



Safe-Quake
Final Technical Implementation Report
Grant Agreement № 070401/2009/540491/SUB/A4

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1. General reminder of project objectives, partnership and expected deliverables

The project SAFE-QUAKE “Improvement of the population’s post-disaster behavior living in urban areas with high seismic risk” was approved in 2009 by the European Commission under the Civil Protection Financial Instrument in the field of preparedness projects. The total project duration was 14 months – project implementation started on March, 2010 and finalized on 31 May, 2011. The total estimated project budget was 420,000 EUR, of which the EC financial contribution amounted to 295,000 EUR.

The Coordinating Beneficiary (CB) was the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (GIES) of Romania and Associated Beneficiaries (AB) were the Fire Safety and Civil Protection Directorate-General of Bulgaria (FSCP DG) and the National Protection and Rescue Directorate of Croatia (NPRD).

The main objectives of the project are:

- To evaluate the level of population’s knowledge on the first measures to be taken post-earthquake;
- To exchange information and share experience between MS experts regarding the best practices and recommendations on self – protection and mutual assistance between civilians, as well as between civilians and rescue teams;
- To set up a concise set of basic rules to be followed by the population in case of earthquake until the arrival of professional intervention;
- To increase the public awareness on the set of behavior rules, especially focusing on the target groups, such as: disabled people, children, elderly;
- To prepare the population for an appropriate reaction in case of earthquake in urban areas with high seismic risk;
- To promote civilian participation to the disaster response efforts performed by emergency services and authorities.

Actions and means involved:

- Performing a population survey in order to establish the level of preparedness on the first steps to be taken post-earthquake;
- Performing a survey addressed to the professional and voluntary rescue teams in order to identify their expectations on the potential support they can get from civilians during rescue operations;
- Sharing experience on best practices followed by the professional intervention teams and drawing – up of a set of basic rules for population in a seminar with international participation;
- Performing a Case Study on vulnerable groups, analyze the characteristics and needs of each of them and drawing – up the set of basic rules;
- Information dissemination and raising public awareness through promotion campaigns addressed to the large public and in schools, asylums, special schools;

- Performing a practical demonstration on the behavior described in the set of basic rules.

Expected results:

- Acquiring a clear picture on population preparedness and rescue teams expectations on the post earthquake basic behavior;
- Elaboration of set of basic rules to be followed by the population in case of earthquake until the arrival of rescue teams in an accessible form and language addressed to all possible affected target-groups;
- A better prepared population living in urban areas to cope with the effects of an earthquake;
- A more motivated population to support the rescue teams during the intervention process;
- Raising the rate of survival after an earthquake

2. General summary of project implementation process

• General overview of the process

In general terms, the overall project implementation was successful and effective. All the project activities planned were carried out, expected results and the project objectives were achieved. During the project progress good communication, exchange of ideas and collaboration were established between the three partner countries. The Coordinating Beneficiary provided timely expert assistance whenever needed (in case of questions related to technical and financial aspects of project implementation, as well as reporting).

Despite the intentions of the project partners for following the set deadlines for each task in the GA, there was some delay in keeping up with the approved schedule, fortunately not affecting the overall objectives and planned activities. These delays were caused by bureaucratic rules and internal procedures associated with the specific provisions and requirements of the national legislation in each of the partner countries (e.g. the organization and carrying out of the public tender / procurement procedures for selecting and sub-contracting the research company for the population surveys took quite a long time to plan ahead and carry out), as well as administrative / logistic bottlenecks (not able to agree upon an earlier proposed date due to inability of partners to attend the event, etc.).

Nevertheless, following the EC's approval for this new schedule, the Coordinating Beneficiary and both Associated Beneficiaries made the necessary efforts for overcoming the difficulties, keeping up with tight project deadlines so as to catch up with delayed activities. As a result, project objectives and expected results were efficiently achieved.

Furthermore, the project proved to have a good sustainability and multiplicity of results since project deliverables and results will be used for future initiatives and disseminated to a wider audience not only in the three project partner countries but also in all the countries participating in the Mechanism.

Following the approval of the project by the EC in 2009 and the signature of the Grant Agreement (GA) by the CB and the EC on 13.11.2009 (a copy of the signed GA was distributed by the CB to the ABs), the CB and ABs draw up and signed the corresponding Partnership Agreements.

According to Action A.1 of the GA, a kick-off meeting with representatives of the CB and the other two project partners was held on January 11, 2010 at Brussels to present the project and to start the common work. This kick-off meeting was arranged and scheduled by EC with all the organizations involved in EU approved projects.

At the start of the project a SAFE-QUAKE logo was created and a website (www.safequake.eu) was developed (Action E.1 of the GA), which is operational and regularly updated to allow greater project visibility and access of the wide public to project information and deliverables (results). The site contains information about the project itself, the partners' institutions, as well as shows the main stages of the project implementation:

- 1) the initial Partners meeting in Bucharest, Romania 31.05. – 01.06.2010;
- 2) the results of the Survey performed and the Case Studies developed in each partner country;
- 3) the International Seminar in Bucharest, Romania 24 – 26.11.2010;
- 4) the Awareness Campaigns and DEMODAY conducted in each partner country.

Due to the fact that there were internal structural changes of AB1 – the Fire Safety and Civil Protection Directorate-General (FSCP DG) to the Ministry of the Interior, three official Letters of Notification (along with the necessary new and updated templates Forms A3 and A5) were elaborated and sent to the CB for informing the Commission about these changes.

Furthermore, for the purposes of project implementation, all three partners formed an internal project implementation working group with representatives from its specialized administration sectors having specific relevance to the project planned activities and expected results, as well as contributing with expertise to its overall objective.

Moreover, at project start up certain *force majeure* events concerning the structural modifications of the FSCP DG and the associated changes in its structure, acting legal framework and administrative staff occurred. Regardless of this, the FSCP DG took timely and coordinated measures to inform the CB on this issue and its subsequent actions. The required documents and information were submitted to the CB in due time and with proper quality so as to avoid further project implementation difficulties and obstacles.

- **Comparative analysis of:**
 - **initial and actual time schedule**

Following the signature of the GA and the Partnership Agreements and prior to project implementation start, the CB proposed and sent to the ABs a tentative project implementation schedule for activities for the period 01.03.2010 – 29.10.2010 (via e-mail on 08.02.2010) for agreement between all project partners. There was a slight delay in project implementation – as compared to initial deadlines set in the GA. Following the overall delay in accomplishing some of the tasks scheduled in the Grant Agreement and taking into consideration that the overall objectives and planned activities of the project were not affected, the CB informed the EC services on this issue and proposed to them the relevant corrective measure, namely for reducing the time for performing the population surveys in four weeks (instead of the initially scheduled eight weeks – Action B.3 of the GA).

- **planned and uses resources**

The financial, technical and human resources allocated for the project proved to be sufficient and effectively used and managed so as to allow for good project management and implementation, adequate monitoring and control, as well as guarantee sustainable results.

