultation can be used in diverse contexts and can also be utilized in various ways within the education sector.
Practical exercises in large groups: Various teaching and learning situations can be used to practice communication techniques in practice. The methods presented here represent a selection that, in the authors' opinion, are suitable for sustainably testing content and communication techniques in a larger group.

Trio consultation: This method, developed by Fengler, is particularly suitable because a small group is often the appropriate learning arrangement, especially in behavioral training. The small group provides a safe space where mistakes are also permitted. This form of peer feedback, with its so-called peer effect, often proves effective because it is based on shared expertise.

Furthermore, participants experience a sense of solidarity and community, and if a shared success is achieved in the training, this can, in turn, become a unifying element within the small group. According to Fengler (2017), this method is particularly suitable for obtaining information, advice, or clarification. In this case, trio consultation is modified to trio feedback. The person seeking advice describes a problem or situation—in this case, a situation with a colleague—and explains their reasons. A short conversation sequence can also be simulated, demonstrating various communication techniques. This sequence should last between 10 and 15 minutes. The "consultant" can ask questions or request clarification.

An "observer" provides feedback to both parties on the consultation process and the feedback itself. The roles are then reversed. This method offers the opportunity for focused feedback.

The training includes peer review and the mutual assessment of learned communication techniques. This simultaneously strengthens the trainees' communication skills and their ability to provide each other with appropriate feedback. If this method is used in a larger group of three, the groups are asked to share their insights afterward (Fengler, 2017). The time allotted can be between 15 and 20 minutes, including feedback.

Thinkers Trio: Habermann and Schmidt (2018) use the Thinkers Trio principle in project management. This method aims to achieve a shared understanding within a project, as they believe it promotes a fact-oriented perspective and communication. The authors also note that this method is suitable for peer consultation.

One limitation or disadvantage is that this method is intended for small groups and is not suitable for emotionally charged topics.

The authors recommend a standardized procedure for implementation. They allocate a total of 90 minutes for this exercise. For the adaptation as feedback, a timeframe of 20 to 90 minutes is sufficient. It is recommended to set the timeframe at 20 minutes. Furthermore, it is advisable to address several topics or techniques during one "round" of the Thinkers Trio method. This would allow the timeframe for these methods to be integrated effectively. The Thinkers Trio will take place concurrently, as in trio consulting. The course instructor briefly observes how the groups of three reflect on each other and provide feedback.

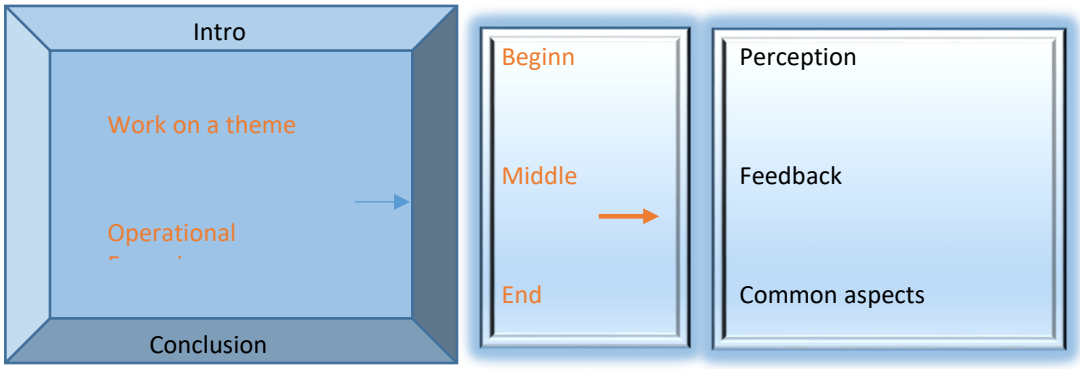


Figure 3: Adapted Think Trio Process (after Hagemann, Schmidt, 2018)

