

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. Objective 3 of the call for proposals "Cooperation projects on preparedness" covers enhancing availability of civil protection modules and other resources. At the same time the preparatory action on an EU Rapid Response Capability which was launched in 2008 with the aim to test innovative arrangements enhancing the availability of civil protection assistance through the Community Civil Protection Mechanism is renewed with the Budgetary Authority earmarking €M 7.5 in the budget for a preparatory action in 2009. What is the difference between the Call for proposals "Cooperation projects on preparedness" and the preparatory action?

The preparedness call is launched within the framework of the existing EU civil protection legislation, namely the Civil Protection Financial Instrument. The Financial Instrument provides an exclusive list of activities that can be financed through it.

Contrary to that, a preparatory action is of an experimental and temporary nature, with the aim of testing innovative arrangements that are not currently covered by the legislation and with a view of developing proposals for the future on the basis of the lessons learnt from these preparatory actions.

The main purpose of proposals funded under the preparatory action is therefore to test operational aspects of the use of resources made available for European civil protection interventions launched under the Mechanism. In particular, they can cover such actions as a) developing civil protection modules, b) keeping modules on standby, and c) deploying them on site. These actions cannot be financed under the Financial Instrument.

On the other hand, proposals eligible for funding under the Call for Cooperation projects on preparedness are limited to actions enumerated in Article 4 of the Financial Instrument. Examples of such actions include studies, surveys, modelling and scenario building, creation of networks and technology transfer, evaluation activities and the like. Proposals to be submitted within objective 3 of this call shall therefore focus on the above-listed activities linked to the civil protection modules and other resources, such as contingency planning or building scenarios, which could build on the results from previous projects focusing on regional cooperation.

On 4 May 2009 a special Info Day will be organised at the Commission premises in Brussels to share information on the calls to be launched under the Preparatory Action on an EU Rapid Response Capability this year.

2. The actions that would be financed under the call for proposals for a Preparatory Action on an EU rapid response capability shall cover maintaining on standby and deploying disaster response resources to provide disaster response assistance to affected countries affected by any kind of disaster. In case, the applicant intends to deploy modules, would that be limited to already defined types of modules only or it could include the new types of modules?

In case the disaster response resources are made of modules, there are two options:

a) this type of module has already been defined in Commission Decision 2008/773/EC Euratom in which case the components, tasks and characteristics of the module shall be in full compliance with this Decision. Considering the registrations of modules done so far, further needs for the following types of modules have been identified: emergency temporary shelters, aerial forest fire fighting modules using helicopters,

aerial forest fire fighting modules using planes, water purification, advanced medical posts with surgery, medical aerial evacuation of disaster victims and field hospital.

b) the applicant intends to develop a new type of module. In this case, the module shall comply at least with the requirements of rapid availability, deployment, self sufficiency and interoperability. These can include modules such as ground forest-fire fighting and flood containment, as well as fire-fighting at sea, maritime search and rescue, search and rescue in flood conditions, and modules in the field of CBRN. This list is not exhaustive.

3. Are regional authorities allowed to participate?

Yes, bearing in mind special provisions mentioned in paragraph 2.4. of the Grant Guide.

4. Is there a ceiling amount on a proposal?

No, apart from the global amount available for this call, namely 6,4 million EUR.

5. You mention that Commission will provide a module basic course in English to up to two persons of the key personal of the module team during the first semester 2010. Is there any possibility to enrol in the courses provided before the starting date of the grant agreement?

Nothing prevents the applicant from attending the modular basic course before the starting date of the grant agreement since the Commission provides the training. There are thus no eligible costs linked to that training. However, if the applicant intends to attend these courses before the start of the grant agreement, he needs to contact the relevant national training coordinator, who can then enrol him or her through the national quota.

6. Can in-kind costs cover the 20% of the budget to be financed by the applicant and possible associated beneficiary?

No, since the EU-contribution is calculated on the eligible costs, which must be costs actually incurred (and include their payment), it is logically impossible to cover the own financial contribution with "in-kind contributions". To give an example: if the costs of an action are €1.000, and the EU-contribution is €750, the beneficiary has to cover the remaining €250 by own funds. It cannot be argued that this money comes from "in-kind contributions" because the amount must still be paid.

