



EMERGENCY RESPONSE COORDINATION CENTRE

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

The ERCC operates around-the-clock and can deal with several emergencies in different time zones

Faster and more efficient response to disasters in Europe and beyond

Improved coordination between the Brussels-based European institutions, national authorities in EU Member States, and other international partners

Enhanced monitoring and analytical capacity ensures better preparedness and a coherent European response corresponding to the needs



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Key messages

- An immediate, coordinated and pre-planned response saves lives. The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) enables the EU and its Member States to respond to natural and man-made disasters in a timely and efficient manner.
- The ERCC collects and analyses real-time information on disasters, monitors hazards, prepares plans for the deployment of experts, teams and equipment, works with Member States to map available assets and coordinates the EU's disaster response efforts.
- The ERCC is the operational heart of the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#). It serves as a coordination hub to facilitate an efficient and coherent European response during emergencies inside and outside Europe.
- The Centre and the EU Civil Protection Mechanism improve joint planning and response coordination in Europe, complementing the role of the Member States.

Background

The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) was established in 2013. Its predecessor, the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) was created in 2001 as the main operational tool of the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#). The main goal of the Mechanism is to facilitate cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions in the event of major emergencies. Apart from the 28 EU Member States, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Turkey participate in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The participating states pool resources that can be made available to disaster-hit countries and share best practices in disaster management.

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The ERCC provides a one-stop-shop for civil protection capacities provided by the participating states. It acts as a coordination hub between participating states, the affected country and dispatched field experts. Any country inside or outside the EU affected by a major disaster can make an appeal for assistance through the ERCC. In response, the Centre matches offers of assistance with the needs of the disaster-stricken country.

Main tasks of the ERCC

Civil protection cooperation and development of EU emergency response capacity

The ERCC has established a fully staffed and trained duty system. Around-the-clock presence ensures real time monitoring and immediate reaction day and night, no matter when or where.

The ERCC manages a reserve of pre-committed assistance from participating states that can immediately be deployed. The countries participating in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism may commit resources on standby in a voluntary pool, ready to be deployed as part of a faster and more coherent European response when the need arises. The quality of the response is ensured through the establishment of quality criteria and a certification process.

The Centre can initiate a process of identification of eventual gaps in the panoply of European assistance and of proposals on how these gaps can be covered, through financial support from the EU. Under the Mechanism, the Commission can co-finance transport costs, thus enabling delivery of assistance to the country affected within a few hours with lower budgetary impact on the participating states offering the assistance. Pooling and consolidating shipments from various countries to the affected country boosts the efficiency of the European response.

Coordination platform for civil protection and humanitarian aid

The ERCC fosters increased coordination between the civil protection and humanitarian aid operations. The Centre keeps direct links to civil protection and humanitarian aid authorities in Member States which enables a smooth, real-time exchange of information. It ensures deployment of coordination and assessment teams composed of humanitarian aid and civil protection experts to conduct joint needs assessments.

Enhancing crisis response coordination at European level

The ERCC ensures cooperation and coherence of EU action at an inter-institutional level, focusing on coordination mechanisms with the European External Action Service, the Council and Member States. It also acts as the central 24/7 contact point upon invocation of the Solidarity Clause.

Examples of ERCC response

Cross-border solidarity in facing forest fires in Europe

The 2017 forest fire season was one of the most severe of the last decade. As States' capacities to respond were overwhelmed during the summer, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism was activated 16 times. The ERCC facilitated the deployment of firefighting airplanes and ground firefighting forces nine times. Portugal, Italy, Montenegro, France and Albania received assistance through the Mechanism. The European Commission co-financed the transportation of assets and several airplanes to be constantly operational during the forest fire season. The ERCC monitored the forest fire risk incidence on a daily basis and was in regular contact with national civil protection authorities to exchange information and coordinate the delivery of assistance.

All EU emergency response means were mobilised for Nepal

Over 8500 people were reported dead and many more injured, after a devastating earthquake struck Nepal in April 2015 followed by several strong aftershocks. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was activated upon request from the Nepali authorities. A large number of participating states offered search and rescue teams, as well as water purification systems and other technical assistance. The coordinated delivery of assistance was facilitated through the ERCC. The Copernicus Emergency Management Service was also activated for the provision of satellite images of the disaster area to support the ongoing operations. An EU Civil Protection team, composed of 10 humanitarian experts and 3 liaison officers, was deployed for more than 20 days through the ERCC.

