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**'I' ITEM NOTE**

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From: Presidency

To: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 2)

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Subject: Report from the Polish Presidency on main achievements at EU level in the field of civil protection

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Delegations will find in annex the Report from the Polish Presidency on the main achievements at EU level in the field of civil protection.

COREPER is invited to take note of the report.

# **Report from the Polish Presidency on main achievements at EU level in the field of civil protection**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Polish Presidency takes place during a time of exceptional complexity and heightened global uncertainty — a period marked by profound geopolitical shifts and intensifying environmental challenges.

The international landscape is undergoing dynamic and often unpredictable changes, with direct implications for Europe's stability and resilience. One of the most pressing challenges remains Russia's unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, which has fundamentally disrupted the security architecture of our region. This ongoing conflict has underscored the need for strong, coordinated responses at both the national and European levels.

At the same time, Europe faces the growing consequences of climate change. Extreme weather events — including prolonged droughts, devastating floods, and large-scale forest fires — are becoming more frequent and severe. These phenomena not only endanger lives and livelihoods but also strain public institutions and emergency response systems. The intersection of geopolitical instability and environmental risks creates a multifaceted threat environment that demands comprehensive and forward-looking strategies.

In response to these evolving realities, Poland has identified the strengthening of Europe's security — in all its dimensions — as a central priority of its Presidency.

In the field of civil protection, and building on the legacy of previous Presidencies — including Poland's own Presidency in 2011 — communication has once again been brought to the forefront of the agenda. In this context, Poland closely monitored and engaged with several key EU-level strategic processes aimed at strengthening resilience across the Union.

A pivotal document during Poland's Presidency, which significantly shaped discussions throughout the semester, was the EU Preparedness Union Strategy, published in March 2025. This Strategy aligned seamlessly with ongoing debates on comprehensive communication in civil protection and provided a solid foundation for advancing this critical area of focus.

Building on these developments, the Polish Presidency discussed this topic thoroughly during PROCIV meeting as well as dedicated Presidency Workshop.

During the Polish Presidency there were 5 PROCIV meetings: 20 February, 19 March, 9 April, 15 May and 17 June.

Besides that, the Polish presidency organized several meetings in Poland, relevant to the civil protection community:

- Presidency Workshop: Understanding Communication in Civil Protection, 27–29 January 2025, Warsaw
- Meeting of the Seveso Expert Working Group, 18–20 February 2025, Warsaw
- Presidency and European Commission Workshop: Workshop on Civil Protection capacity building tools and EU funding opportunities, 24–26 March 2025, Warsaw
- Forum: " Safe Cultural Heritage – European Challenges in Times of War and Crisis", 3–4 April 2025, Kraków
- 54th Meeting of Directors-General for Civil Protection of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism Participating States, 21–23 May 2025, Gdańsk

The Polish Presidency, in cooperation with the European Commission and Finland, co-organized an additional informal study visit for Directors-General for Civil Protection of the EU, held on 10 of January 2025 in Helsinki, Finland.

During the Polish Presidency, the European Commission organized also an additional informal meeting of Directors General for Civil Protection that took place in Brussels on 11-12 February 2025.

This Report seeks to provide a summary of the key discussions, decisions, and events that have taken place in the field of civil protection, with the intention of supporting the continuity of dialogue and progress under future Presidencies. By documenting the main outcomes and points of consensus, the Report aims to serve as a useful reference and foundation for the work that lies ahead.

## **1. PRES PL PRIORITY: COMMUNICATION IN CIVIL PROTECTION**

Taking into account the current risk landscape and building on the outcomes of previous Council presidencies — including the Polish Presidency in 2011 — Poland has made communication in civil protection a priority topic of its Presidency agenda in the field of civil protection.

In this context, the Presidency closely followed ongoing strategic processes at the EU level related to resilience building, which some had started before the Polish Presidency semester. Polish Presidency reflections built on the report by former Finnish President Sauli Niinistö, published in October 2024 at the request of the European Commission, which focuses on enhancing Europe's civilian and defense preparedness and readiness. Among its key recommendations are the strengthening of information sharing and crisis communication systems to ensure that citizens can be reached effectively under all

circumstances. The report also highlights the importance of building psychological resilience and improving coordination at the EU level — elements directly linked to communication efforts.

A second major EU level development is the Preparedness Union Strategy, elaborated as a follow-up to the October 2023 European Council Conclusions. Published in March 2025 by the European Commission, the Strategy underscores the essential role of communication in civil protection—particularly through enhanced early warning systems, strengthened crisis coordination, and improved public disaster risk awareness.

A third relevant initiative is the implementation of the EU Disaster Resilience Goals, a joint effort by the European Commission and the Member and Participating States of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. These goals aim to strengthen the capacity of the EU and its partners to anticipate, withstand, and recover from future disasters and crises.

Building on these strategic developments, the Polish Presidency translated its priority on communication in civil protection into concrete action at the working level. The topic was placed at the heart of discussions within the PROCIV Working Party, fostering reflection on how best to operationalize emerging action at EU level, identify priority needs and recognize the gaps.

The discussions that took place during PROCIV, touched upon both human-related aspects of communication in civil protection as well as technological aspects.

The detailed topics included:

1. psychological and behavioral matters;
2. vulnerable group needs;
3. countering disinformation, fake news and role of social media;
4. the possible added value of non-binding communication guidelines
5. technologies in the context of building societal resilience;
6. technologies for early warning and public alert systems;
7. technological tools for crisis communication among civil protection and crisis management actors.

The countries had the chance of expressing their views regarding further action in relation to these topics, exchange good practices and knowledge as well share their opinions.

The highlights from the discussions:

- The importance of building psychological resilience of both first-responders and society was underscored during the meetings. Some Member States indicated that some solutions in this regards are already in place in their countries, but further actions are needed especially in regards to including psychological perspective in terms of communication in civil protection.

