



## Civil Protection: EU outlines Disaster Resilience Goals

Brussels, 8 February 2023

Today, the European Commission adopted a Recommendation and a Communication to establish common goals to boost disaster resilience in the areas of civil protection. This includes ways to better prepare European countries for natural hazards, including earthquakes, floods and forest fires to name a few. In view of the rapidly changing risk landscape, the European disaster resilience goals aim to improve the capacity of the EU, its Member States and Participating States to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism to anticipate and withstand the effects of future major disasters and emergencies. To this end and in close cooperation with Member States, the European Commission identified five goals to pursue collectively.

The five European Disaster Resilience Goals are:

1. **Anticipate – To improve risk assessment, anticipation, and disaster risk management planning.** The complexity and interdependency of risks the EU faces makes it important to identify vulnerabilities in critical sectors, and anticipate hazards and threats.
2. **Prepare – To increase risk awareness and preparedness of the population.** Increasing risk awareness and preparedness of the population helps to reduce the impact of disasters.
3. **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.
4. **Respond – To enhance the EU Civil Protection Mechanism response capacity.** 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.
5. **Secure – To ensure a robust civil protection system.** 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.

To kick-off the implementation of these goals, the European Commission is launching five flagship initiatives, one under each goal. For example, a flagship initiative will be to launch **preparEU**, a pan-European awareness raising programme for disaster resilience targeting European citizens.

### Background

When the scale of an emergency overwhelms the response capabilities of a country, it can request assistance via the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#). Once activated, the EU's [Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#) coordinates and finances assistance made available by EU Member States and eight additional Participating States (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, and Türkiye) through spontaneous offers. The Union disaster resilience goals set priority areas and related specific objectives to strengthen the disaster resilience of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and of the Member States. The goals are a non-binding common baseline to support prevention and preparedness actions in the event of disasters which affect two or more countries at the same time.

### For more information

[Commission Recommendation on Union disaster resilience goals](#)

[Commission Communication on the European Union Disaster Resilience Goals: Acting together to deal with future emergencies](#)

[EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

[Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#)

Quotes:

For over 20 years, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has ensured swift and efficient emergency assistance whenever a major disaster strikes, overwhelming national capacities. The provision of assistance supported through these EU solidarity operations is impressive. However, natural and man-made disasters are becoming more frequent, intense, and complex, with an increasingly cross-sectorial and transboundary impacts. As we recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis is becoming ever more present in the form of extremely devastating wildfire seasons, droughts and floods, expanding across Europe. Meanwhile, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is sending shockwaves throughout Europe and beyond. To withstand this, we need to boost our collective resilience, with an improved understanding of the changing risk landscape and common orientation. Embarking on this European disaster resilience agenda, the EU and its Member States will be better placed to respond to, prevent and prepare for the consequences of major disasters. This will save more lives and protect better citizens, livelihoods, and the environment in the EU.  
Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner for Crisis Management - 08/02/2023

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