- expected and actual results

According to the GA the expected results were:

- *“Acquiring a clear picture on population preparedness and rescue teams expectations on the post earthquake basic behavior”*

Actions undertaken for achieving the results: draft structure of the questionnaires for the population and the rescue teams delivered and exchanged among project partners; research companies contracted; final questionnaires delivered; population and rescue teams surveys carried out and vulnerable groups case studies performed; survey results interpreted, exchanged and compared among project partners, e-mail correspondence exchanged; Agenda, Minutes and attendance sheets from two partner meetings (in Romania and Croatia); Contracts signed with sub-contracted research companies; invoices for services provided

According to the tasks in the GA, the project partners prepared the draft structure of the Questionnaires for the population and the rescue teams surveys according to their national interests and needs and sent them via e-mail to the CB (Action B.1 of the GA). They also prepared some questions for people with disabilities Based on their proposals, the coordinating beneficiary harmonized the questions and developed new draft questionnaires. Then the CB developed the technical specification and contracted the research company in order to realize the final questionnaires and to perform the survey on the population from Bucharest.

During the first partner meeting held in Bucharest, Romania, in the period 31.05.-01.06.2010 the final form and content (structure) of the questionnaire for the population and the rescue teams survey were discussed and accepted by all project partners (Action B.2 of the GA). The selected research company was present at the meeting and provided support in designing the final questionnaires. Furthermore, case studies for vulnerable groups were discussed. Administrative issues and future project tasks were discussed, outlined and accepted by all partners. The project implementation schedule was updated. Minutes from the meeting were elaborated and accepted by all partners and then sent by the CB to the EC.

In the next period, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for selecting and sub-contracting a research company for the population surveys were elaborated, a public procurement (according to national legislation procedures) was organized and carried out, a Contractor was selected and a Contract was signed - for ABs. During the period august-september 2010, the population and rescue teams surveys (Action B.3 of the GA) were conducted, as well as case studies for different vulnerable groups (blind, deaf-mute, disabled, children and elderly) were elaborated and conducted (Action B.4 of the GA).

Result is achieved. Indicators of achievement: reports and analysis (statistics, charts, diagrams) for population and rescue teams surveys conducted; case studies for vulnerable groups elaborated and results interpreted; presentations on survey results elaborated and carried out by project partners; joint analysis, conclusions and recommendations made by project partners, project website updated with information on project actions, etc.

A second partner meeting was held in Zagreb, Croatia, in the period 11-12.10.2010 (Action B.5 of the GA) for interpretation of the survey results. At the working meeting the

three project partners presented, compared and analyzed the results from the conducted population and rescue teams surveys and vulnerable groups case studies on earthquake preparedness. The discussions during the meeting led to a joint conclusion that there is a substantial need for the public to be informed and for the authorities to conduct a large media campaign. Also it was concluded that, for the most part, the public would like to participate and to help in the case of an earthquake but need to be trained on how to do that first. The results of the rescue teams surveys are in favor of the above mentioned conclusion. During this meeting social treatment of vulnerable groups members was recognized and underlined as an issue which should be the matter of top civil protection interest requesting special contingency plans with detailed procedures and dedicated/special operational task forces to be developed in each one of the Project partners countries. Based on the results from the discussions the project partners established the topics to be discussed during the international Seminar in Bucharest (Action C.1 of the GA), experts to be invited and the overall project implementation agenda / schedule. The final form of the questionnaires was sent to the EC, attached to the First Progress Report and the result of the survey may be accessed on the project website.

According to the GA the expected results were:

- *“Elaboration of set of basic rules to be followed by the population in case of earthquake until the arrival of rescue teams in an accessible form and language addressed to all possible affected target-groups”*

Actions undertaken for achieving the results: International seminar in Bucharest organized and conducted; information and experience exchanged between MS experts regarding the best practices and recommendations on self-protection and earthquake preparedness, as well as mutual assistance between civilians and rescue teams; proposals and recommendations of working groups in the seminar elaborated and structured into a set of basic rules in an accessible form and language addressed to all possible affected target groups (for the population in general and for vulnerable groups of people with different psychological/physical disabilities); draft versions of two types of brochures (one for the population and one for the vulnerable groups) in terms of content and design elaborated; seminar visibility and media broadcasting ensured, e-mail correspondence exchanged between partners; Agenda, Minutes and attendance sheets from seminar; presentations carried out by project partners and experts in the field of earthquake preparedness and seismology; working panels formed, discussions and final recommendations made.

According to Action C.1 of the GA, an International Seminar was conducted in Bucharest, Romania, in the period 24-26 November 2010 with the participation of the three project partners, representatives from the participating countries in the Civil Protection Community Mechanism, as well as lectors and experts in the field of earthquake preparedness and seismic risk, volunteer organizations (NGOs), etc. During the seminar presentations were carried out, as well as participants were grouped in 2 working panels – one to address the population and the other for vulnerable groups (people with disabilities). The working groups elaborated the set of basic rules for earthquake preparedness (to be included in a brochure). On the occasion of the Seminar, the participants were asked to fill in an evaluation questionnaire about the organization of the activity. The overall opinion was favorable, mentioning that the Seminar was well-organized and well-structured, the discussed topics and the presented items were balanced, the outcomes being very fruitful.

A draft version of the brochure (for the population and the vulnerable groups) was elaborated and agreed upon by all partners. Seminar visibility (Action C.2) was ensured with the attendance and broadcasting of media. Future project tasks and project implementation

schedule were discussed among the project partners and main priority actions until the end of 2010 were outlined.

Result is achieved. Indicators of achievement – set of basic rules for the population and the vulnerable groups elaborated, media broadcasts (radio/TV/newspaper); project website updated with information on project actions, etc.

According to the GA the expected results were:

- *“A better prepared population living in urban areas to cope with the effects of an earthquake.”*
- *“A more motivated population to support the rescue teams during the intervention process.”*
- *“Raising the rate of survival after an earthquake.”*

Actions undertaken for achieving the results:

The necessary informational (brochures containing the set of basic rules to be followed in case of an earthquake + CDs for the population and the vulnerable groups, leaflets and posters) and promotional materials (banners, T-shirts, caps and pens) for dissemination to the project target groups were designed and printed; the population and the target groups were informed on the awareness raising campaign launch (via different media channels – TV, radio, newspapers, electronic media online news agencies etc.), e-mail correspondence exchanged between partners; official documents related to external sub-contracting services for the design and printing out of the informational and promo items of the project (Technical specifications elaborated, offers, letters of invitation to tender published, Evaluation committees formed, working sessions conducted, protocols, contracts signed with selected Contractors, delivery and acceptance protocols created and signed, invoices, bills, bank payment orders, internal financial reports, etc.); the awareness raising campaign was organized and conducted; the printed materials were disseminated to the population and the different target groups; people were informed and motivated to learn and educate themselves about the proper behavior in case of an earthquake (often times prevention is better than reaction and mitigation of the consequences). Better population preparedness for safe and correct behavior in case of an earthquake was ensured through the dissemination of the informational materials (brochures with the set of basic rules) and the awareness raising campaign. Particular attention was paid to the vulnerable groups in specialized institutions and to the medical and pedagogical personnel working with them. Good project visibility was ensured through open communication with the public and different media channels.

Result is achieved. Indicators of achievement - designed, printed and distributed informational and promotional materials (brochures, CDs, leaflets, posters, banners, T-shirts, caps, pens); practical demonstration in a public place on the behavior described in the set of basic rules performed; schools and specialized institutions visited; media publications, interviews, TV and radio news reports broadcasted, pictures and short films made.

According to Action C.3 of the GA *“Producing (printing out) a brochure containing the set of basic rules”*, two separate brochures – for the population and for the vulnerable groups (with a CD) containing the set of basic rules for safe and correct behavior in case of an earthquake were designed and printed by an external sub-contracted company. Leaflets, posters and banners were also elaborated. These information materials were distributed during the awareness raising campaign conducted by the three project partners during 1 month time.