- Some MS are implementing a variety of solutions aimed at improving communication in civil protection between civil protection/crisis management authorities and vulnerable group needs. MS agreed that there is no single definition of vulnerability but it's necessary to define and identify each group that could be more susceptible to disasters.
- In terms of countering fake news and disinformation, MS generally agreed that it is an important topic; however, some expressed their reluctance as to whether it should fall within the remit of civil protection foras as it may be better addressed in other fora. Meanwhile, others underlined the link between this topic and the work undertaken within such foras and that it also could be tackled from the civil protection perspective.
- With regard to developing guidelines on communication in civil protection, many Member States expressed support for such an initiative, noting that the guidelines could serve as a useful compilation of good practices and lessons learned. It was also emphasized that any such guidelines should remain non-binding for Member States to allow for sufficient space for the national specificities.
- Many MS expressed their interest in the implementation Galileo Alerting System, some also indicated that further information on the system is required for them to make a decision on using in the future Galileo.
- In terms of using EU forecasting tool it seems that there is a need to further explore this topics in terms of integration those into national systems, although some MS indicated that their national forecasting tools may be enough.
- Many MS have reported the widespread use of new technologies in their efforts to promote social education and raise risk awareness.
- MS expressed support for further exploration of satellite-based solutions in the context of communication in civil protection, noting that additional training and awareness-raising on the use and potential of EU space-related services could be beneficial.

A dedicated Presidency Workshop further deepened this engagement by providing a platform for Member States and key stakeholders to exchange experiences, share innovative practices, and explore practical solutions. The workshop highlighted not only the complexity of communication in crisis contexts, but also its indispensable role in building societal resilience and ensuring the effectiveness of the EU's civil protection efforts.

### **1.3 Overview of the PRES PL Workshop “Understanding Communication in Civil Protection” - Warsaw, Poland 28–29 January 2025**

An event dedicated to technological and non-technological challenges related to communication with the public and between entities involved in prevention, preparedness, and response to complex disasters and other crises, including those stemming from the current security situation in Europe. The initiative aimed to develop potential recommendations for the European Commission and EU Member States.

Over 100 representatives from leading civil protection institutions of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism participated in the event. The participants included experts in international cooperation, communication, as well as CBRN threat specialists.

In addition, the event was attended by representatives of the European Commission – Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) and the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as representatives of Polish institutions, including the Ministry of the Interior and Administration (MSWiA) and the Government Centre for Security (RCB).

The event was divided into a plenary session, panel discussions, and a simulation game.

During the plenary session, Poland presented its experiences in civil protection communication using the example of the response to last year's flood. Ukraine also shared its solutions, presenting the perspective of communication efforts during the ongoing war with Russia.

The program then continued with three panel discussions:

- Panel Discussion I – Technologies in Civil Protection Communication

This panel focused on solutions and needs related to early warning and alert systems, situational awareness, and communication tools. The invited experts included representatives from Germany (Fraunhofer Institute for Telecommunications), Belgium (National Crisis Center), DG ECHO, and Poland (Space Research Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences – CBK PAN).

- Panel Discussion II – Non-technological Aspects of Civil Protection Communication

This discussion addressed topics such as information management, psychological aspects, disinformation issues, and the role of media and citizen engagement, including the good practice of appointing local leaders. The panellists included experts from Sweden (Swedish Psychological Defence Agency), Portugal (Portuguese Civil Protection Authority), Finland (Ministry of the Interior), and Poland (University of Warsaw, the City of Warsaw).

- Panel Discussion III – Specific Challenges in CBRN Risk Communication

This panel focused specifically on communication challenges related to CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear) incidents, highlighting their unique characteristics. Experts included representatives from Lithuania (Fire and Rescue Department under the Ministry of the Interior), DG ECHO, Denmark (Danish Emergency Management Agency – DEMA), Norway

(Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection – DSB), a CBRN expert from the State Emergency Service of Ukraine, and a representative of the NGO “Humanosh”.

After the panel discussions, a simulation game was held. It was a short exercise prepared by experts from the Polish State Fire Service and the University of Warsaw. The game followed a scenario related to a CBRN threat. The goal of the exercise was to identify gaps in civil protection communication.

The exercise highlighted issues such as coordination of information dissemination and its credibility, including the identification and combating of disinformation. Psychological aspects were also noted – particularly how to communicate effectively without causing panic. Communication with NGOs and businesses was not overlooked during the game, and it was pointed out that these aspects should also be considered in future work.

## **2. PREPAREDNESS UNION STRATEGY**

- Summary of discussions held before and after the strategy’s publication

The Polish Presidency continued the discussions held by the previous presidencies – Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian on the future of European civil protection, especially from the perspective of the Niinistö Report and Preparedness Union Strategy that followed after.

The discussions held during PROCIV meetings took on the agenda topics like:

### **1. Future of UCPM**

Highlights from the discussion:

- MS highlighted the need to ensure adequate funding for both existing and potential future activities, stressing that any new functionalities under the UCPM must not negatively impact the financing of ongoing work. The need to develop flexible budgetary solutions was also emphasized.
- The importance of clearly delineating the responsibilities of the UCPM and other instruments was underlined by the MS.
- MS emphasized the relevance of a whole-of-society, whole-of-government, and all-hazard approach.
- Any extension of the UCPM mandate must respect existing frameworks, including national specificities.
- Some MS raised that preserving fundamental humanitarian principles—particularly neutrality and impartiality—must remain a priority in any considerations regarding potential new tasks for the UCPM.
- Improved use of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network was also indicated by MS as a direction for further work.

- MS stressed that the UCPM is currently functioning effectively and efficiently, and any new developments must not undermine this.
- MS had questions regarding the potential establishment of an EU crisis management hub. Some MS welcome such a hub while others shared concerns. Some MS emphasized the need to clarify its relationship with the ERCC and that it's work may not impact negatively the support of ERCC to UCPM operations.
- Strengthening the ERCC was also positively received by some MS.
- MS also underlined the role of the Council in relation to the work related to the development of UCPM, and that any discussions in this regards must take place during PROCIV working party meetings.

