
EU Commission: Civil Protection, anticipate to protect. “Enhance early warning systems”

The EU’s five goals to prevent and respond to natural disasters are summed up in five “verbs”. Anticipate: to improve risk assessment, anticipation, and disaster risk management planning. “The complexity and interdependency of risks the EU faces – according to the Commission – makes it important to identify vulnerabilities in critical sectors, and anticipate hazards and threats”. Prepare: to increase risk awareness and preparedness of the population, so as to help “reduce the impact of disasters”. Alert: to enhance early warning. “Enhancing early warning systems ensures that warning messages across the national, regional and local levels reach the right people on time”. Respond: to enhance the EU Civil Protection Mechanism response capacity. The Commission said on this point: “By further enhancing the EU Civil Protection Mechanism response capacity, the EU can provide more help to fill critical gaps and avoid further deterioration of the situation when the capacity of a country is overwhelmed”. Last but not least: secure. “Civil protection systems need to remain operational 24/7, during and after disasters, when they are most needed. Updating business continuity plans and procedures and ensuring coordination and information sharing across sectors, including with critical infrastructure providers, will help civil protection systems to function at all times”. In order to implement these goals, the European Commission “is launching five flagship initiatives, one under each goal”. One of these flagship initiatives will be to “launch preparEU, a pan-European awareness raising programme for disaster resilience”.

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