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European Union

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NOTE

From:	Commission
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Non-paper on the participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

Delegations will find in Annex information from the Commission regarding the abovementioned topic.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID
OPERATIONS (ECHO)

Disaster Preparedness and Prevention
Civil Protection Horizontal Issues

Brussels,
ECHO.B.1/JS

CORRESPONDENCE SLIP

ADDRESSEES: General Secretariat of the Council

SUBJECT: Non-paper on the participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

REMARKS:

Following the information by the Council Legal Service and the Commission on ‘Expansion of the UCPM to third countries’ in the meeting of the Council Working Party on Civil Protection (PROCIV) on 18 October 2022, the Commission would like to transmit to the General Secretariat of the Council and the members of the Council Working Party on Civil Protection (PROCIV) a non-paper on the participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.


Yours faithfully,

Electronically signed

Hans Ulrich GOESSL
Acting Head of Unit

Enclosure: Non-paper on the participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

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 Electronically signed on 26/10/2022 17:45 (UTC+02) in accordance with Article 11 of Commission Decision (EU) 2021/2121



Non-paper on the participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

This non-paper aims to present information as to the recently undertaken and currently planned steps relating to the participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (“UCPM”)¹.

The participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania in the UCPM represents a positive political signal to both countries, supporting them on their path towards a possible future EU membership, as well as a further consolidation of the territorial coherence of the UCPM. The integration of eligible third countries into the UCPM across Europe has been a long-standing priority for the Commission with currently Norway, Iceland, Turkey, Serbia, North Macedonia and Montenegro taking part as Participating States in the UCPM.

Bosnia and Herzegovina applied for participation in the UCPM already in 2014 and again in June 2020. The country significantly improved its civil protection system and showed a clear commitment in the area of disaster management. On 6 September 2022, the Commission signed the agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina on joining the UCPM as a full member. Following the notification by Bosnia and Herzegovina on the completion of the national ratification procedure, the agreement is to be applied as of 1 January 2023, with Bosnia and Herzegovina gaining the full rights and obligations of a UCPM Participating State as from that date.

Furthermore, Albania has officially applied for the participation in the UCPM in June 2022. Albania has also made concrete progress in building the capacity its civil protection system and has conducted an inclusive re-organisation of its national civil protection system. Against this background, the Commission has undertaken technical-level discussions with Albanian civil protection authorities and has deemed Albania mature enough in regard to the national organisation of its civil protection capabilities to joining the UCPM. The Commission is planning to sign the relevant agreement with Albania in November 2022. Following the notification by Albania on the completion of the national ratification procedure, and pending the completion of the procedure on a Commission Decision adopting the agreement and authorizing its signature, the agreement will be applicable as of 1 January 2023, with Albania gaining the full rights and obligations of a UCPM Participating State as from that date.

¹ Article 28 of the Decision No 1313/2013 allows certain third countries to join the UCPM. These are (a) European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement, and other European countries when agreements and procedures so provide; (b) acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates, in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in Union programmes established in the respective Framework Agreements and Association Council Decisions, or similar agreements.