## 2. European Civil Defense Mechanism

### Highlights from the discussion:

- Some MS emphasized the need for a clear concept of the new mechanism as a prerequisite for engaging in more in-depth and substantive discussions.
- MS also highlighted the importance of clearly defining the relationship between the UCPM and the potential ECDM, as well as assessing the impact of this mechanism on national structures.
- Avoiding duplication of efforts and keeping core UCPM functions was underscored as a key priority.
- The establishment of a solid legal basis was identified as an essential preliminary step before proceeding with further deliberations.
- Some Member States stressed the need to define the term of civil defense, while others did not consider this to be a pressing issue.

## 3. Population Preparedness

### Highlights from the discussion:

- The MS welcomed the discussion on section of the Preparedness Union Strategy on Population Preparedness, emphasizing the importance of this topic.
- MS identified as relevant areas for action the following topics: the improvement of early warning systems, increased awareness of disaster risks, the promotion household self-sufficiency in the event of a crisis, and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups.
- While the importance of the PreparEU initiative was acknowledged, MS emphasized that efforts to strengthen population preparedness must not be limited to this single project. Such efforts should extend beyond the initiative, incorporate national approaches, and be tailored to specific domestic conditions and contexts.
- It was further highlighted that any actions undertaken at the EU level must respect the principle of subsidiarity and should serve to complement - not replace - national preparedness efforts.
- MS also underscored the significant role of NGOs in this domain and stressed the need for their greater inclusion in strategies and activities aimed at enhancing population preparedness.



### **3. 54<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF DIRECTORS-GENERAL FOR CIVIL PROTECTION OF UCPM COUNTRIES, (Sopot/Gdansk, 22-23 May 2025)**

The 54th Informal Meeting of the Directors-General for Civil Protection of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism took place on 22–23 May 2025 in Sopot and Gdansk, Poland.

The meeting gathered high-ranking representatives from UCPM Member States (both EU MS and Participating States) and EU institutions to address key strategic priorities in the field of civil protection and disaster preparedness.

Discussions focused on the implementation and future direction of the EU Preparedness Union Strategy, including civil-military cooperation, and the potential development of an EU stockpiling strategy. Delegates also exchanged views on the upcoming revision of Decision 1313/2013, both in plenary and smaller working groups.

The agenda included sessions on capacity building, communication in civil protection, and recent experiences of civil protection operations during blackouts in Portugal and Spain and Italy during the Pope Francis funeral. The meeting concluded with forward-looking presentations on the Danish Presidency's priorities, civil protection investments under the Growth & Stability Pact, and the outlook for the 2025 wildfire season.

In addition to the formal sessions, participants engaged in networking events.

### **4. OTHER KEY PRESIDENCY EVENTS**

#### **4.1 Informal Study Visit of Directors-General for Civil Protection of the EU – (Helsinki, Finland, 10 January 2025)**

As part of the Polish Presidency's efforts to strengthen civil protection and resilience across the EU, a high-level visit to Finland took place in May 2025. The meeting was co-organized by the Finnish Ministry of the Interior, the European Commission, and Poland. It brought together Directors-General and senior representatives of civil protection authorities from EU Member States, as well as the Commission.

The visit focused on Finland's approach to comprehensive security and preparedness for complex crises, including hybrid and military threats. A key element of the discussions was the report "Safer Together – Strengthening Europe's Civilian and Military Readiness", prepared under the leadership

of Mr. Sauli Niinistö, Special Adviser to the President of the European Commission. The report's recommendations sparked a wide-ranging exchange on how to better align civilian and military efforts, strengthen cross-border coordination, and build societal resilience.

Participants were introduced to Finland's comprehensive security model, which integrates governmental, private sector, and civil society actors in national preparedness efforts. Finnish institutions such as the Security Committee, the National Emergency Supply Agency, and the National Defence Courses provided examples of how strategic planning, emergency stockpiles, and intersectoral training contribute to whole-of-society resilience.

The meeting included a roundtable of Directors-General of Civil Protection, where Member States shared views on future EU action, including the development of a European Preparedness Strategy, closer cooperation between civilian and military domains, and the need for common training frameworks. The European Commission underlined that preparedness is a strategic priority and highlighted the importance of updating the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in line with emerging threats.

The visit concluded with a field visit to a civil shelter in Helsinki, illustrating Finland's practical investments in civil defence infrastructure.

The visit offered valuable inspiration for the development of more integrated and strategic approaches to civil protection in Europe. The Finnish model underscored the benefits of whole-of-society preparedness

#### **4.2 SEVESO Expert Group Meeting – (Warsaw, 18–20 February 2025)**

The National Headquarters of the State Fire Service and the Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection jointly hosted a meeting of the Seveso Expert Group (SEG), a key EU-level forum for supporting the consistent and effective implementation of Directive 2012/18/EU on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances (Seveso III).

The SEG brings together representatives of Member States, the European Commission (DG ENV), UNECE, the European Environment Agency, and industrial stakeholders such as CEFIC. Polish SEG members represent the national competent authorities for Seveso III: the State Fire Service and the Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection.

The event included a thematic seminar (18 February) dedicated to land-use planning and Seveso implementation, featuring presentations of national approaches and good practices, including a contribution from the Polish State Fire Service.

On 19 February, the formal SEG meeting addressed the following key topics:

- progress in implementation of the Directive and support measures from the Commission and scientific bodies;
- evaluation of Member State implementation reports (2019–2022) and the revised reporting template for the next four-year cycle;
- risks arising from energy transition, including hydrogen fuels and Li-ion battery facilities;
- interpretation issues concerning the scope of the Directive (e.g. underground storage of hazardous chemicals);
- recent major accidents in Europe (e.g. galvanic plant fire in Germany and explosives facility fire in Poland);
- updates on the classification of waste and biogas in relation to Seveso III.

On 20 February, a study visit was held at Soudal Manufacturing Sp. z o.o. in Pionki – an upper-tier establishment under Seveso III. The visit was preceded by a briefing at the Regional State Fire Service Training Centre in Pionki, covering site-specific safety measures. The Mazowieckie Province Fire Service also presented the external emergency plan for the site, including findings from joint exercises held in October 2024.