Scenic Learning – "Speed Dating": According to Apel, Börding, Deisinger, and Kelling (2020), this method promotes active listening. The group is divided into two. The course instructor introduces a topic. Participants each have one minute to explain something about the topic to their partner. After a brief introduction, the roles are reversed. After another signal, the group shifts one position. A new topic is introduced. This method can be used in various settings, such as getting to know each other, describing example situations, etc. Fishbowl Method: This method aims to stimulate intensive discussions within a heterogeneous group. It also serves to focus attention on communication and interaction, such as argumentation structures and communication styles. It allows participants to practice verbally responding to the previous speaker's arguments. The method is compared to the principle of an aquarium and gets its name from the seating arrangement. There is one group in the inner circle and one group in the outer circle. The group in the outer circle observes the group in the inner circle. In the inner circle, questions are discussed, a topic is debated, or the results of a training exercise are presented. The group in the inner circle can also be used to provide feedback, for example, on a training exercise. After the discussion in the inner circle concludes, the group in the outer circle gives the group in the inner circle feedback on what they observed. The group in the inner circle is smaller than the group in the outer circle.

This method encourages participants to practice observing, listening, and giving feedback. Thus, this method can be used to train communication in general, giving feedback, and perception skills. Additionally, it can be used to consolidate the results of previous content.

The following should be considered for implementation:

- The framework must be clarified.
- The discussion times must be set.
- The principle is visually illustrated by two circles of chairs.
- The observation criteria for the group in the outer circle should be discussed or specified.
- It should be clarified how the observations of the people in the outer circle will be documented.
- The maximum group size is 30 to 40 people.
- A maximum of seven people should sit in the inner circle, and a maximum of 35 people in the outer circle.
- The time commitment is at least 30 minutes.
- The instructors primarily act as observers. For the first discussion, participants can join the inner circle to support or demonstrate the discussion.
- There are various implementation options (open, closed fishbowl, etc.) (Macke et al., 2016).

The time frame depends on the number of aspects to be discussed. Generally, approximately 30 to 45 minutes is recommended. However, this time can be extended.

7 Curriculum development

The following section presents an exemplary integrated subject to illustrate the relationship between curriculum elements and the content from which the learning units for participants are developed. Integrated subjects represent the merging of several subfields from various disciplines, such as psychology, ethics, and legal principles in the integrated subject of psychosocial health. The derivation of the content within the integrated subjects demonstrates that the differentiation of learning fields results from the professional profile and the summarized competency areas.

Furthermore, learning and teaching methods are summarized, focusing particularly on the sustainability of learning outcomes with regard to action-oriented learning. From these, the most suitable methods for the respective content of each integrated subject are selected.

Additionally, the learning fields in which content from the integrated subjects should be taught are identified within each integrated subject. The content for the learning fields is described, and the corresponding number of teaching units is defined within the integrated subjects.

Table 2 Exemplary simplified example of a bundled subject with a representation of its relationship to the curriculum

Description of bundled subject			**Relation to curriculum**
Bundle subject 1: Disaster management, Orientation & Frameworks			Bundled Topic
Learning field (LF): Establishing operational connections as disaster response			Allocation to learning field
Lesson unit:		**9 LU**	Numbers lesson units
Self learning lessons		**11 LU**	Number lessons unit
Description of contents This bundle subject provides participants with a solid orientation to liaison work in national and cross-border disaster management contexts. It establishes a common understanding of the role, mandate, and responsibilities of liaison officers and introduces the legal, organizational, and administrative frameworks of the cooperating countries and institutions. Participants examine similarities and differences between national disaster management systems, administrative structures, and operational environments. Particular emphasis is placed on cross-border procedures, chains of cooperation, interfaces between organizations, and the coordination of actors at strategic, tactical, and operational levels. The subject also introduces the core functions of liaison officers—information provider, contact person, mediator, and coordinator—and familiarizes participants with essential liaison tools for documentation, coordination, and information exchange.			Contens and Learning situations in allocation to learning field
Objective Learning outcomes: • explain the role, mandate, and objectives of cross-border liaison officers for disaster management • describe structures, legal frameworks, and organizational systems of both countries • compare administrative and operational systems and identify similarities and differences • explain cross-border procedural and operational processes • describe the three core tasks and responsibilities of liaison officers • apply basic liaison tools for coordination, documentation, and information exchange			Verifiable learning outcomes in relation to the learning field
Recommended Learning and teaching methods: Impuls lectures, case studies, learning stations, group work, guided discussions			Learning methods that promote action orientation
Recommended teaching rmaterial/IT: Beamer, PowerPoint, flipcharts, maps of organizational structures, case descriptions			
Literature: 1.			Recommended literature