According to Action D.1 of the GA “*Informing the public on the awareness raising campaign launch*”, before the official start of the awareness raising campaign, the Coordinating Beneficiary and both Associated Beneficiaries announced to the public the relevant information about the SAFEQUAKE project and the upcoming awareness raising campaign launch. This was done through national media channels (TV and radio), newspapers and online information agencies. Representatives from the national civil protection structures participated in TV news panels (interviews) and informed the public about the awareness campaign launch. The elaborated informational materials under the project (such as: brochures for the population + CD, brochures for the vulnerable groups + CD, leaflets, posters and banners) were placed in public institutions and public places for dissemination to the public. The population and the target groups were informed about the campaign launch, its objectives, events planned and results expected.

According to Action D.2 of the GA, “*Awareness raising campaign launch*”, various public events were organized and conducted by the Coordinating Beneficiary and both Associated Beneficiaries, as it follows:

CB– Romania

- A DEMODAY was conducted on April 8th, 2011 in Bucharest, in a central area- Herastrau Park. The DEMODAY was an outdoor event with practical demonstrations performed by the rescue and firefighting teams (part of the Inspectorate for Emergency Situations of Bucharest Municipality) as well as with the active participation of volunteers and specialized rescue teams from the Red Cross and Ambulance Service

The core action of the DEMODAY was established on 3 levels:

- Information
 - materials (video and hand-outs) on the measures and rules to be known by the citizens in case of the earthquake.
 - important issues to be known by the citizens of Bucharest (e.g. relocation places for the homeless people).
- First-aid techniques
 - medical emergency first-aid offered by the paramedics and by the Ambulance personnel; the role of Red Cross volunteer teams in the event of a major earthquake.
 - psychological first-aid in case of a major earthquake
- Search and rescue techniques
 - exhibition of technical equipment
 - practical demonstration

Before the 8th of April, representatives of the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations advertised the DEMODAY, by distributing the leaflets in central and crowded areas and explaining to the citizens the purpose and the relevance of the demo-day and by visiting schools, kindergartens, institutions where they posted the posters for promoting the DEMODAY and encouraging citizens' attendance and participation.

Also, the DEMODAY was announced prior to its start via different media channels. Representatives of mass-media (TV, radio, newspapers, online news agencies) were present at the event. The journalists broadcasted the event on prime time and published detailed information/articles about DEMODAY (newspapers, internet).

Herastrau Park was the main location for the DEMODAY but there were also other secondary locations - 8 parks, covering major districts of our capital, where representatives of GIES, Red Cross and volunteers distributed the brochures and the promo materials elaborated under the project. The event was attended by many people of all ages – children, students, adults, elderly people, etc. In general, the population expressed interest in the event.

- GIES representatives visited schools, asylums, special schools, kindergartens, universities and sustained presentations about the safety measures to be taken in case of the earthquake and distributed the informational materials elaborated under the project. The people reaction to the awareness campaign was positive; they were motivated and interested in this initiative and appreciated the information and the info materials provided.

During the campaign the GIES representatives had meetings with vulnerable groups, for blind people specific material being printed out in Braille alphabet.

AB – Bulgaria

- Conducted “Open Doors Day” initiative in a high school in Sofia with the participation of students, school management staff and personnel, as well as representatives from the FSCP DG. Presentations on the safe and proper behavior in case of an earthquake were made by the civil protection staff and fire fighters, as well as rescue and firefighting equipment was demonstrated. At the event were distributed the informational and promotional items elaborated under the project. Media was present and recorded the event, which was broadcasted (TV, radio) and published (newspapers, Internet).
- Conducted “Info Day” for vulnerable groups in a specialized school for children with speech and hearing impairment disabilities with the participation of representatives from the FSCP DG. Through specially provided sign language interpretation, the children were informed and instructed on the proper and correct behavior in case of an earthquake, as well as were given specific information applicable to cases with their disability – whom to seek for help and first-aid, how to behave during and after the disaster, what would be the proper self-protective measures, etc. Specialized school personnel (medical and teachers/pedagogues) were also present at the event and showed active interest in the presentation and the brochure for the vulnerable groups. Firefighters and rescuers showed their equipment and specialized rescue vehicles to the children explained their functions and shared stories and personal experience from their rescue and firefighting missions. The target groups (vulnerable groups, the personnel working with them) were informed on the relevant specific self-protective measures and rules to follow in case of earthquakes. Informational and promo materials were distributed. Furthermore, the promo and informational items for other vulnerable groups (the specific brochure for the vulnerable groups) were distributed to other specialized institutions, special schools, asylums, etc. Media were present and recorded the event, which was broadcasted (TV, radio) and published (newspapers, Internet).
- Conducted DEMODAY on April 9th, 2011 in Sofia (capital) at the National Palace of Culture Plaza in the downtown part of the capital. The DEMODAY was a public, outdoor event with practical demonstrations of urban search and rescue (USAR) techniques during and after an earthquake according to four different scenarios. The practical demonstrations were performed by the rescue and firefighting teams of the FSCP DG, with the active participation of volunteers and specialized rescue teams from the Bulgarian Red Cross, as well as the medical emergency services units. The DEMODAY was announced prior to its start via different media channels - TV (participation in morning news block panels, interviews), radio, newspapers, online news agencies. Representatives from the FSCP DG visited schools, institutions were they posted the informational materials (banners, posters) for promoting the upcoming DEMODAY and encouraging citizens’ attendance and participation. The event was attended by many people of all ages – children, students, elderly people, etc. In general, the population expressed interest in the event and listened to the explanations and instructions of the rescuers and firefighters. The informational (brochures, leaflets) and promo items elaborated under the project (T-shirts, caps and

pens) were distributed to the population at the event. People were informed on the importance of being well-prepared for an earthquake and to have a disaster prevention culture. Citizens learned about the importance of having a disaster survival kit (its content, where to store it) a Family Preparedness Plan (in cases of disasters), home insurance against disasters, earthquake drills and trainings, etc.) Media were present and recorded the event, which was later broadcasted on TV, radio, as well as published in written press (newspapers).

AB– Croatia

- A DEMODAY was conducted on April 18th, 2011 in Zagreb, on the major fore squares in the city. The DEMODAY was an outdoor event with practical demonstrations performed by the rescue teams.
- Prior to the day a great deal of posters, flyers, brochures and CD-s were distributed amongst the schools, special schools and homes for the elderly in the city in order to raise awareness on the upcoming event. Furthermore there were radio and TV announcements prior to the event and a few interviews on the Project were given on the local radio and TV networks and also for the Internet portals. Also a press conference was held prior to the actual events with our Director, Mr. Damir Trut, The Civil Protection Commander, Mr. Huzjak, the seismological expert, Mr.Kuk and, the Head of the Prevention, Planning and Inspection Division, Mr. Sajko present.
- The DEMODAY has been held on the main squares in Zagreb: Bana Josipa Jelačića Square, Petra Preradovića Square, King Tomislav Square and Marketplace Utrine
- The material was disseminated amongst the population with the population showing a great deal of interest and having numerous requests for more such material. All ages and profiles of Zagrebs population were present, showed interest and were pleased in the Directorate demonstrating on the actions to be taken in case of an earthquake, also there were quite a few comments on the event being a single one and on the need to repeat such an event regularly. There has been a larger percentage of the elderly citizens present throughout the event with them showing a great interest in helping with the dissemination of the material amongst their communities and those not situated in the homes for the elderly, which were informed on the event earlier.
- Promotions of the Project and demonstrations of the behavior in case of an earthquake were held by the rescue teams, rescue dogs and the Zagreb County Protection and Rescue Office. Also practical demonstrations on tools rescue teams use with rescue dogs were presented on the main square which the present population, especially the children, found very interesting.
- On the actual day there were also lectures held in the schools in Zagreb by the County Protection and Rescue Office, demonstrations of the rescue equipment and, of course, flyers, brochures, CD-s, pens, caps, and T-shirts distributed amongst the children.
- **All the actions were documented by newspaper reporters and national televisions.**
- In order to have a multiplicity of the results, the NPRD distributed the materials to its offices at regional level in the for regions and to all 20 offices