The meeting confirmed the continued relevance of the Seveso III Directive in the evolving risk landscape and highlighted the value of shared learning among Member States.

It provided important insights that will support more effective prevention and preparedness policies in the EU and at the national level.

#### **4.3 Workshop on Civil Protection Capacity Building Tools and EU funding opportunities – (Warsaw, 24-26 March 2025)**

The workshop was organized by the European Commission in cooperation with the Polish Fire University and the State Fire Service. Participants included representatives from 30 countries and numerous EU and international institutions.

The event focused on opportunities and challenges related to capacity building in civil protection as well as financing preventive and preparedness measures within the European Union. Discussions were structured around three main thematic clusters.

- Cluster 1: From Knowledge to Investment – Scaling Preventive and Preparedness Actions

- Cluster 2: Projects to Promote Governance and Reforms for Improved Disaster Risk Management: What Have We Learnt?
- Cluster 3: Promoting Innovation in Disaster Prevention and Preparedness and Strengthening the Links with Climate Adaptation

#### **4.4 Safe cultural heritage – European challenges in times of war and crisis – Forum (Kraków, 3–4 April 2025)**

On 3–4 April 2025, the Polish Presidency hosted a high-level forum on safeguarding cultural heritage in times of war and crisis. The event was co-organized by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the State Fire Service of Poland.

The forum brought together policymakers, experts, and practitioners from the EU Member States, international organizations, and civil society. Its purpose was to raise awareness about the threats to cultural heritage caused by armed conflicts, natural disasters, and other crises, as well as to discuss EU and national mechanisms for its protection.

Key themes addressed included the legal framework for heritage protection in armed conflict, risk assessment and disaster preparedness for cultural sites, cooperation among emergency responders and heritage professionals, and innovative approaches to documentation and digital preservation.

Participants exchanged experiences from recent conflicts, including the ongoing war in Ukraine, and highlighted the importance of integrating cultural heritage protection into civil protection policies and operational plans. The forum stressed the need to improve training of first responders, enhance cross-border cooperation, and develop funding streams dedicated to heritage safeguarding.

It was acknowledged that protecting cultural heritage contributes not only to preserving history and identity but also to promoting social cohesion and recovery in post-crisis situations.

The Forum underscored that safeguarding cultural heritage must be an integral part of civil protection systems. Its conclusions can inspire further development of EU and national mechanisms aimed at protecting heritage in times of war, disaster, and crisis.

## **5. OTHER WORK**

The EU Joint statement on behalf of the EU and its Member States for the 8th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025 (st08797/25), was agreed by the PROCIV on 15 May 2025.

## **6. UCPM Implementation**

## **6.1 Administrative Arrangement on the Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS)**

On 19 March 2025, a new Administrative Arrangement has been signed to reinforce the Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS). Signed by UN OCHA Coordinator Tom Fletcher, ECHO Director-General Maciej Popowski, and UNITAR Director Karambizi, with Commissioner for Preparedness and Crisis Management Hadja Lahbib as witness, this formalised arrangement reaffirms the successful collaboration between the European Commission (DG ECHO and DG JRC), UN-OCHA, and UNITAR/UNOSAT. For over 20 years, GDACS, a joint initiative between the European Commission and the UN, has been a vital early warning tool, providing rapid impact estimations, early alerts, and anticipatory actions. As a globally recognised platform, it plays a key role in international humanitarian aid and disaster relief, as well as for response operations under the UCPM, ensuring timely and effective interventions that save lives. This Arrangement strengthens long-standing cooperation and ensures continued investment in GDACS.

## **6.2 Stress-test flagship initiative under DRG No.5**

Under the Polish Presidency, the Commission organised a workshop on the Flagship initiative under DRG No.5. The initiative consists of two main strands: (i) stress-testing the ERCC's business continuity and (ii) supporting national contact points in their own tests through a voluntary methodology and exchange of experiences.

A workshop was organised in March 2025 with Member States and Participating States to share lessons learned from the stress-test and discuss the way forward of the initiative. Key insights from the workshop presented in PROCIV include:

- The countries participating in the workshop appreciated the initiative's relevance and timeliness, along with the materials prepared by the Commission so far.
- The participating countries supported creating non-binding guidelines for business continuity within the UCPM, aligning with the Preparedness Union Strategy's objectives.
- The stress-test concept allows MS to involve other entities, such as crisis centres or those managing UCPM capacities, even if they are not officially designated as national contact points.
- To further increase resilience of NCPs, there is a need for more training on CECIS 2.0.

MS/PS also raised concerns about potential CECIS failures and the need for alternative communication channels with the ERCC.

### **6.3 Global Situation System (GSS)**

Since April 2025, the GSS is available to EU Member States and UCPM Participating States from the ERCC portal.

The GSS serves as a single access point to the EU-developed early warning and information systems and already aggregates a broad range of geospatial datasets and information sources for comprehensive situational awareness. The system provides also an extended archive of past events, as well as background information such as hazard zones, population density, infrastructure, critical facilities, country-specific information etc.

### **6.4 EU MODEX**

An EU MODEX exercise, conducted on 20-23/05/2025 in the area of Gdańsk, included a VIP visit at the margin of the 54<sup>th</sup> DGs' meeting. The exercise scenario simulated a series of explosions in the outer area of the North Port in the LPG terminal causing structural damages to the port, industrial facilities and nearby residential areas. Due to the presence of toxic gases and unknown chemical materials, the simulated incident was classified as a CBRN risk situation. Five response teams from Ukraine, Germany, Austria, France, and Poland participated in the exercise.