8 Structure of the curriculum

The core of the curriculum consists of the learning fields. These fields define the competencies to be developed. Furthermore, they specify the level of competence and thus clarify for the respective instructors which content is associated with each field. The unit for the core subjects describes the content, learning situations, learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, and recommended literature for the instructors.

8.1 Overview of learning fields and bundle subjects

The following describes the learning fields, the bundled subjects and their content.

Table 3 Relevant learning fields, title, core competence and bundle subjects

Learning field	TItle	Core competence	Bundle subject
Learning field 1	Establishing operational connections as disaster response	Participants develop a values-based understanding of liaison, apply cross-border liaisons tools, act effectively, in a structured, solution-oriented, and resilient manner in operational and disaster-related environments. They make situation-appropriate decisions within their mandate, coordinate processes between multiple actors, and adapt flexibly to dynamic and complex operational conditions.	Bundle subject 1 **Disaster management, Orientation & Frameworks** Bundle subject 3 **Operational Liaison Skills** Bundle subject 4 **Disaster Management & Application**
Learning field 2	Cooperation and Professional Conduct	Participants develop an understanding of the importance of professional communication, explain the importance of resilient cross-border relationship and network, continuously develop their professional competence through reflection, learning, and responsible handling of errors. Participants act effectively, in a structured, solution-oriented, and resilient manner in operational and disaster-related environments. They make situation-appropriate decisions within their mandate, coordinate processes between multiple actors, and adapt flexibly to dynamic and complex operational conditions	Bundle subject 2 **Communication & Culture** Bundle subject 3 **Operational Liaison Skills**

The following illustration provides an example of the development of a competence.



Figure 2 Example of the spiral development of a competence in a learning field

8.1.1 Learning field 1 - Establishing operational connections as disaster response

Learning field	Title	Time guideline in LU
1	**Establishing operational connections as disaster response**	**57**

Core competence: Participants develop a values-based understanding of liaison, apply cross-border liaisons tools, act effectively, in a structured, solution-oriented, and resilient manner in operational and disaster-related environments. They make situation-appropriate decisions within their mandate, coordinate processes between multiple actors, and adapt flexibly to dynamic and complex operational conditions.

The participants define different disaster scenarios. The participants show in an exemplary disaster scenario to work in a structured way under time and information pressure. They prioritize tasks and deploys resources purposefully. The participants derive new measures and courses of action from available information and coordinates processes between different actors. The participants take situation-appropriate decisions within their own mandate. They describe basic knowledge of the disaster management system of their own country/organization (region) and their basic knowledge of the disaster management system of the neighbouring country/region. They describe principles of disaster management in their own country and the neighbour country. The participants explain differences of disaster management between both countries. During their operational experience they act professional. The participants describe their own mandate in cross border connection. They adapt to (rapidly) changing situations in their own working environment. Describe their understanding with the basic legal framework of disaster management in their own country and the other country. The participants explain the risk profile of the border region (both countries). They classify the legal framework of their work. The participants define challenges and borders of their work. The participants use professional wording of disaster management during their communication.

Participants explain their role as a liaison, reflect on their role and its impact, and weigh up and reflect on their actions.

Participants describe their attitude toward their responsibility as a liaison. Participants work in a structured way under time pressure and incomplete or rapidly changing information. They are able to prioritize tasks, allocate resources purposefully, and derive appropriate measures and courses of action from available information. Participants demonstrate operational experience by acting confidently and professionally in real or simulated operational situations.

Participants describe methods of evaluation They use a selected evaluation methods to proof the effectiveness of the individual elements of a liaison person and modify them as needed.

