

## European Commission Factsheet

# Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

### Visit the European Commission exhibition booth:

14-18 March, 10:00 – 20:00

Sendai Mediatheque  
Gallery on 5th and 6th floors  
2-1 Kasugamachi Aoba-ku  
Sendai-shi, Japan

### Attend the European Commission side event:

*Putting Policy in Practice:  
Innovation and community  
preparedness*

16 March, 14:00 - 17:00

In English with Japanese  
translation

Tohoku University Kawauchi-  
kita  
Campus Multimedia Hall,  
Sendai, Japan

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**2015**  
European Year  
for Development

The European Commission is taking a cross-sectoral approach to disaster risk management inside the European Union (EU) and beyond. Here are the key policy areas where the EU is taking action:

### Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

The European Commission, through its [Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department](#), helps over 120 million victims of conflict and disasters worldwide every year.



Photo credit: ECHO

The EU is committed to reducing vulnerability and building resilience to future stresses and shocks as pre-requisites for poverty reduction and sustainable development and to making risk management approaches an integral part of all EU humanitarian aid and development assistance programming within all sectors and contexts.

Enhancing the EU's resilience to crises, as well as its capacity to anticipate, prepare and respond to risks, especially cross-border risks, is amongst the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy: competitiveness and sustainability depend upon effective disaster risk management which helps to avoid losses and strengthens resilience to increasing global shocks and threats. In the last 10 years, significant achievements have been made both through Union policies and financial support.

The new provisions in the revised EU civil protection legislation set the framework for implementation of a cross-sectoral disaster risk management policy, promoting a comprehensive approach for all natural and man-made risks throughout all phases of the disaster management cycle: prevention, preparedness and response.

Progress has been also made in crisis and vulnerability assessments through the development of a common, transparent science-based humanitarian risk index (the Risk Management Index 'InfoRM' was launched in 2014) based on open data and aimed at harmonizing disaster risk management across humanitarian actors (a joint initiative of the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the European Commission as well as donors, NGOs and Member States).



## International Cooperation and Development

EU development cooperation supports a range of programmes on Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Intra-ACP Cooperation has allocated €180 million since 2008 to address existing and emerging risks caused by natural hazards. This was possible by working with key actors active on disaster risk reduction such as: African Union, African Development Bank, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, Caribbean Development Bank, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. Concrete action is being delivered on policy and legislative frameworks for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, risk identification, risk reduction and preparedness, risk financing and resilient recovery.



Photo credit:  
UNEP Disasters & Conflicts

The [Global Climate Change Alliance](#) (GCCA) is an EU initiative launched in 2007 that addresses adaptation and mitigation to climate change, mainstreaming, disaster risk reduction and/or reducing emissions from deforestation and land degradation (REDD). The GCCA has already channelled €316.5 million in support of 50 programmes in 38 countries and eight regions and sub regions in Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific and South-East Asia. Specific programs supporting disaster risk reduction are implemented in nine countries.

Since 2009, with the adoption of the EU Strategy in support to disaster risk reduction in developing countries, the European Commission has mainstreamed disaster risk reduction in development cooperation policies and programs. In 2013, the EU adopted the Resilience Action plan, promoting resilience as a central aim of EU external assistance with disaster risk reduction playing a major role in addressing the root causes of natural disasters.

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## Space data at the service of emergency

Copernicus is an EU earth observation space programme under civil control. Copernicus monitors the Earth to support, among others, the protection of the environment and the efforts of civil protection and civil security and fosters global initiatives. Copernicus has six different services: Emergency management, Atmosphere Monitoring, Marine environment monitoring, Land monitoring, Climate change, and Security. The space component of Copernicus consists of 24 satellites called Sentinels; Sentinel 1-A was launched in April 2014 and its data is already used by the Emergency Service. By the end of 2020, eight Sentinels will be in orbit and over 24 Sentinels by 2040, providing most of the data needed by the Copernicus services.



Photo credit:  
ECHO/Viktorija Jeras

The [Copernicus Emergency Management Service](#) (EMS) has been in operation since April 2012. It supports crisis managers, civil protection authorities and humanitarian aid actors dealing with natural disasters, man-made emergency situations and humanitarian crises, as well as those involved in preparedness and recovery activities. As an EU service, the EMS's first priority is responding to national or cross-border disasters in Europe and large-scale disasters outside the EU. The Emergency service has two main components, Mapping and Early Warning. The Copernicus EMS Mapping Service provides a year-round 24/7 Rapid Mapping service for high-speed service delivery during crises. It also provides

a Risk and Recovery Mapping service, which is designed for pre- or post-crisis situations in support of prevention, preparedness, disaster risk reduction and recovery activities. Finally, the Early Warning components of the EMS delivers alerts and risk assessments of floods and forest fires.

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## Research and Innovation

The EU has supported multi-national and interdisciplinary research and innovation in the field of natural hazards since the late 1980s. The focus was placed mainly on climate and geological-related hazards such as floods, droughts, landslides, avalanches, forest fires, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. So far, EU research and innovation has enabled the development of methods and technologies for improved hazard and risk assessment, forecasting and monitoring, management and mitigation, as well as crisis management. The developed tools address the entire risk-reduction chain and have been integrated into robust frameworks that can support decision-making at all levels. In addition, innovative research infrastructures have been developed, to lead the progress in relevant fields of science and technology.

[Horizon 2020](#), the 2014-2020 EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, will foster, among others, the development of innovative and systemic risk reduction solutions. The overall aim will be to enhance the resilience of societies and ecosystems to natural hazards, addressing simultaneously economic, environmental and social objectives.



Photo credit: Galló Gustav

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## Science for Disaster Risk Reduction

The EU's in-house science service, the Joint Research Centre turns science into usable information and science-based advice for policies aimed at disaster risk reduction. It also provides science-based analyses for emergency preparedness and response coordinated activities. It supports the operational work of EU institutions and their strategic partners including UN organisations, as well as the development and monitoring of policy aimed at disaster risk reduction.



Photo credit: A. Annunziato, JRC

Through scientific partnerships in the EU and at international level, the Joint Research Centre carries out research in early warning, vulnerability and risk analysis and impact assessment. For example, the activities of the Joint Research Centre cover the definition of standards for safer buildings and disaster loss data sharing and development of global disaster awareness and alerting systems.

More information on the tools and platforms developed by the Joint Research Centre is available here: <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/default/files/jrc-science-for-disaster-risk-reduction-report.pdf>