### **6.5 Launch of European Anthropogenic Scientific Partnership, Chemical Pillar (EAHSP-C)**

In February 2025, the ERCC launched the EAHSP-C's chemical pillar which will provide DG ECHO's ERCC with scientific and technical advice and analysis on future chemical related emergencies. This service complements the existing ARISTOTLE partnership (for natural hazards) and the EAHSP-Radiological Nuclear partnership, strengthening DG ECHO's capacity in the field of early warning and information, and reinforcing its impact assessment capacity for chemical events in Europe and beyond. The service will be fully operational by the end of the year and aims to translate scientific knowledge and data on chemical related emergencies into actionable insights to enhance situational awareness and analysis for the UCPM.

The awarded partner is CEFIC, the European Chemical Industry Council, which works together with BASF-Site Emergency Response Team, the 24/7 operations focal point. BASF-SERT handles incidents such as chemical spills, fires, and leaks to ensure the safety of employees, the community, and the environment. Their expertise in emergency response plays a critical role in preventing and mitigating the impact of chemical-related incidents.

As part of efforts to enhance cooperation and refine operational procedures, a training at BASF's Ludwigshafen site was held in May 2025 with participants from the ERCC, the European Chemicals Agency, BASF and CEFIC. In addition, a dedicated workshop took place in June 2025 with CEFIC's Intervention in Chemical Transport Emergencies (ICE) scheme, which coordinates a comprehensive network of chemical organizations across 16 European countries.

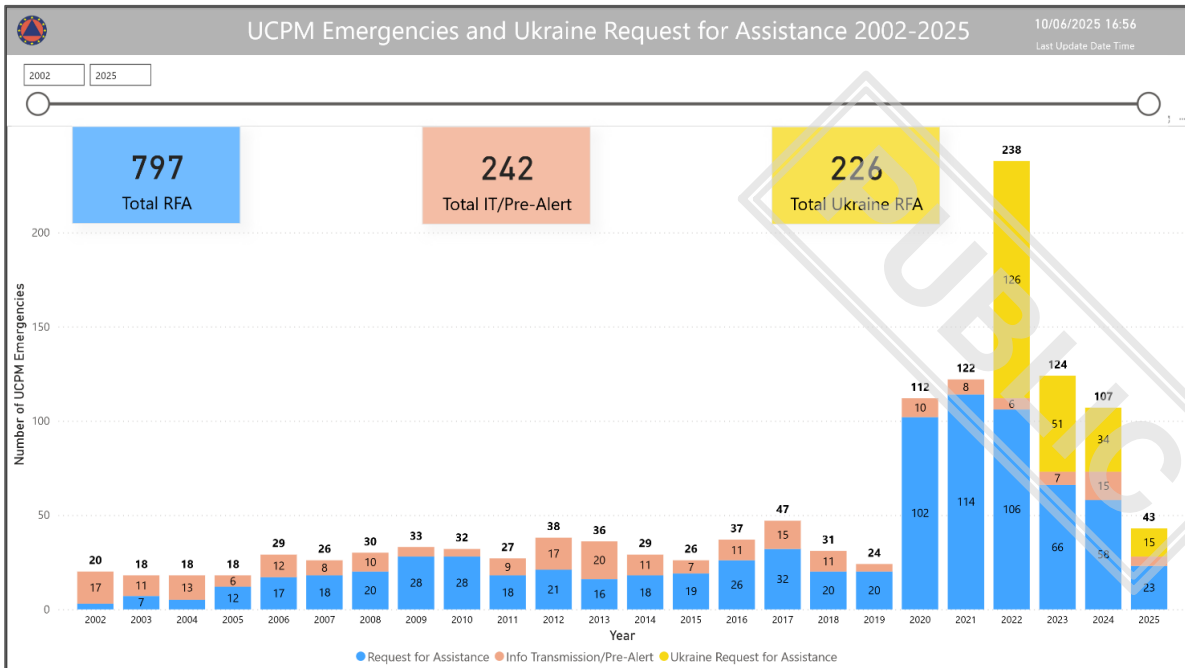
## **6.6 Overview of recent emergencies**

### **Response to emergencies: 1 January – 11 June 2025**

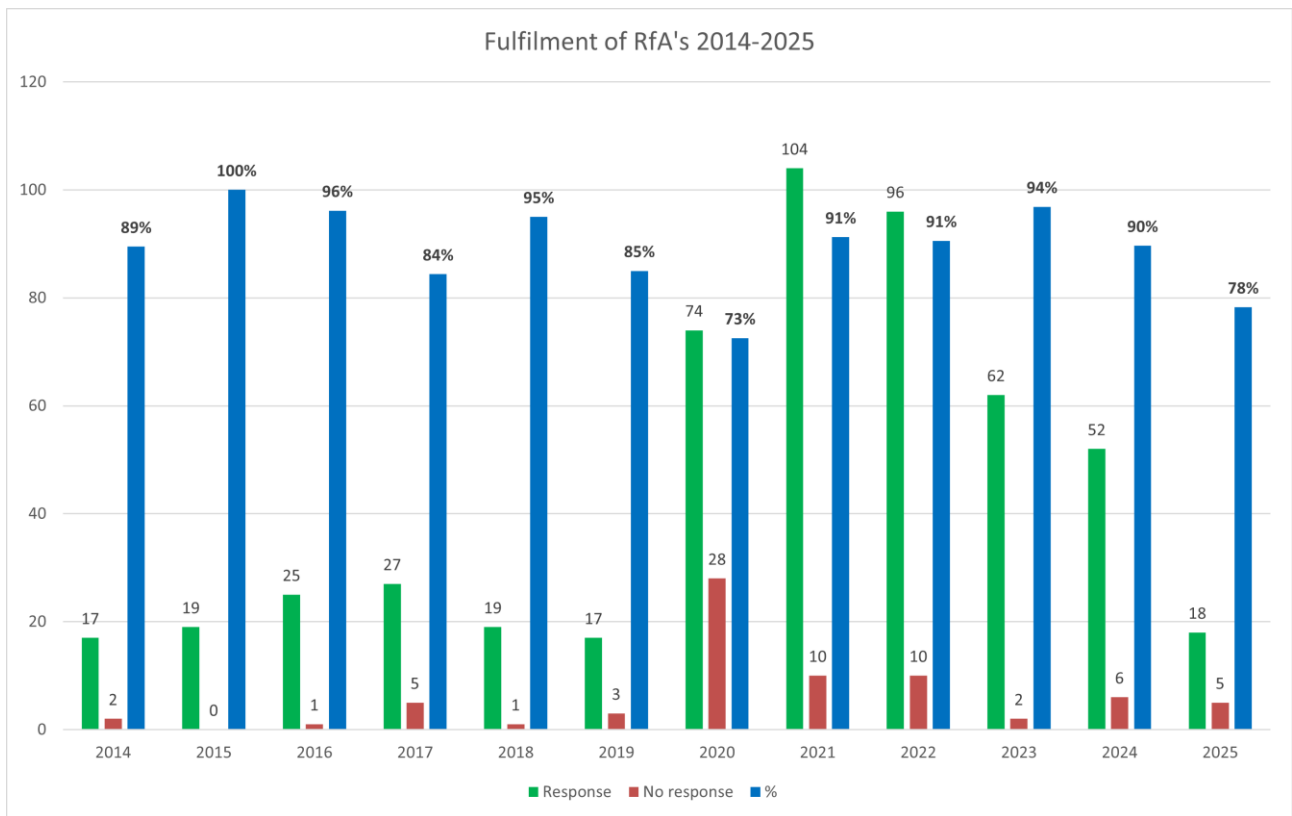
Since 1 January 2025, the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) has received 23 new requests for assistance (RFAs): 12 from within the UCPM (9 from EU Member States and 3 from UCPM Participating States) and 11 from third countries. Of these, 78% of the total received offers of support through the UPCM (18 out of 23). Within the UCPM, 83% of activations received offers (10 out of 12 – 7 out of 9 or 78% within the EU Member States and 3 out of 3 or 100% within UCPM Participating States) and in third countries 73% of activations received offers (8 out of 11). In parallel, the UCPM has remained activated for Ukraine since 2022, and during the first half of 2025, the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) received 15 other new or updated requests for assistance from the Ukrainian authorities.