Participants explain and apply liaison checklists, useful maps of their region/countries for which they are responsible, list with contact details of responsible person of their own and neighbour countries in terms of disaster management and reporting documentation. They coordinate operational processes between different organizations, authorities, and stakeholders, taking into account differing structures, mandates, and responsibilities. Participants demonstrate operational experience by acting confidently and professionally in real or simulated operational situations.

Participants implement leadership elements in their actions. They reflect on their own contribution to cross-functional relationship building. They demonstrate values-based, clear, unambiguous, factual, and understandable communication.

Participants learn about the necessity of a trusting relationship within the team, the influencing factors, and demonstrate ways to build trust. They utilize values such as respect, diligence, and loyalty in their communication style. Participants apply communication techniques purposefully in various situations. They identify communication problems and describe their causes.

Relevant Bundle subjects

Disaster Management, Orientation & Frameworks	**Operational Liaison Skills**	**Disaster Management & Application**

8.1.2 Learning field 2 - Cooperation and Professional Conduct

Learning field	Title	Time guideline in LU
2	Cooperation and Professional Conduct	27

Core competence: Participants develop an understanding of the importance of professional communication, explain the importance of resilient cross-border relationship and network, continuously develop their professional competence through reflection, learning, and responsible handling of errors. Participants act effectively, in a structured, solution-oriented, and resilient manner in operational and disaster-related environments. They make situation-appropriate decisions within their mandate, coordinate processes between multiple actors, and adapt flexibly to dynamic and complex operational conditions

The participants describe and apply principles of professional communication. In exemplary disaster scenario they communicate on an equal footing with national and international partners. The participants define different language styles and adapt their language, style, and tone to the target audience and situation. They describe types of networks. Participants explain the principles of an aim-orientated network. They apply methods of trust building and maintains resilient working relationships. Participants describe causes for misunderstandings and conflicts. The handle misunderstandings and conflicts constructively. Participants explain the importance of confidence and diplomatic procedures. They maintain confidentiality and diplomatic sensitivity. Participants develop a broad professional network (to be built in the pre-disaster phase). Participants describe the importance of initiative actions and take over initiative. Participates demonstrate proactively actions in team meetings. They explain advice principles and provides solicited and unsolicited advice. Participants explain actors in crises management in their own and neighbour country and their operating system (agenda, procedures, workflows). They master the principles of successful communication in a team. They act resiliently under stress, recognize the limits of their role, and actively contribute to a constructive learning and error culture within cross-border cooperation.

Participants explain difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. They describe the importance of motivation to work as a liaison. They explain methods to motivate themselves. Participants apply an exemplary method of reflection. Participants reflect on own actions and collaboration, learn from mistakes and uses feedback constructively. They use feedback constructively, learn from mistakes, and integrate lessons learned into their future actions.
They recognize

Participants communicate the limits of their own role and seeks support from appropriate structures or persons when necessary. Participants act professionally and resiliently in stressful or emotionally demanding situations and are aware of the importance of psychosocial health and aftercare.

Participants react resiliently and professionally in stressful situations. They actively contribute to improving processes and cooperation. Participants describe the willingness to remain humble and focused on supporting incident management rather than leading it. They demonstrate multidisciplinary thinking and cooperation across professional boundaries are emphasized.

Relevant Bundle subjects	
Communication & Culture	**Operational Liaison Skills**

8.2 Bundle subject

The following section provides a comprehensive description of the bundle subjects and their content, along with the corresponding objective learning outcomes. Additionally, it includes recommendations for teaching methods and literature.