- With the positive impact of the Projects actions on the population and the findings of the research preformed, it is our finding that the results of this Project have to be shown and used in the future. Furthermore that such and all similar actions, informing populations on the behavior in case of an earthquake, should be regularly preformed on a yearly basis, if not more often, a national “Be prepared for earthquake” day will be declared in Croatia not to single out this Project as an exception but to make it a rule.

In general, in the three partner countries, the citizens’ reaction to the awareness campaign was positive - people showed interest and motivation to read the brochures and learn more about earthquakes and disasters preparedness.

3. Evaluation of the project management / implementation process

- **Positive aspects / opportunities**

Taking into consideration the consequences of large-scale earthquakes affecting people and the lack of active involvement, disaster awareness culture and responsibility of citizens towards their own protection and earthquake self-preparedness, this project was of utmost importance in contributing to public awareness raising, building and promoting a disaster awareness and seismic culture in civilians, as well as in allowing to have a better prepared population, ready for an appropriate reaction in case of earthquake in areas with high seismic risk. Furthermore, the project also focused on another important and urgent social aspect of disasters (specifically earthquakes) preparedness – addressing the special needs of specific target groups - vulnerable groups (people with different psychological/physical disabilities), children and the elderly. Also, the project was an effective tool for promoting and encouraging the active involvement and participation of civilians in disasters response efforts performed by emergency services and first responders (e.g. rescue teams, fire brigades, first aid medical services, etc.).

The active involvement of the three international partners and the specific socio-economic (as well as natural landscape) aspects of each country, their national needs and priorities in terms of disasters preparedness and protection enabled the exchange of valuable experience, good practices and ideas among the participating countries, ultimately leading to the achievement of the overall objective. Furthermore, through the public awareness raising activities, organized and conducted as part of this project, the importance of the preventive approach, as compared to the reaction and recovery (mitigation) approach was highlighted, ultimately reaching the conclusion that “prevention is better than cure”. People understood that earthquakes are natural hazards and that being well-informed and prepared for proper reaction and safe behavior can enhance their chances of survival in the event of a large and destructive earthquake. Also, a special emphasis was placed on vulnerable groups – their specific needs at the occurrence of a disaster (earthquake) and the ways they can cope with the earthquake itself and the physical and psychological post-effects of the disaster. The specialized medical and pedagogical staff working with them was instructed as well.

In general, the population in the three partner countries showed active interest and concern towards the public awareness campaign topic and the SAFE-QUAKE project. People attended and participated in the organized public events (school visits, DEMODAY), showed interest in the elaborated info and promo items and there was feedback between the people and the rescue teams. Concepts like the “*Disaster survival kit*” and “*Family Emergency Plan*”, as well as “*disasters insurance policy*” were relatively new and interesting, as well as useful information. The vulnerable groups, as a target group, under the project (and specifically the specialized medical, psychological and pedagogical staff working with them) found the project deliverables (informational brochure, on-site visits and presentations) very useful and necessary in view of the special needs and concerns of each vulnerable group.

In conclusion, the realization of this project provided the three participating countries the opportunity to share and exchange experience, knowledge and good practices in coping with the disastrous effects of earthquakes, but most importantly, the preventive approach and the role of information and preparedness were emphasized. Project partners were able to compare and contrast results achieved in their countries during the different stages of the project implementation (the conducted sociological surveys, public awareness raising campaigns), and on this basis to consider future measures applicable in their countries in the field of improving the response capacity and preparedness of the authorities and citizens in case of an earthquake. Last but not least, the project realization showed that being informed and well prepared to adequately and quickly react in case of an earthquake can save lives, but it is a collective responsibility of all of us – authorities at decision-making level, rescue teams (operational level) and the population in general. Building up the proper disaster awareness culture in citizens is a collective responsibility at all levels of our society.

- **Internal and external difficulties encountered**

Internal difficulties: The specific administrative internal rules and procedures of each partner institution sometimes posed difficulties and challenges for the timely and well-coordinated project implementation (bottlenecks). Long administrative coordination and agreement procedures (bureaucracy), which also apply to the management and implementation of international projects often times caused unforeseen and unavoidable delays in keeping up with previously set deadlines.

Sometimes specific national legislation rules and procedures (relating to tender procedures and public procurements) caused further delays in meeting the initially set and adopted project deadlines.

External difficulties: Delays in project partner's activities at national level as a result of legal and administrative rules and procedures (e.g. sub-contracting obligatory requirements and deadlines according to national legislation / public procurement law, etc.); sometimes too many different points to be discussed and trying to find a common solution (harmonization), administrative and technical problems, etc.

- **Partnership / core group cooperation (as appropriate)**

In the process of joint implementation of the project among the three participating countries, good partnership and successful cooperation have been established. Having the opportunity to exchange ideas, experience and recommendations in the field of earthquakes experience is another positive outcome of the joint team work. Active "open" and transparent communication has been established between the three project partners. ABs have been very professional and managed very well with sufficient time assigned for all the tasks. From the ABs feedback, the Coordinating Beneficiary, as mainly responsible for the technical and financial management of the project, has proved to be a valuable international partner providing the necessary technical assistance and timely help (concerning administrative, financial and logistical issues of the project) at the request of the partners.

- **Cooperation with the Commission**

The cooperation between the Beneficiary and the Commission worked well.

From technical and financial point of view, the answers from the Commission for any possible risen problems during the development of the project were prompt.

The difficulty may reside in the Beneficiary's decision about how to set its own rules for each of the foreseen actions, because no matter how it has settled them, only the Commission authorizing officer responsible for the project will take the final decision regarding the eligibility of the undertaken actions.

- **Comments on European value added**

The project SAFEQUAKE was an important and sustainable informational and preparedness tool, which enabled good international cooperation and exchange of information and sharing of experience between EU MS experts regarding the best practices and recommendations on self - protection and mutual assistance between civilians, as well as between civilians and rescue teams in case of an earthquake. Furthermore, the project contributed to increasing the public awareness and preparedness concerning proper and safe behavior in case of an earthquake, especially focusing on the target groups, such as: disabled people, children and the elderly. Through the parallel (simultaneous) organization and conduction of the activities planned, the project enabled a constant "comparison-and-contrast" interaction and feedback between the project partners concerning the state-of-the-art (situation) in each partner country in the field of earthquakes reaction and preparedness. This in turn, enabled each project partner to adapt the project results and deliverables to best match and address national needs and priorities.