In addition to the 23 new RFAs received in 2025, 19 open RFAs carried over and remained open from previous years. These included 6 activations from 2023 (4 of which are still ongoing) and 13 from 2024 (4 of which are still ongoing also).

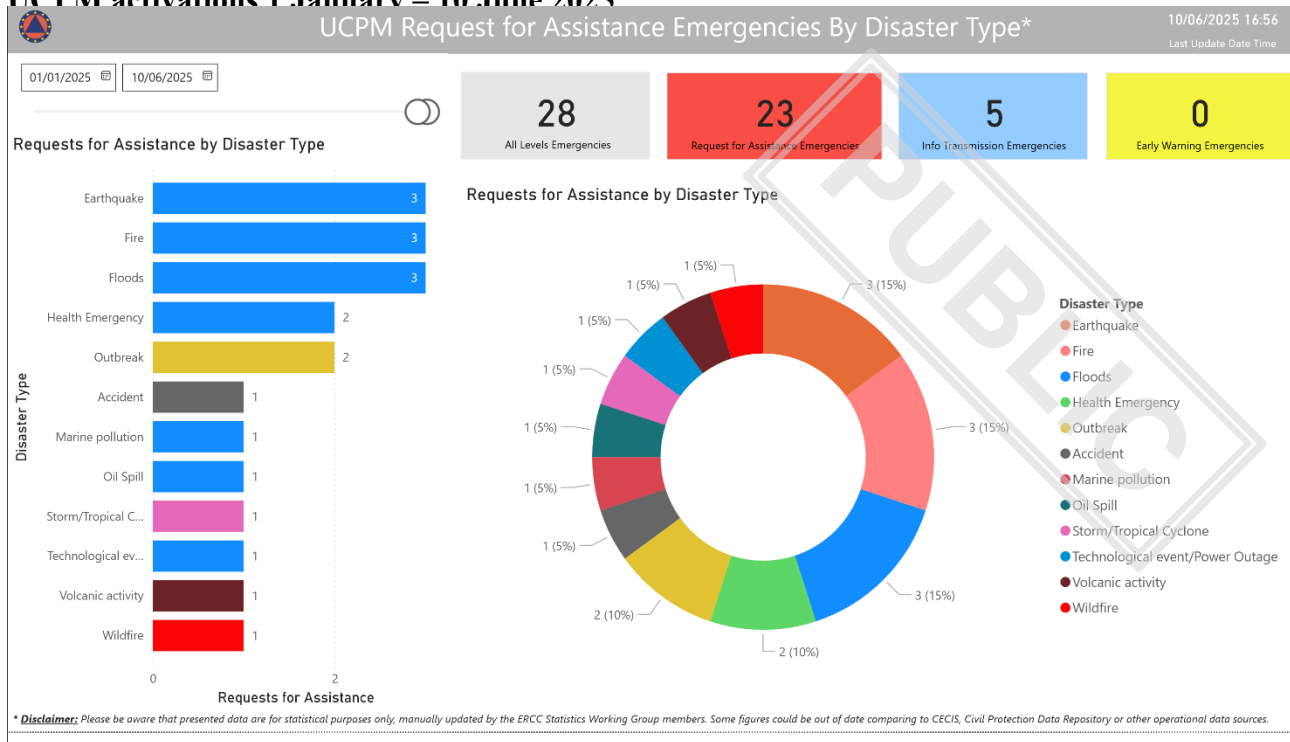
### **UCPM Activations 2002 – 2025:**



### Fulfilment of Requests for Assistance (RfA) 2014-2025







The 12 new UCPM requests for assistance within the UCPM (EU Member States and UCPM Participating States) during the reporting period were related to floods (RO), storms (IE), wildfire season preparation (PT, ES, FR, EL), health/medical (SK, CZ, PT) and technological / human-induced events (UA – Chernobyl, MK, MD).

The 11 new UCPM requests for assistance outside the EU during the reporting period related to wildfires (IL), earthquakes (MM x2, TJ), floods (BO, EC), health/medical (UG, ET), marine pollution (EC, ER) and technological / human-induced events (LB).