8.2.1 Bundle subject 1 – Disaster management, Orientation & Frameworks

Bundle subject 1: Disaster management, Orientation & Frameworks		
Learning field (LF): Establishing operational connections as disaster response		
Lessons unit:		**9 LU**
Self learning lessons		**11 LU**
Description of contents This bundle subject provides participants with a solid orientation to liaison work in national and cross-border disaster management contexts. It establishes a common understanding of the role, mandate, and responsibilities of liaison officers and introduces the legal, organizational, and administrative frameworks of the cooperating countries and institutions. Participants examine similarities and differences between national disaster management systems, administrative structures, and operational environments. Particular emphasis is placed on cross-border procedures, chains of cooperation, interfaces between organizations, and the coordination of actors at strategic, tactical, and operational levels. The subject also introduces the core functions of liaison officers—information provider, contact person, mediator, and coordinator—and familiarizes participants with essential liaison tools for documentation, coordination, and information exchange.		
Objective Learning outcomes: • explain the role, mandate, and objectives of cross-border liaison officers for disaster management • describe structures, legal frameworks, and organizational systems of both countries • compare administrative and operational systems and identify similarities and differences • explain cross-border procedural and operational processes • describe the three core tasks and responsibilities of liaison officers • apply basic liaison tools for coordination, documentation, and information exchange		
Recommended Learning and teaching methods: Impuls lectures, case studies, learning stations, group work, guided discussions		
Recommended teaching rmaterial/IT: Beamer, PowerPoint, flipcharts, maps of organizational structures, case descriptions		
Literature: 1.		

8.2.2 Bundle subject 2 - Communication & Culture

Bundle subject 2: Communication & Culture		
Learning field (LF): Cooperation and Professional Conduct		
Lessons Units		**9 LU**
Self learning lessons		**8 LU**

Description of Content

This bundle subject addresses communication as a key competence of liaison work in international and intercultural environments. Participants develop an understanding of how communication styles, cultural backgrounds, and organizational cultures influence cooperation, trust, and decision-making in disaster situations.

The course covers intercultural communication principles, communication channels in international operations, operating language requirements, and professional terminology. It also addresses challenges arising from different command structures, communication cultures, and expectations.

In addition, the subject focuses on network building and maintenance, relationship management, teamwork, cooperation across professional boundaries, and confidential communication, with particular attention to discretion and handling sensitive information. Concepts of motivation, initiative, negotiation, and conflict management are integrated to support resilient and professional liaison behaviour.

Communication is the foundation of all interaction and connection. In addition to the general principles of communication psychology, approaches to self-presentation, individual communication styles, negotiation, team communication, meetings, and conflict management are presented. Furthermore, culturally determined differences in communication, are discussed using examples. The effects of different communication styles are also explored. Additionally, techniques of networking will be discuss and motivation concepts.

In particular, the following situations are given significant attention:
- Respectful, friendly, and values-based communication
- Communication in critical situations
- Using communication techniques to de-escalate tense situations
- Considering sociocultural differences in communication
- Communication under time pressure
- To motivate themselves
- Networking methods and care of network

Objective Learning outcomes:

The participants:

- apply intercultural communication skills in international contexts
- identify cultural implications and potential sources of misunderstanding
- select appropriate communication channels in international situations
- use operating language clearly and precisely
- maintain professional networks and trust-based working relationships
- cooperate effectively in multinational and interprofessional teams
- apply principles of confidential communication and discretion
- Communicates on an equal footing with national and international partners
- Adapts language, style, and tone to the target audience and situation
- Builds trust and maintains resilient working relationships
- Handles misunderstandings and conflicts constructively
- Maintains confidentiality and diplomatic sensitivity
- Has a broad professional network (to be built in the pre-disaster phase)
- Shows to take over initiative
- Participates proactively in team meetings
- Provides solicited and unsolicited advice
- Describes how the other team operates (agenda, procedures, workflows)
- Masters the principles of successful communication.

Recommended Learning and teaching material:

Case studies, role plays, scenario-based exercises, group discussions, self-reflection, simulations, scenarios, short presentations

Recommended teaching rmaterials/IT:

Beamer, PowerPoint, video material, communication scenarios, flipcharts, Camera, Handout, Metaplan boards

Literature:

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8.2.3 Bundle subject 3 – Operational Liaison Skills

Bundle subject 3: Operational Liaison Skills		
Learning field (LF): Establishing operational connections as disaster response **Learning field (LF): Cooperation and Professional Conduct**		
Lessons unit		**7,5 LU**
Self learning lessons		**12 LU**

Description of the content

This bundle subject focuses on the operational effectiveness of liaison officers under real and simulated conditions. Participants develop skills to coordinate processes, disseminate information, and act confidently and professionally in dynamic and time-critical situations.

