

European Commission
Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
**10 YEARS OF THE EU CIVIL PROTECTION
MECHANISM**

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Facts & figures

- Since its launch in 2001, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has monitored 253 disasters and has received over 150 requests for assistance.
- Requests for assistance have been constantly increasing. In 2002 the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) received 3 requests, in 2005 14 and in 2010 28 requests.
- Over the past decade the Mechanism's membership has grown to 31 participating states.
- To date, almost 2 000 experts representing 30 participating states have attended the training courses financed by the European Commission.

BACKGROUND

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was established on 23 October 2001, and has developed rapidly since then. Initially developed as a cooperation mechanism for facilitating a rapid and efficient European response to disasters, it soon became an important tool for increasing the capability and preparedness of civil protection actors to deal with disasters both inside and outside Europe. The Mechanism is also contributing to developing measures for the prevention of disasters and the reduction of risks, with a view to making sure that all components of the disaster management cycle are being addressed.

EU Civil Protection Mechanism interventions cover all types of major emergencies: natural and man-made disasters, acts of terrorism and technological, radiological and environmental accidents, including accidental marine pollution.

Currently 31 states participate in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (EU-27 plus Croatia, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway). The participating countries pool the resources that can be made available to disaster-stricken countries all over the world. The European Commission manages the Mechanism through the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC), and in the future the Emergency Response Centre (ERC) will play a key role.

Main achievements

Constant strengthening of disaster prevention and preparedness

The European Commission supports and complements the prevention and preparedness efforts of participating states in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, focusing on areas where a common European approach is more effective than separate national approaches.

Improving the quality of and accessibility to disaster information, implementing prevention measures, raising public awareness on disaster management, developing guidelines on risk assessment and hazard mapping, encouraging research to promote disaster resilience, and reinforcing early warning tools are some of the EU-level disaster prevention activities being developed and constantly upgraded.

Providing faster and more efficient disaster response

Primary responsibility for dealing with the immediate effects of a disaster lies with the country in which it has occurred. Nevertheless, when the scale of the emergency overwhelms national response capabilities, a country can benefit from civil protection resources or teams from other countries.

The Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) facilitates provision of European assistance through the Mechanism by matching offers to needs and searching for solutions, and by appointing EU field experts when required. The MIC has grown into a well recognised focal point for exchange of requests and

offers of assistance. It also sends out early warning alerts on natural disasters and circulates latest updates on on-going emergencies and Mechanism interventions.

In addition, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has developed in a tool supporting transport of assistance. The MIC facilitates the access to transport resources by pooling of transport assets, co-financing transport costs, and hiring transport assets on the commercial market.

Enhancing international cooperation

International cooperation in the field of civil protection aims at improving disaster management policies of all the partners involved. Disaster prevention, preparedness, response and disaster risk reduction are areas for closer cooperation between the EU and

third parties. These third parties include EU candidate countries, neighbouring countries, OECD countries and EU's strategic partners, as well as the United Nations (UN) and other regional and international bodies.

EU Civil Protection Mechanism in action

Since its creation in 2001, the Mechanism has been activated for disasters in Member States – e.g. the forest fires in Portugal, floods in the Balkans in 2010 and explosion at a naval base in Cyprus in 2011 - but also worldwide, including recent earthquakes in Haiti, Chile and Japan. Since its launch in 2001, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has monitored 253 disasters and has received over 150 requests for assistance.

EU Civil Protection Mechanism Operations 2002-2011