- **Lessons learnt and possible improvements**

- a better planning and schedule for the activities involving public tender and sub-contracting and cooperation with other actors
- a balanced involvement between different levels (decision makers, operational and expert)
- a common understanding of all aspects of the project (administrative, financial and technical) would speed up the results and the actions

Possible improvements would be:

- promoting a greater engagement at all levels (decision-making, operational, expert);
- planning ahead more time (when setting up the initial project implementation agenda and defining deadlines) for specific legal procedures (e.g. concerning public procurement procedures, award of contracts, etc.);
- maintaining constant and clear communication between all project partners (so as to avoid delays, misunderstandings and problems regarding administrative aspects);

4. Activities

- **Comparison between initially planned and actually implemented activities, including monitoring, evaluation and dissemination**

Despite our efforts, there were some delays in keeping up with the approved schedule, fortunately not affecting the overall objectives and planned activities.

There were some delays regarding the meeting held in Bucharest, some delays in contracting the research companies (as a result of legal and administrative rules and procedures at national level), delays of the following meeting in Zagreb and therefore the

International Seminar has been delayed too but project partners accomplished all objectives for 2010.

Concerning the activities planned for 2011 (Action C.3, Action D.1 and Action D.2 of the GA), there was some delay by AB1 (Fire Safety and Civil Protection Directorate-General) in the organization and carrying out of the public procurement procedures for sub-contracting the printing company (Action C.3 of the GA). This delay was due to the structural changes concerning the AB1 institutional organization (regulated in the new Law on the Amendment and Supplementation of the Law for the Ministry of the Interior, into force on January 1st, 2011), by means of which the former Fire Safety and Rescue Directorate-General and the Civil Protection Directorate-General merged into one single structure called Fire Safety and Civil Protection Directorate-General (to the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria). In view of the changing internal organization of the new structure and administrative and legal arrangements (new legal registration, VAT, new financial accounts, etc.), the AB1 was temporarily unable to organize and carry out public procurement procedures and award contracts. The AB1 took the necessary correction measures and informed in due time of these circumstances the Coordinating Beneficiary.

Furthermore, there was a slight delay in the official start of the public awareness raising campaign (Action D.2) and instead of conducting it in the period 14.03.2011 – 14.04.2011 (as initially agreed among project partners), the public awareness raising campaign began a week later and was held in the period 21.03.-21.04.2011.

Nevertheless, the Coordinating Beneficiary and both Associated Beneficiaries made the necessary efforts to catch up with the project implementation agenda and all of the planned actions for 2011 were implemented with due quality and the results were achieved.

- **Qualitative evaluation of the activities**

All project partners have been very professional and managed very well with sufficient time assigned for all the tasks/activities. Despite some delay in the overall project implementation agenda, due to structural changes affecting AB1 and particular aspects of the national legislation procedures, specific to each project partner country, the three partners made the necessary efforts to effectively manage short time and meet tight project deadlines. As a result, project actions were implemented with due quality and project results achieved. Overall, the project objectives were achieved.

5. Presentation of the technical results and deliverables

5.1 According to **Task E – Dissemination** of the GA the following deliverables had to be delivered:

- **Website and logo**
- **Short media reports on the events**
- **Layman's report**

At the start of the project a SAFE-QUAKE logo was created and a website (www.safequake.eu) was developed which is operational and regularly updated to allow greater project visibility and access of the wide public to project information and deliverables (results).

Media was informed and invited to all important stages of project implementation (International Seminar at Bucharest, announcing of the public awareness campaign, the public awareness campaign). Therefore, the visibility of all major events during the course of

the project implementation was ensured. In general, there was good and sufficient media coverage of all project-related public events.

Also, following the e-mail correspondence between the CB and the EC, dated 08.04.2011, since we draw up hereinafter Final Report, the layman's report was not necessary to be submitted.

5.2 According to **Task A – Management and Reporting** of the GA the following deliverables were expected:

- **Working plans for each activity**
- **Activities schedule**
- **Communication concept between the partners**
- **3 reports to the European Commission**

For all the tasks, the CB and the ABs draw up proper documents in order to assure well-prepared activities. Two progress reports and a final one were submitted to the EC, respecting the structure and the deadlines, in accordance with article 11 of the Grant Agreement.

5.3 According to **Task B – Population and Rescue teams surveys and case studies of vulnerable groups** of the GA the following deliverables are expected:

- **Two well structured questionnaires to cover all areas of interest**
 - **Description**

According to the Grant Agreement the project partners prepared the draft structure of the Questionnaires for the population and the rescue teams' surveys according to their national interests and needs and sent them via e-mail to the CB (Action B.1 of the GA). They also prepared some questions for people with disabilities. Feedback was received and exchanged among project partners. The CB harmonized the questions.

- **Purpose**

Each project partner contributed with their ideas and recommendations, together the representatives of the Research Company in Bucharest, to the final design and content of the questionnaires for the population and the rescue teams' surveys according to their national needs and interests. These questionnaires were used to evaluate the level of population's knowledge on the first measures to be taken post-earthquake, to identify the rescue teams' expectations about a possible support to be granted by the population while performing the intervention. A structured interview guide was used for identifying the characteristics and needs of each target group on a suitable behavior in case of an earthquake.

- **Evaluation**

During the meeting held in Bucharest, Romania, in the period 31.05.-01.06.2010 the final form and content (structure) of the questionnaires for the population and the rescue teams survey were discussed and accepted by all project partners (Action B.2 of the GA). Furthermore, case studies for vulnerable groups were discussed.

On the basis of the elaborated and agreed by all project partners of the two Questionnaires for the population and the rescue teams' survey, the sub-contracted research company in each partner country performed the population (sociological) survey in the urban areas with high seismic risk. The rescue teams were questioned through the civil protection organizations of each partner country (Action B.3 of the GA). The results obtained are consistent and relevant from a statistical, preparedness and training point of view (*they are posted on the project webpage www.safequake.eu, **Section Events and News***).

The case studies were performed by the psychologists of the civil protection organizations in the project partners' countries (Action B.4 of the GA) and they succeeded in obtaining valuable results.

- **Comprehensive answers from each the target group of each project partner countries**

- **Description**

The sub-contracted companies in each of the partner countries performed the sociological surveys according to a previously elaborated and approved by all project partners questionnaires. The vulnerable groups' individual case studies were elaborated and performed by the psychologists of the civil protection organizations in the project partners' countries.

- **Purpose**

To obtain a clear picture of the status of each target group – what do they know about earthquakes, about self - protection and behavior in case of an earthquake, etc.

- **Evaluation**

Answers provided were recorded, processed and evaluated by the sub-contracted research companies in each partner country and by the psychologists of the civil protection organizations in the project partners' countries.

- **Statistics, graphs and diagrams in order to analyze the results of the questionnaires**

These were included in the sociological surveys analysis and final reports (presentations) elaborated by the sub-contracted companies and by the psychologists of the civil protection organizations in the project partners' countries and were presented at the partners' meeting in Croatia by the project partners.

- **Relevant conclusions and a clear picture on population preparedness and rescue teams expectations**

- **Topics to be discussed and fixed during the seminar**

- **Description**

According to the Grant Agreement a partner meeting was held in Zagreb in order to "interpret the survey results". The project partners sent in advance the results of the surveys and case studies to the Associated Beneficiary – Croatia. (Action B.5 of the GA).