A central focus is placed on liaison leadership without command authority, emphasizing influence through expertise, communication, coordination, and trust rather than hierarchical power. Participants learn to maintain role clarity, prevent role conflicts, and support incident management structures effectively.

The subject also strengthens participants' ability to reflect on their own performance, apply structured evaluation and feedback methods, and continuously improve their professional conduct and cooperation.

Objective Learning outcomes:

The participants:

- coordinate tasks effectively under time and pressure constraints
- demonstrate confident behaviour in operational situations
- disseminate relevant information rapidly and accurately
- mediate misunderstandings between partners and organizations
- act proactively and solution-oriented in liaison roles
- evaluate their own work and cooperation critically
- differentiate between formal leadership with command authority and liaison leadership without command authority. They apply situational leadership based on influence, expertise, coordination, trust-building, and communication rather than hierarchy
- prevent role conflicts by communicating mandates, responsibilities, and limitations transparently and demonstrate humility by supporting incident management
- apply structured evaluation and feedback methods (e.g. debriefings) to critically assess their liaison performance and cooperation

Recommended Learning and teaching methods:

Simulations, role plays, collegial advice, think-pair-share, thinkers trio

Reocmmended teaching material/IT:

Video camera, scenario scripts, flipcharts, evaluation sheets

Literature:

1.

8.2.4 Bundle subject 4 – Disaster Management & Application

Bundle subject 4: Disaster Management & Application		
Learning field (LF): Establishing operational connections as disaster response		
Lesson units		**19,5 LU**
Self learning lessons		**8 LU**
Description of contents This bundle subject integrates and applies previously acquired knowledge and skills in realistic disaster management contexts. Participants gain an overview of disaster management structures, disaster team integration, and the positioning of liaison roles within disaster organizations. The subject addresses legal frameworks, relevant actors, and operational instruments used in disaster management. Using case studies and lessons learned from real deployments, participants analyze successes and challenges in disaster response. A key component is the final simulation exercise, including preparation, execution, structured debriefing, and evaluation. Psychosocial stress factors, resilience, and aftercare are explicitly addressed to support sustainable operational performance.		
Objective Learning outcomes: The participants: • describe national and international disaster management structures • analyze disaster situations using case studies and lessons learned • integrate liaison roles into disaster management teams • apply liaison competencies in a realistic disaster simulation • reflect on operational actions and derive improvement measures • apply structured operational evaluations and debriefings after simulations or disaster deployments and derive concrete improvement measures.		
Recommended Learning and teaching methods: Case studies, simulations, scenario exercises, debriefings, group reflection		
Recommended teaching material/IT: Simulation scripts, role cards, beamer, flipcharts, evaluation tools		
Literatur:		

9 Function and qualification of lectures

With regard to the learning fields and, in particular, the detailed description of the bundled subjects, it becomes clear that bundle subjects should be taught by instructors who have experiences in the fields. Furthermore, the necessary qualifications of the subject-matter instructors are explained.

The lecturers who teach the learning field Communication and Professional Conduct and the associated bundled subjects should have completed either a degree in

- psychology,
- education,
- communication studies,
- management-oriented,
- educational science
- or a degree such as an MBA in Responsibility, Leadership and Communication.

The lecturers who cover the topics of liaison disaster management and legal frameworks for disaster management should either

- be members of the disaster team themselves,
- lecturers in disaster management,
- and ideally have experience in cross-border cooperation.

