



Council of the  
European Union

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**LIMITE**

**IPCR 16  
AG 14  
RELEX 129  
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PROCIV 8  
CSDP/PSDC 50  
COCON 12  
COTER 33  
HYBRID 9  
SAN 64  
MI 82  
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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

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Subject: Enhancing preparedness, response capability and resilience to future crises – steering note

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In preparation for the General Affairs Council, delegations will find attached a steering note on enhancing preparedness, response capability and resilience to future crises.



## FRENCH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

### GAC meeting on 22 February 2022 – Enhancing preparedness, response capability and resilience to future crises

#### Steering note

On 23 November 2021 the Council adopted conclusions on enhancing preparedness, response capability and resilience to future crises<sup>1</sup>.

The European Council of 16 December 2021<sup>2</sup> stated in its conclusions that crisis management and resilience constituted ‘a major cross-cutting political priority for the Union’. It also called both for strengthening the EU’s crisis preparedness and response in an ‘all-hazards’ approach, and for building and monitoring resilience and addressing areas where we are exposed. It invited the Council to take the work forward.

Following on from the Slovenian Presidency, an ad hoc working party was set up to continue this work. It held its first meeting on 4 February 2022. The Presidency circulated a questionnaire on the three strands identified in the Council’s work under the Slovenian Presidency, namely: (i) preparedness; (ii) crisis response; and (iii) resilience to future crises. It will compile a summary of the Member States’ replies, which will feed into the ongoing work in the working party.

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<sup>1</sup> [Council conclusions of 23 November 2021, 14276/21](#)

<sup>2</sup> [European Council conclusions, 16 December 2021, EUCO 22/21](#)

The purpose of the discussion at the General Affairs Council will be to give political guidance in respect of the most important issues.

1. As regards preparedness, all Member States, in principle, have crisis management plans in place at national or local level.

In its communication of 15 June 2021 on lessons to be learned from the crisis, the Commission announced that it would prepare an annual State of Preparedness Report to cover not just health threats but all types of threats (chemical, biological and radiological attacks, seismic shocks, environmental or technological disasters, blackouts).

There are two matters in particular that may be raised in relation to European-level efforts: the development of preparedness plans for different types of crises and the building of strategic reserves beyond what is already planned within the framework of RescEU and HERA.

2. As regards crisis management, paragraph 15 of the Council conclusions of 23 November 2021 states that *‘[t]he IPCR arrangements have proven to be a flexible and useful instrument for addressing immediate challenges in times of crisis. With a view to ensuring that the Council’s crisis response mechanism remains fit for purpose, the Council will review by June 2022 whether the IPCR arrangements need improvement or strengthening, in particular in the areas of anticipation and preparedness, taking on the lessons identified from the IPCR activations for the migration crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as past crisis management exercises and relevant experiences at Member State level to be taken into account in the discussions in the Council.’*

The major role played by certain structures such as the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), which provides operational coordination support for the IPCR arrangements, should be mentioned in this context.

The work due to be carried out in the coming weeks should allow for consideration of any necessary improvements to the functioning of the IPCR arrangements in the wider context of crisis management at European level.

3. Lastly, as regards resilience, various work is in progress.

On the legislative side, there are trilogues ongoing on three important texts: the Directive on the resilience of critical entities, the Directive on digital operational resilience for the financial sector (DORA) and the Directive on measures for a high common level of cybersecurity across the Union (NIS 2).

The Commission, for its part, is preparing a resilience dashboard. Union disaster resilience targets are also being developed in line with civil protection legislation, based on different scenarios that could arise. In addition, a Union civil protection knowledge network has been launched.

4. In light of the above, Ministers are invited to reply to the following questions:
- Which measures do you consider to be the highest priorities with a view to strengthening the EU’s crisis-management preparedness?
  - How well, in your view, does the IPCR work? How should it be improved?
  - Do you think that enough work is being done at European level on resilience? What additional measures could be taken if necessary, particularly to address cyber risk?

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