- **Purpose**

Each project partner offered detailed reports (including statistics, graphs, diagrams etc.) about the results of the two surveys addressed to the population and the rescue teams and a comprehensive interpretation of the case studies (posted on the project's website). All these were the starting point for discussions during the Seminar in Bucharest and further for the elaboration of a concise set of basic rules to be followed by the population in case of earthquake.

- Evaluation

At the working meeting held in Zagreb, Croatia, in the period 11-12.10.2010, the three project partners presented, compared and analyzed the results from the conducted population and rescue teams surveys and vulnerable groups case studies on earthquake preparedness. The discussions during the meeting led to a joint conclusion that there is a substantial need for the public to be informed and for the authorities to conduct a large awareness campaign. Also it was concluded that, for the most part, the public would like to participate and to help in the case of an earthquake but need to be trained on how to do that first. The results of the rescue teams' surveys are in favor of the above mentioned conclusion. During this meeting social treatment of vulnerable groups' members was recognized and underlined as an issue which should be the matter of top civil protection interest requesting special contingency plans with detailed procedures and dedicated/special operational task forces to be developed in each one of the project partners' countries. Based on the results from the discussions the project partners established the topics to be discussed during the international Seminar in Bucharest, experts to be invited and the overall project implementation agenda/schedule.

5.4 According to **Task C – Develop the set of basic rules** of the GA the following deliverables are expected:

- **Proposals of the working groups are mapped and the recommendations are elaborated and structured into a set of basic rules**

- Description

According to the Grant Agreement, a Seminar with international participation was held in Bucharest (Action C.1 of the GA) in order to analyze the results of the surveys and case studies, working groups to discuss the identified topics and make recommendations, share experience and best practice, draw-up a set of basic rules in an accessible form and language addressed to target groups.

- Purpose

Each project partner had the opportunity to present their own positions and interests with accent on issues recognized as priorities that came from the results recorded in national opinion poll surveys. The CB presented an approach on vulnerable group members' position within the national civil protection frameworks that could be commonly accepted by each one of the Project partners. The results of the researches, the presentations and discussions from the seminar were the starting point for the elaboration of a concise set of basic rules to be followed by the population in case of earthquake.

- Evaluation

During the seminar presentations were carried out, as well as participants were grouped in 2 working panels – one to address the population and the other for vulnerable groups (people with disabilities). The working groups elaborated the set of basic rules for

earthquake preparedness (to be included in a brochure). A draft version of the brochure (for the population and the vulnerable groups) was elaborated and agreed upon by all partners.

- **Public information on general results of the seminar**

During the international seminar adequate media attendance and coverage of the event and the seminar visibility (Action C.2 of the GA) was ensured. Different media channels (TV and radio) broadcasted the event to the wide public and different newspapers informed the general public about the seminar.

- Establish a national day for "Be prepared for earthquake"

According to the national legislation each project partner established a national day "Be prepared for earthquake" – a specific date to be celebrated on a yearly basis (Action C.1 of the GA)– a specific date to be celebrated on a yearly basis (Action C.1 of the GA).

At present, the CB/GIES is waiting for the approval from the state authorities to organize the national day. This delay was caused by bureaucratic rules and internal procedures associated with the specific provisions and requirements of the national legislation.

In Bulgaria the National Day for "Be prepared for earthquake" would be September 14th. On this date the AB annually celebrates the holiday of its institution as well - Fire Safety and Civil Protection Directorate-General. So, the SAFE QUAKE day will be officially celebrated on this date as well.

According to the Action C.1 of the GA Croatia has started the national procedure to establish the "Be prepared for earthquake day" as it is a very long procedure.

So far all the requests have been written and all the comities necessary were informed and approved the request and acknowledged all the rationales in order to have it sent to the main Governments office to be voted on, unfortunately, it has been removed form the agenda of the offices last meeting due to more important issues...

- **A comprehensive brochure designed based on the recommendations of the experts**

Following the international seminar in Bucharest (Action C.1 of the GA) proposals for the set of basic rules (brochures for the population and the vulnerable groups) were elaborated on the basis of the exchange of information and sharing of experience and best practices among all participants, presentations made by the participating experts and invited guests. On the basis of the joint partners' work in the working panels during the international seminar and common conclusions reached concerning the format and the content of the brochures, the CB elaborated a draft version of the brochure (one for the population and one for the vulnerable groups) and sent the proposals to the ABs. Following active feedback and communication between project partners (comments and additional remarks), the final content of the brochure containing the set of basic rules – one for the population and one for the vulnerable groups was agreed upon and each project partner proceeded to sub-contracting a printing company for the design and printing out of the brochures (Action C.3) in their native languages to be distributed to the population and the vulnerable groups. Also, the CB printed 400 brochures in English and distributed them to the European Commission and to the national civil protection authorities of participating states to the Community Civil Protection Mechanism (Action C.3).

5.5 According to Task D – Awareness raising campaign for general public and each target group of the GA the following deliverables are expected:

- **Short media reports on the campaign**

- **Description**

According to Action D.1 of the GA, prior to the official start of the awareness raising campaign, the CB and the ABs announced to the public the relevant information about the SAFEQUAKE project and the upcoming awareness raising campaign launch through various national media channels (TV and radio), newspapers, and online information agencies. Representatives from the three project partners' countries participated in TV news panels (interviews) and informed about the awareness campaign launch. The elaborated informational materials under the project (such as: brochures for the population + CD, brochures for the vulnerable groups + CD, leaflets, posters and banners) were placed in public institutions and public places for dissemination to the public. The population in general and the target groups were informed about the upcoming campaign launch, its objectives, events planned and results expected.

- **Purpose**

The purpose of the official announcement via media of the public awareness raising campaign was to reach the largest number of people possible and encourage the population to attend the events planned throughout the duration of the campaign. Furthermore, the importance of preparedness and prevention in cases of natural disasters (specifically earthquakes) was communicated to a wide audience.

- **Evaluation**

The population in general and the target groups were informed about the upcoming campaign launch, its objectives, events planned and results expected. People expressed interest and motivation to attend the upcoming events (DEMODAY) during the campaign, as well as to read the informational materials (brochures). Good and active cooperation was established with the media and adequate coverage and broadcasting of major events during the campaign was ensured.

- **Educational materials**

- **Description**

The jointly developed informational brochures (for the population and the vulnerable groups) by the project partners containing the set of basic rules for proper and safe behavior during an earthquake were printed out and distributed during the one month public awareness campaign held in each project partner country to the relevant target groups. Furthermore, leaflets containing information about concepts like *Disaster survival kit* and *Family Emergency Plan* were also elaborated by the project partners and distributed to the population and posters and banners were placed in public institutions and public places in order to properly inform the citizens about this topic.

- **Purpose**

The elaborated informational (brochures + CDs, leaflets and posters), as well as promo materials (banners, T-shirts, pens and caps) had the purpose to both inform and motivate people to know and learn more about earthquake preparedness and proper and safe behavior in case of an earthquake.

- Evaluation

A well-informed and motivated population to learn more about safe behavior and proper reaction in case of an earthquake; willingness and interest among citizens to participate in public events related to the SAFEQUAKE awareness raising campaign; project visibility was ensured.

- **Population preparedness (behavior, rules, first aid)**
- **Practical demonstration**

- Description

According to Action D.2 of the GA, “*Awareness raising campaign launch*”, various public events were organized and conducted by the Coordinating Beneficiary and both Associated Beneficiaries during 1 month. See point 3 (pages 7-8).