In the first half of 2025, 32 UCPM experts<sup>1</sup> (3 of them remotely) from 14 EU Member States/ UCPM Participating States (BE, EE, FR, DE, HU, LU, MT, NO, PL, SL, ES, SE, NL) were deployed in 6 missions, along with 7 Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) Liaison Officers.

In addition, the Commission’s Copernicus Emergency Management Service was activated 55 times, producing close to 536 satellite maps, covering the following types of events: floods, wildfires, storms, mass movement and oil spill.

<sup>1</sup> Between 2013 and 2024 on average 64 UCPM experts were deployed per year.

A more detailed description of the UCPM response to the requests is set out in Annex 1.



## **Annex 1**

### **1. Russia's war on Ukraine**

Since the beginning of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, 226 new or updated requests for assistance were submitted in the sectors of health, shelter, food and non-food items, heavy machinery and equipment, energy, agriculture, chemical, biological, radiation and nuclear incidents (CBRN), civilian demining, personal protection, transportation and logistics. 15 new such requests were received during the reporting period, with a focus on medicines, medical equipment, emergency vehicles, energy items, CBRN, IT equipment and winter preparation.

In all, 27 EU Member States have responded along with six UCPM Participating States (Iceland, North Macedonia, Moldova, Norway, Serbia and Türkiye). More than 155 000 tonnes of various items have already been offered and delivered to Ukraine, the majority of which have been delivered through the EU logistical hubs located in Poland, Slovakia and Romania.

The UCPM has delivered CBRN assistance from MS/PS spontaneous offers, rescEU CBRN and medical stockpiles and rescEU private donations. Millions of CBRN items have been channelled under the UCPM. This assistance includes antidotes, detectors, therapeutics, dosimeters, respirators, decontamination provisions, protective suits, and gas masks. The latest CBRN offer channelled through the UCPM was made by Germany in April 2025 offering protective equipment. Following an explosion reported on 14 February 2025 at the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) within the New Safe Confinement (NSC) building, on 18 February the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) requested assistance to the UCPM consisting of rescue from height equipment and CBRN detection and decontamination. In response, the ERCC mobilised rescEU stocks hosted by Finland, Germany, Poland and Slovenia of a total financial value of nearly EUR 1.1 million. In addition, Norway offered height-rescue equipment.

Support for the Ukrainian energy sector through the UCPM has been crucial in the aftermath of attacks on the country's energy infrastructure, with approximately 45% of offers under the UCPM addressing energy-related needs. The UCPM has undertaken extensive efforts to alleviate the impact of resource loss. Under the UCPM, substantial assistance has been extended to Ukraine, including 9 308 power generators, 6 589 transformers, and 6 autotransformers, thousands of electrical components and millions of efficient LED bulbs. In this reporting period, around 3 489 transformers and 1 159 generators were offered. Additionally, UCPM has increased the channelling of large energy infrastructure through donations from Lithuania, Estonia and Germany requiring complex planning and logistics.

Since 1 March 2022, the ERCC has received 5 433 (around 480 for the reporting period) requests for medical evacuations of Ukrainian patients. To date, more than 4 390 Ukrainian patients have been evacuated for medical treatment in 22 countries (AT, BE, HR, CZ, DK, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SI, ES, and SE). During the reporting period, 357 medical evacuations were completed to 14 countries under the UCPM Medevac scheme.

## **2. The Middle East crisis**

Given the complexity of the situation and the regional dimension of the conflict, the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) has been activated a total of 14 times since October 2023, including for humanitarian supplies for Gaza, support to countries affected by the spill-over of the crisis, facilitating repatriations from Israel, Gaza and Lebanon and for marine pollution assessment in Yemen.

The following presents an overview of the response to activations during the reporting period.

### **a) Egypt – Support to health care system**

On 2 November 2023, Egypt requested assistance for its health care system, anticipating evacuees requiring medical services, and listed needs for ICU equipment, trauma care, and consumables. Egypt has sent updated requests in March and September 2024.

Since January 2025, 5 Member States (BE, DE, FR, SE, SK) have offered assistance in the form of medical equipment such as ventilators, protective gowns and medicines to Egypt to support the healthcare system.

### **b) Support to Lebanon:**

On 18 September 2024, Lebanon submitted a request for assistance for medicine and medical equipment as well as civil protection items. Nine EU Member States (BE, BG, EL, ES, FR, LU, PL and SK) have delivered various medical equipment, devices, and medicines to Lebanon.

### **c) Gaza Medevac**

On 24 April 2024, WHO requested assistance for medical evacuations of Palestinian patients based in Egypt or Gaza. Since July 2024, 206 patients and 450 companions have been evacuated by 11 EU Member States and 3 UCPM Participating States (BE, DE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LU, MT, RO and SK as well as AL, NO and TR), in collaboration with the WHO and Egyptian and Israeli authorities. Between 1 January and 11 June 2025, a total of 11 medevac operations were conducted, transporting 152 patients and 338 companions.

### **3. UCPM Response within the European Union**

#### **a) Floods**

##### Romania – Salt Mine Flood

On 2 June, Romania activated the UCPM to assess the structural integrity of the Praid salt mine, following flooding in central Romania. Romania requested the deployment of eight experts to provide expertise in environmental science, geology and civil engineering. On 4 June, eight experts from HU, DE, NL, ES and one liaison officer from the ERCC deployed to assist Romanian authorities in developing a roadmap to restore normal conditions and assess the risks posed to the surrounding inhabited area above the mine, with the goal of ensuring a safe and stable environment.

#### **b) Wildfires**

##### Europe - Wildfire Season

The preparation of the 2025 Europe wildfire season is in full preparation. PT, ES, FR and EL made requests for prepositioning of ground forest fires teams. Almost 650 firefighters from 14 European countries (AT, BG, CZ, DE, EE, EL, FR, IT, LV, MD, MT, NL, RO, SK) will be deployed.