If, on the contrary, the costs for own personnel are budgeted under "personnel", at the same time, these costs could be considered as own financial contribution, since there would be payment of salary and therefore a cost actually incurred.

7. Who has the ownership in case of a multinational module?

This is the kind of issue for which arrangements need to be found between all involved partners from the beginning so that the issue is crystal clear when submitting the proposal. Applicants shall also consider how sustainability of the European rapid response capability will be ensured once the lifespan of grant agreement has ended. In terms of communication channels, the Commission will be in contact with the coordinating beneficiary.

8. In case we intend to develop a new type of modules, must an ad hoc expert group give first a favourable opinion in order that the latter becomes eligible under this call for proposals?

No. See page 3 of the grant guide in which it is explained that the call is not limited to modules but covers resources in general.

9. There seems to be a heavy emphasis on forest fires in the guidance notes, even though the notes also say that any man-made or natural disaster can be addressed. For example, on page 2, it states: The goals of the Preparatory Action include improving the mobilisation of additional operational resources and emergency support from Member States to assist other Member States or third countries in coping with forest fires too numerous and intense to be handled by their own national capacities and manpower". Are applications that do not address the preparedness response to forest fire disasters less likely to be funded?

No, the excerpt mentioned is a quote from the explanatory background of the call (1.1. context of the call for proposals). Specific reference is made in that context to forest fires because the present call for proposals is a merge of the call for Pilot project 2008 on forest fires **and** of the Preparatory action 2008. The word "include"" has been used on purpose to reflect this "merge".

The objectives of the call are clearly defined in item 1.2. "Objectives" where it is specifically mentioned "The overall objective of the projects that may be co-funded under this call for proposals is to improve, on a test basis, the overall capacity of the EU to respond immediately, through the deployment of civil protection capacities, to critical needs **arising from major disasters of any type inside and outside the EU**, at the request of the MIC".

Forest fires is just an example of disaster that can be covered by the Preparatory Action in the same vein as forest fire fighting capacities mentioned under C (under 1.2. Objectives) is just an example of resources that could be used for this type of disaster.

The type of disaster covered is not a criterion that influences in a way or another the evaluation of the proposal.

10. Potential applicants send draft summary of proposals they intend to submit and ask the Commission whether these fit or not the objectives of the call.

Unfortunately, the Commission cannot comment on a summary description of a proposal. Indeed, proposals are assessed by an evaluation committee and only when they are complete of all elements, including the budget.

Potential applicants are invited to carefully read the technical aspects of the proposals and type of eligible actions (items 2.1 and 2.2 of the grant guide), and to check whether their organisation would have the knowledge, capacity and competent resources to fulfil all of them.

Whether the proposal fits this call depends on the objectives, the target audience, the expected outcomes and the overall framework in which the applicant intends to develop the project.

Please note that the Preparatory Action is meant to test innovative arrangements and may not duplicate with tools already existing in the current legal basis of the Mechanism (recast).

11. Are the deployment costs of the modules developed eligible under this call?

Deployment costs must be budgeted in the proposals as mentioned under page 9 of the grant guide under "types of eligible costs". The deployment costs are part of the eligible costs and thus co-financed by the Commission at 80%.

12. What exactly is the focus of MIC for this preparatory action: Early Warning (pre-impact); Response, Recovery (post-impact)? A combination? All?

Please read more specifically item 1.2. of the grant guide: "The overall objective of the projects that may be co-funded under this call for proposals is to improve, on a test basis, the overall capacity of the EU to **respond** immediately, through the deployment of civil protection capacities, to critical needs arising from major disasters of any type inside and outside the EU, at the request of the MIC. It shall also improve the availability of assistance through the Mechanism by ensuring that key civil protection resources are either available or on standby during relevant periods".

This call focuses thus on the response.

13. What emphasis do you place on the capabilities MIC is seeking: the coordination of info vs role during operations?

The focus of the call is to test the deployment of the European Rapid response capability in an emergency. The coordination role is ensured by the MIC.