- Purpose

The awareness raising campaign aimed at increasing the level of preparedness and information of the population concerning self-protection and safe and proper behavior in cases of an earthquake through demonstration lessons, sharing of promotional materials (brochures, flyers, caps, pens, T-shirts) targeted at the project target groups.

- Evaluation

In general, the population in the three partner countries showed active interest and concern towards the public awareness campaign topic and the SAFE-QUAKE project. People attended and participated in the organized public events (school visits, DEMODAY), showed interest in the elaborated info and promo items and there was feedback between the people and the rescue teams. Concepts like the “*Disaster survival kit*” and “*Family Emergency Plan*”, as well as “*disasters insurance policy*” were relatively new and interesting, as well as useful information. The vulnerable groups, as a target group, under the project (and specifically the specialized medical, psychological and pedagogical staff working with them) found the project deliverables (informational brochure, on-site visits and presentations) very useful and necessary in view of the special needs and concerns of each vulnerable group. Thus, the expected project results were achieved: (1) “Better prepared population living in urban areas to cope with the effects of an earthquake”; (2) A more motivated population to support the rescue teams during the intervention process; (3) Raising the rate of survival after an earthquake.

- **Value-added – in particular European value-added and transferability of the deliverable**

The project SAFEQUAKE was an important and sustainable informational and preparedness tool, which enabled good international cooperation and exchange of information and sharing of experience between EU MS experts regarding the best practices and recommendations on self - protection and mutual assistance between civilians, as well as between civilians and rescue teams in case of an earthquake. Furthermore, the project contributed to increasing the public awareness and preparedness concerning proper and safe behavior, especially focusing on the target groups, such as: disabled people, children and the elderly. Through the parallel (simultaneous) organization and conduction of the activities planned, the project enabled a constant “comparison-and-contrast” interaction and feedback between the project partners concerning the state-of-the art (situation) in each partner country in the field of earthquakes reaction and preparedness. This in turn, enabled

each project partner to adapt the project results and deliverables to best match and address national needs and priorities.

Also, final outcomes could be used for the rest of the countries in the SEE region which are dealing with the same seismic risk as the countries involved in the Project. In that way, the Project outcomes could be transparently disseminated to all countries in the region.

- **Dissemination**

Dissemination of information regarding the Project implementation process and the results (deliverables) obtained was done through the SAFE-QUAKE website (which is operational and regularly updated) and through the all major events of the project (International Seminar at Bucharest, announcing of the public awareness campaign, the public awareness campaign).

Also, the brochures handed over to the population and vulnerable group during the campaign contained useful information for everyone interested to learn about a proper behavior during an earthquake.

The English version of the brochures, with attached CD, was also sent by regular mail to all the EU MS.

The project results could be used in the future in other areas as well. For example, the developed informational materials (brochures, leaflets) under the project could be used as training materials, as well as to be included as educational materials in schools' programmes and academic curricula. Furthermore, project results could be presented and shared with other institutions and organizations stakeholders in disaster management and protection (e.g. civil protection organizations, emergency responders) both at national and international (EU MS) level as well.

6. Evaluation of the technical results and deliverables

- **General lessons learnt**

Through the project realization and sharing of information, good practices and experience in the field of earthquake preparedness and reaction among project partners, as well as during the International Seminar held in Bucharest with the participation of external experts and visitors, it became obvious that awareness raising, trainings (earthquake drills) and information dissemination to the population are of key importance for preparedness in case of an earthquake. Furthermore, it was emphasized that earthquake preparedness and knowing what is the safe and proper behavior and rules to follow in case of an earthquake is a personal responsibility of every citizen. By being informed and prepared to adequately react in case of an earthquake, instead of being attacked by fear and panic, in turn can help save our lives and others'.

Another important conclusion drawn was that earthquake preparedness and prevention approach should be a top priority of civil protection organizations and institutions stakeholders in disaster management and protection. Efforts and actions in this direction should be collective – ranging from top level from decision-making authorities (e.g. Ministers/Directors-Generals) through expert (administration) and operational level (rescue teams / emergency responders). The citizens (population in general) in general should also adopt a more serious and responsible attitude towards earthquake preparedness.

Furthermore, the project showed that vulnerable groups (the elderly, children and people with different psychological and physical disabilities – hearing, visual, movement and

mental disabilities) are indeed very vulnerable when the earthquake strikes, as well as in the hours immediately following the disaster. These people need special care, attention and procedures applicable to their protection in case of an earthquake. The SAFE QUAKE project provided the possibility to reach such an audience of people, examine their specific needs in relation to self-protection and reaction in cases of earthquakes (through the developed “case studies” by the psychologists of the civil protection organizations of each partner country) and to provide valuable information and specific guidance concerning earthquake preparedness both to the vulnerable groups and the specialized pedagogical, medical and psychological personnel working with them.

Last but not least, earthquake preparedness education (trainings and drills, information campaigns, awareness raising campaigns, informational and training materials) should start from an early age on (from kindergartens, pre-school on).

Lessons learnt: (1) Improving the response of the authorities and citizens in case of an earthquake can be done only through the active involvement of the people affected. Creating a disaster awareness culture (through the organization of information and public awareness raising campaigns, public initiatives “Open Doors Days”, trainings, etc.) at the level of citizens is a very important initial step in creating an effective disasters prevention approach and prevention-related policies (laws, regulations, operational activities). This is a common obligation for all – different levels should be engaged (decision-making authorities, operational units, such as civil protection organizations, rescue teams, emergency services, as well as the population in general); (2) Disasters know no limits and boundaries. The increased frequency and intensity of seismic activity over the world and occurrence of large-scale, devastating earthquakes in different parts of the world should also provide further incentives for countries to invest in preparedness and building up their capacity. International cooperation and the preparedness capacity to react to a disaster outside the borders of a country should be built and further strengthened. (3) The recent devastating earthquakes (2010 Haiti and Chile, 2011 Japan) and their massive human, economic and environmental costs and damages are a reminder that the world needs to step up and accelerate work on disaster prevention. (4) Last but not least, “prevention is better than cure”. Earthquakes preparedness (and disasters in general – such as floods, fires, etc.) should be an integral part of the education and general knowledge of all citizens, starting from a very early age.

• **Strengths**

1. The project was a very important initial step in creating a disaster awareness culture in the population (specifically relating to earthquakes). People understood that earthquakes are ordinary natural phenomena (natural hazards) and not “apocalyptic” episodes, “end of the world”, or “punishments to humanity”. Furthermore, it was emphasized that being well-informed and prepared in case of an earthquake can help people save their life and others’ as well and that this is a personal responsibility of everyone of us and of our families;

2. The project provided the possibility to learn more and gain greater insight about rescue teams and first responders’ views and expectations on the role of citizens at the occurrence of an earthquake and when their help is most valuable and needed. The common conclusion reached between project partner countries was that volunteerism among citizens in cases of disasters (earthquakes) is very important and is encouraged by the rescue teams, but that people should undergo first relevant trainings to enhance their own preparedness and learn first-aid techniques.

3. The project provided the possibility to reach a very special audience – the so-called “vulnerable groups” (the elderly, children, people with psychological and physiological disabilities), to examine their specific needs in relation to self-protection and reaction in cases of earthquakes and to provide valuable information and specific guidance concerning

earthquake preparedness both to the vulnerable groups and the specialized pedagogical, medical and psychological personnel working with them.