The dedicated **rescEU fleet** during 2025 wildfire season will consist of ten Canadair airplanes, eight light aircraft and four helicopters stationed in ten Member States.

A dedicated wildfire support and analysis cell will be established at the EU's Emergency Response Coordination Centre during the wildfire season to ensure a rapid and efficient coordination and response.

#### **c) Storms**

##### Ireland – Storm Éowyn

On 25 January, following the storm Éowyn, Ireland activated the UCPM to cope with power outages within critical services such as water supply, telecommunications, education and healthcare. DK provided 4 generators as a loan, LU sent 1 generator. 10 generators of 27.5 kVA and 2 generators of 640 kVA were mobilized from the rescEU stockpile hosted by PL, provided as a loan.

#### **d) Health/Medical events**

##### Slovakia – Foot and Mouth disease

On 22 March, following several outbreaks of Foot and Mouth disease (FMD), Slovakia requested through the UCPM three CBRN decontamination teams, 10 trucks equipped with sealed

compartments and two decontamination gates for heavy vehicles. AT offered one CBRN decontamination module registered in the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP)<sup>2</sup>, which consisted of 48 people and was deployed in Slovakia from 26 March until 7 April. CZ offered two decontamination gates operated by a team of 17 people, which were deployed from 26 March until 15 April.

## **2. All other UCPM response outside the European Union**

### **a) Wildfires**

#### Israel – Wildfires

On 30 April, Israel activated the UCPM following wildfires raging in the vicinity of Jerusalem. Israel requested the deployment of six firefighting planes and one helicopter to support their response efforts. Eight Member States/Participating States offered aerial firefighting support (CY, ES, FR, HR, IT, RO, RS, UA), of which the offers by HR, IT and CY were accepted. Two Canadair airplanes from IT and one helicopter from CY were deployed between 1 and 3 May. Two Canadair airplanes from HR departed on 1 May, but their deployment was cancelled due to improvement of the situation and the airplanes returned to their base.

### **b) Earthquakes**

#### Myanmar - Earthquake

Following the destructive earthquake that struck Myanmar on 28 March, the UCPM was activated by UNEP/OCHA Joint Environmental Unit, UN OCHA and WHO. Seven EU Member States (BG, DE, FI, IT, LU, PL, SE) offered shelter and medical items. In the context of this response, 12 experts (SE, FI, NL, SI, LU and NO) and two ERCC Liaison Officers were deployed to Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur to assess logistical modalities to enable the delivery of assistance into Myanmar.

### **c) Technological / human-induced events**

#### Moldova – Energy stability

On 17 January, Moldovan authorities activated the UCPM due to the risk of energy supply cut-off, requesting electric generators, air conditioners for the winter and summer, and gas-turbine power plants. Gazprom stopped delivering natural gas to the Transnistria region of Moldova. As the

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<sup>2</sup> EU Member States and UCPM Participating States can voluntarily commit civil protection resources known as response capacities to a pool within the framework of the UCPM called the ECPP.

Moldoveneasca Thermoelectric Plant in the Transnistria region supplied 70% of Moldova's electricity, this triggered an energy crisis as Moldova had to rely on coal and gas reserves to supply electricity and heating. In response, 5 Member States (SE, DE, BE, FI, LT) offered 42 generators ranging from 20 kVA to 150 kVA, and 31 air conditioners from SE. The generators were delivered in batches between 5 February and 29 May.

#### North Macedonia – Nightclub fire

On 16 March, North Macedonia requested assistance through the UCPM, after more than 210 people were killed or injured following a fire during a concert. North Macedonia requested the medical evacuation and treatment of 57 patients through the UCPM. Out of the 57 requested, 40 were evacuated and 17 were operationally cancelled. 15 Member States (SE, CZ, FR, ES, HU, PL, BE, NE, AT, IT, HR, SL, NO, LT, LU) offered treatment and transport.

#### Libya – Urban Fires

On 23 March, Libya requested assistance through the UCPM following the periodic outbreak of urban fires in the town of Al-Asaba. The Libyan National Centre for Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Management requested technical expertise to advise local authorities on mechanisms to identify the causes of the fires.

FI offered one expert in hazardous materials and EE offered one expert in fire cause investigation, who provided remote support 2-11 April. MT offered four experts in fire investigation, who were deployed in Libya between 6-10 April and conducted fire investigation activities in coordination with Libyan authorities.

### **d) Health/Medical events**

#### Uganda - Sudan Virus Disease (Ebola)

On 11 February 2025, the WHO requested under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) a medical evacuation expert/coordinator to support the establishment of the Viral haemorrhagic fever (VHF) Medevac system and enhance capacity in response to the ongoing Sudan Virus Disease SVD Ebola outbreak in Uganda. BE, NO, DE and PL responded with offers of experts who were deployed on rotation between 27 February to the 27 April, to support the health authorities in building infection, prevention and control (IPC) strategies and Medevac/ isolation-transport-device trainings.

### **e) Marine Pollution**

#### Eritrea – Cargo vessel blaze and drifting in the Red Sea

On 28 January, a cargo ship started burning in the Red Sea with almost 1800 containers catching fire.

On 3 February, the UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit (JEU) requested UCPM assistance for marine pollution and environmental expertise. FR offered one UCPM expert who supported the JEU mission remotely from 6 February 2025 until 17 February 2025. The experts recommended environmental monitoring protocols to assess the potential impact of the incident on the environment.

### Ecuador – Oil Spill

On 13 March, a significant oil spill occurred in Ecuador after a landslide ruptured the pipeline system, following a severe rainy season with intense floods and landslides, affecting a river estuary, flowing into the ocean.

On 20 March, Ecuador requested the UN to mobilise technical expertise through the UNEP/OCHA Joint Environmental Unit (JEU). On 22 March, UNEP/OCHA JEU requested assistance through the UCPM for four environmental experts to join a two-week UNDAC mission until 5 April.

ES offered one expert in oil spill response and hazardous waste management and NL offered one expert in oil spill response.