



EU CIVIL PROTECTION LEGISLATION

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

EU Civil Protection legislation: more effective, efficient and coherent disaster management

Beginning of 2014: revised EU civil protection legislation came into effect

Since its establishment in 2001, the EU civil Protection Mechanism has been activated for over 180 times



Key messages

A rising trend in natural and man-made disasters over the past decade has demonstrated that coherent, efficient and effective policies on disaster management are needed now more than ever.

The EU Civil Protection legislation was revised at the end of 2013 to better respond to the natural and man-made disasters in a swift, pre-planned and effective manner and thus to increase the security of EU citizens and disaster victims worldwide.

When national capacities are overwhelmed, a predictable and reliable system at European level can save lives and optimise financial resources.

A well-coordinated response prevents duplication of efforts and ensures that the assistance meets the real needs of the affected region.

The revised EU Civil Protection legislation builds on an established system that has proven to work well. The primary responsibility for disaster management remains with the Member States.

The new legislation places a much greater emphasis on disaster prevention, risk management, and disaster preparedness, including the organisation of trainings, simulation exercises and the exchange of experts, but also developing new elements, such as a voluntary pool of pre-committed response capacities by the Member States.

The European Commission presented a legislative proposal in late 2011, which received the support of the Member States and the European Parliament. The new EU Civil Protection Mechanism came into effect at the beginning of 2014.

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Better protection in face of disasters

Emergency Response Capacity

The revised legislation creates a European Emergency Response Capacity, moving from the current *ad hoc* arrangement to a more predictable and reliable system that allows for better planning.

A voluntary pool of response capacities and experts will be established and available for immediate deployment as part of a collective European intervention. The Member States are asked to voluntarily commit to the pool core resources for standby following a certification procedure. The voluntary pool will enable a faster and more coherent disaster response. It will also allow for better coordinated disaster response planning at European level and in all Member States.

The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)

The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) was set up in May 2013, providing a full 24/7 capacity to monitor and respond to disasters, ensuring that the Member States are fully informed of the situation and decide in a coordinated way about the provision of financial and in-kind assistance, as well as quickly mobilising the resources soon to be available in the voluntary pool.

Risk management planning

The new legislation asks the Member States to share a summary of their risk assessments and to refine their risk management planning. Voluntary peer reviews are recognised as an essential element to improve the risk management capability of the Member States. An understanding of risks will become the starting point for developing contingency plans for a collective European response to major disasters. These plans will help us to exchange best practice and learn from each other in addressing these risks. They will help us identify where additional investments are needed in disaster prevention.

Filling the gaps

The EU will provide limited seed-funding to address genuine gaps in response capacities, where currently no capacities are available, following a coordinated consultation process with all the Member States. Limited funding will also be available to help Member States address temporary shortcomings in capacities in the case of extraordinary disasters. For this purpose, the EU will support the Member States to keep specific assets on stand-by.

Strengthening of transport arrangements

The revised legislation simplifies and strengthens the transport arrangements for the immediate deployment of assistance. In the past decade the Commission's support to the Member States in accessing transport has allowed substantially more assistance to be offered. Under the new legislation, the Commission will be using simplified procedures and may provide higher levels of EU co-financing in certain circumstances.

Preparing to face the main risks

The importance of prevention and preparedness actions is now legally embedded into the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. EU assistance for training will be provided to allow for improved interoperability of the Member States' teams on the ground. Individual preparedness and trust in the partners' capabilities is crucial for an effective response to all disasters, especially where time is of the essence to save lives. Finally, the new legislation provides for the possibility to deploy expert missions to advise on disaster prevention and preparedness at the request of the country concerned.

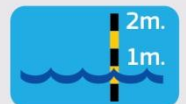


Better protection in face of disaster

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MONITORING DISASTERS



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