- **Possible challenges and/or improvements to be tackled through further action**

1. Project results showed that people need more information and guidance as to what the proper civil protection system reaction should be in case of a major earthquake. Public expectations demand more information as to which institutions to seek for family reunion immediately following a major destructive earthquake, as well as which institutions are responsible for reaction and for first aid provision in the hours immediately following the disaster;
2. The project outcomes (specifically the gaps recorded in the sociological surveys) showed that there should be further improvements and optimizations made in the legal framework regulating the overall civil protection organizational and operational preparedness aspects (upgrading of the existing or creating of new civil protection policies);
3. Emphasis should be made upon rescue teams' and first responders' needs and expectations (as results have shown in the rescue teams surveys). Training programs and materials, as well as overall legal framework (policies and procedures) regulating rescue teams' actions and intervention in cases of major disasters should be upgraded, harmonized at EU level, so as to allow more effective, prompt and well-coordinated actions at the occurrence of a major disaster.

- **Recommendations to stakeholders, partners, authorities in charge, National and EU institutions**

1. Special attention should be paid to national protection and rescue policies development, including contingency plans, development plans and operational plans related to increasing the level of awareness, knowledge and information of the population and on recommended behavior in the case of an earthquake striking their homes or facilities in which they have been working. Results should be used as a basis for further developments for e.g. in improving the existing ones and developing of the new programs for rescue teams and population education, for developing and upgrading of the existing rescue teams training programs, for standardization of civil protection equipment etc., in each of the Project partners country.
2. Creating and promoting disaster awareness culture and earthquake preparedness in the population is a collective responsibility and all levels should be engaged (decision-making, operational, expert and the population in general).
3. Social treatment of vulnerable groups' members is an issue which should be the matter of top civil protection interest requesting special contingency plans with detailed procedures and dedicated/special operational task forces to be developed.

7. Follow-up

The project results could be used as a basis for further developing and upgrading the existing rescue teams training programs and educational materials in schools in the field of earthquake preparedness, reaction and protection. Also, the developed informational materials under the project could be made available to other public and private institutions, NGOs (e.g. Red Cross organizations), schools and universities in order to further disseminate them.

Also, among the follow-up activities the followings can be mentioned:

- in case the approval for the national day “Be prepared for the earthquake” is obtained, awareness raising campaigns will be organized every year
- national civil protection organizations will organize information sessions about the seismic hazard;
- preventive education courses during the classes of civic education;
- exercises concerning protection against seismic hazard

The project proved to have good sustainability, its results and deliverables being further used after its end in future initiatives concerning earthquake preparedness and awareness raising (both at national and international level) – for example in developing training materials and programs, as well as preventive education courses, media work, public awareness raising campaigns and practical demonstrations, exercises concerning protection against seismic hazards, etc. National civil protection organizations personnel will continue to further develop and upgrade the results achieved.

Moreover, in Romania, after the project's end, the English version of the project package (brochure and CD) was distributed to more than 30 embassies in Bucharest, providing thus useful information to the foreign staff in case of disaster occurrence.

Also, following the distribution of the brochures, the GIES representatives were contacted by Swedish Trade Council, acting in Romania, which is interested in supporting a campaign in Romania, at all educational institutions using the educational materials (brochure, leaflets) elaborated under the SafeQuake project.

FINANCES

The financial plan was feasible; there was no need for redistribution between the budget categories by more than 10 percent or 30,000 euro, as there were savings for the project implementation.

The costs foreseen for the population survey and for organizing the awareness campaign and DEMODAY were lower than foreseen.

Also, following the e-mail correspondence between the CB and the EC, dated 08.04.2011, the Conclusion Meeting to be held in Bruxelles (action A3) was not necessary to be organized since a final presentation of the project will have to be presented at the Civil Protection Committee in Brussels, in September 2011.

The costs incurred either for organizing the partners' meeting and the Seminar or for purchasing the subcontracting services did not exceed the foreseen sums.

All the expenses can be proved with appropriate original documents.

The annual gross salary for Romanian staff, *Sheet Alternative FR 05 RO*, column E, were actualized in 2011, having into consideration the economic crises measures that the Romanian Government have put into force from the 1st of July 2010 to the 31st of December 2010 (25% cutting off the salaries) – Law no. 118/2010 and from the 1st of January 2011 (15% increase of the cut salaries) - Law 285/2010.

The hours worked by the involved personnel in this project were recorded on a timely basis, using the model of Commission's time sheets.

According to the Partnership Agreements, the project partners sent the centralized situation of the worked hours and a signed copy of the time sheets for the involved personnel.

During the project development phase, the national law requirements were applied for organizing the meetings and for subcontracting the needed services.

In September 2010 and at the beginning of 2011 the Coordinating Beneficiary made the payments to the project partners from the EC's co-finance part (177.000 euro), so that Bulgaria and Croatia implement the project activities.

The financial Report (Participant cost statement summary) was drew up separately by each of the partners, based on the costs incurred during the project implementation phase and reflects the type of expenses made by partners and the worked hours for accomplishing the project tasks.

Explanation for the extra personnel costs of the Bulgarian Associated beneficiary

As previously explained in the Final technical report, by means of the new Law on the Amendment and Supplementation of the Law for the Ministry of the Interior (into force on January 1st 2011), the Associated Beneficiary 1 – Fire Safety and Civil Protection Directorate-General was a newly created structure of the Ministry of the Interior, involving the merging of two former separately existing structures – the Civil Protection Directorate-General and the Fire Safety and Rescue Directorate-General.

These structural modifications involved staffing, administrative and financial changes for the new Directorate-General, which increased not only its overall staff (in terms of civil servants working on permanent contracts), but also in terms of newly created specialized administrative sectors and departments within the new structure. As a result, we had the opportunity to involve more specialized staff from new sectors and units, which in turn made the carrying out of the project activities successful and easier and the project results sustainable.

We consider that the involvement of a larger staff to work under the project in 2011, as compared to the Personnel staff reported in 2010, contributed to the more diversified and effective implementation of the project activities. Furthermore, through the participation of a larger number of people in the project activities we also had the possibility to apply a two-level system of control and monitoring of timely and proper project implementation– at expert level (for elaboration of the required technical and financial documents in the course of the project, as well as carrying out of activities planned) and at decision-making level (for check-up, coordination and agreement procedures). It is important to note that the involvement of several people from the same sectors did not result in overlapping or unnecessary duplication of efforts. On the contrary, a more effective and timely project implementation was ensured.

Furthermore, in order to keep up with the overall slight delay in carrying out of the project activities, the project staff worked more actively and for more hours to be able to meet tight project deadlines and fit all project activities in the short time remaining for the

completion and finalization of the project. As can be verified, the annual gross salaries of the permanent staff involved in the project and reported in the Personnel costs do correspond to the ones actually registered in our accounting system. The longer and more frequently distributed working hours under the project worked by the project staff aimed at avoiding more delays and obstacles in the successful project implementation and final completion and reporting.

Last but not least, through the involvement of a larger staff to work under the project, as well as the increased working hours reported for each project staff member, the Fire Safety and Civil Protection Directorate-General increased its administrative capacity and experience in terms of working under EU projects (and specifically as concerning the specific financial and technical rules and procedures of projects co-financed by the EC and under the Civil Protection Financial Instrument). Therefore, the realization of the SAFE-QUAKE project was a valuable lesson learned in the field of EU funded projects and programmes .