10 Time table bundle subjects

	08:00-09:00	09:00-10:00	10:00-11:15	11:15 – 12:30	12:30-13:00	13:00-14:15	14:15-15:30	15:30-16:30
Day 1 07.05.26			**Orientation & Frameworks** **Introduction & Objectives** Course overview, importance of liaison work, how do we want to work together	**Orientation & Frameworks** **Understanding Structures of Both Countries** and **Organizational Understanding** Administrative (6) and operational systems, mapping similarities /differences, operations management (2), organizational understanding (20), environment /landscape – learning stations And administration, operations management, environment	**Lunch**	**Orientation & Frameworks** **Understanding Structures of Both Countries** and **Organizational Understanding** Administrative (6) and operational systems, mapping similarities /differences, operations management (2), organizational understanding (20), environment /landscape – learning stations And administration, operations management, environment	**Orientation & Frameworks** **Cross-Border Operational/Procedural Processes** Procedural frameworks, cooperation chains, cooperation between governments, regional organizations **Management & Application** **Disaster Management Structures** Setup, role distribution, integration into disaster teams	**Orientation & Frameworks** **Tasks and Roles of a Liaison Officer** Core functions: information provider, contact person, mediator, leader, activities of liaison – scenario-orientated cases, finding of failures
Day 2 08.05.26	**Orientation & Frameworks** **Tools for Liaisons** Manual, check list for Liaison, contact list, location maps, location representation, reporting tools, Funk – scenario-orientated simulation		**Operational Liaison Skills** **Coordination Ability Under Pressure** Managing time-sensitive coordination	**Operational Liaison Skills** **Confident Behavior in Operational Situations** and **Motivation / Proactive Attitude** Presence and leadership under pressure And being proactive in liaison tasks **Operational Liaison Skills** **Mediation in Case of Misunderstandings** Conflict resolution and reframing techniques – case simulations, video training		**Operational Liaison Skills** **Rapid Information Dissemination** Skill -> efficient communication to right people the right information – speed dating format	**Operational Liaison Skills** **Evaluation of Liaison Work in your own organisation/region and Cooperation**	**Management & Application** **Evaluation Methods** Feedback and peer evaluation, Reflection, Introduction in collective consultation, collective consultation in four groups based on the case studies

	08:00-09:00	09:00-10:00	10:00-11:15	11:15 – 12:15	12:15- 12:45	12:45 – 14:00	14:00-15:15	15:15- 16:30	16:30-17:45	
Day 3 26.05.26			**Liaison 1** **Management & Application** **Case Studies and Lessons Learned, from experts** Real-world deployments, successes and failures – scenario-orientated case simulation, analysing previous disaster management, description of real-life experiences, building a structure of Liaisons	**Liaison 2** **Management & Application** **Case Studies and Lessons Learned, from experts**	**Lunch**	**Liaison 3** **Management & Application** **Case Studies and Lessons Learned, from experts**	**Liaison 4** **Management & Application** **Case Studies and Lessons Learned, from experts**	**Liaison 5** **Management & Application** **Case Studies and Lessons Learned, from experts**		
	09:00 - 09:30	09:30 - 10:15	10:15 – 11:15	11:15 – 11:30	11:30 – 12:30	12:30 - 13:15	13:15 – 14:30	14:30 – 14:45	14:45 – 16:00	16:00 – 16:30
Day 4 27.05.26	**Communication & Culture** **Welcome** Welcome and introduction • Daily routine Organisational	**Communication & Culture** **What is intercultural competence?** • Situation example, group work • Definition and aspects of intercultural competence	**Communication & Culture** **Causes of misunderstandings Group work and input** • Situation analysis, exchange and reflection	**Coffee break**	**Communication & Culture** **Cultural Perception Group work: Typically Dutch & Typically German** • Input: Stereotypes and prejudices • Definition of culture	**Lunch**	**Communication & Culture** **The Self and the Other** Simulation game • Alienation, exchange and reflection	**Coffee break**	**Communication & Culture** **Action strategies Develop action strategies** • Situational examples, role-playing • Exchange and Reflection • Joint brainstorming	**Management & Application** **Conclusion** • Own evaluation
	08:00-09:00	09:00-10:00	10:00-11:15	11:15 – 12:15	12:15- 12:45	12:45 – 14:00	14:00-15:15	15:15- 16:30	16:30-17:45	
Day 5 28.05.26			**Management & Application** **Final Simulation Exercise**					**Management & Application** **Participants Evaluation / Feedback of the course**	**Management & Application** **Summary and final feedback of the course**	

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