Union Civil Protection Mechanism 2014-2020

2011/0461(COD) - 17/12/2013 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish a Union Civil Protection Mechanism in order to prepare for, and respond to disasters.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

BACKGROUND: in view of the significant increase in the numbers and severity of natural and man-made disasters in recent years and in a situation where future disasters will be more extreme and more complex with far-reaching and longer-term consequences as a result, in particular, of climate change and the potential interaction between several natural and technological hazards, an integrated approach to disaster management is increasingly important.

CONTENT: the Decision establishes the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, which promotes solidarity and supports the coordination of Member States' actions in the field of civil protection with a view to improving the effectiveness of systems for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters. It lays down the general rules for the Union Mechanism as well as the rules for the provision of financial assistance. The Decision is intended to bring better predictability and quality of assistance, and increased cost-efficiency by means of scale and complementarity. The protection to be ensured by the Union Mechanism will cover primarily people, but also the environment and property, including cultural heritage, against all kinds of natural and man-made disasters, including the consequences of acts of terrorism, technological, radiological or environmental disasters, marine pollution, and acute health emergencies, occurring inside or outside the Union.

The main points are as follows:

Specific objectives: these are:

- to achieve a high level of protection against disasters by preventing or reducing their potential effects, by fostering a culture of prevention and by improving cooperation between the civil protection and other relevant services;
- to enhance preparedness at Member State and Union level to respond to disasters;
- to facilitate rapid and efficient response in the event of disasters or imminent disasters; and
- to increase public awareness and preparedness for disasters.

Union structure: the Mechanism is based on a Union structure consisting of an Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), a European Emergency Response Capacity (EERC) in the form of a voluntary pool of pre-committed capacities from the Member States, trained experts, a Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) managed by the Commission and contact points in the Member States. This provides a framework for collecting validated information on the situation, for dissemination to the Member States and for sharing lessons learnt from interventions.

Prevention actions: the Commission shall, inter alia:

- take action to improve the knowledge base on disaster risks and facilitate the sharing of knowledge, best practices and information,
- promote Member States' risk assessment and mapping activity
- regularly update a cross-sectoral overview and map of natural and man-made disaster risks the Union may face
- support the development and implementation of Member States' risk management activity.

Preparedness actions: the Decision sets out the general preparedness actions that must be taken both by the Commission and by Member States. Amongst the Commissions tasks is the management of the ERCC and CECIS, and developing a network of trained experts from Member States, who can be available at short notice to assist the ERCC.

Member States, for their part shall identify modules, other response capacities and experts within their civil protection or other emergency services, which could be made available for intervention upon request through the Union Mechanism.

Response action: the response mechanism includes a enhanced coordination system which encompasses:

- notification of disasters in the EU between Member States;
- disaster response: when a disaster occurs within the Union, or is imminent, the affected Member State may request assistance through the ERCC. The request shall be as specific as possible. In exceptional situations of increased risk a Member State may also request assistance in the form of temporary pre-positioning of response capacities;
- any Member State to which a request for assistance is addressed through the Union Mechanism shall promptly determine whether it is in a position to render the assistance required and inform the requesting Member State of its decision through the CECIS, indicating the scope, terms and, where applicable, costs of the assistance it could render. The ERCC shall keep the Member States informed;
- when a disaster occurs outside the Union, or is imminent, the affected country may request assistance through the ERCC. The assistance may also be requested through or by the United Nations and its agencies, or a relevant international organisation.

Emergency Response Coordination Centre: the ERCC must ensure 24/7 operational capacity, and serve the Member States and the Commission in pursuit of the objectives of the Union Mechanism. On the basis of identified risks, the Commission will define the types and the number of key response capacities required for the EERC ("capacity goals") and will monitor progress towards these capacity goals identifying potentially significant response capacity gaps in the EERC. Response capacities that Member States make available for the EERC shall be

available for response operations under the Union Mechanism following a request for assistance through the ERCC. The ultimate decision on their deployment shall be taken by the Member States which registered the response capacity concerned.

Risk assessment: the Union Mechanism includes a general framework for the sharing of information on risks and risk management capabilities . Member States must: (i) develop risk assessments and risk management capability at national or appropriate sub-national level and make available to the Commission a summary of the relevant elements; (ii) participate, on a voluntary basis, in peer reviews on the assessment of risk management capability.

Financial framework: the financial envelope for the implementation of the Union Mechanism for the period 2014 to 2020 shall be EUR 368 428 000 in current prices:

- EUR 223 776 000 in current prices shall derive from Heading 3 "Security and Citizenship" of the multiannual financial framework and
- EUR 144 652 000 in current prices from Heading 4 "Global Europe".

The annual appropriations shall be authorised by the European Parliament and the Council within the limits of the multiannual financial framework.

Percentages for allocation of the financial envelope are as follows:

- Prevention: 20 % +/- 8 percentage points
- Preparedness: 50 % +/- 8 percentage points
- Response: 30 % +/- 8 percentage points

Evaluation: the Commission shall evaluate the application of the Decision and submit:

- an interim evaluation report on the results obtained by no later than 30 June 2017;
- a communication on the continued implementation of this Decision by no later than 31 December 2018; and
- an ex-post evaluation report by no later than 31 December 2021.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 21.12.2013.

APPLICATION: 01.01.2014.

DELEGATED ACTS: the Commission will be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance in order to review the breakdown of the financial envelope for the implementation of the Decision by 30 June 2017, in light of the outcome of the interim evaluation. The power to adopt delegated acts is conferred on the Commission for a period of seven years until 31 December 2020. The European Parliament or the Council may object to a delegated act within two months from the date of notification (which may be extended by two months.) If the European Parliament or the Council make objections, the delegated act will not enter into force. The urgency procedure should apply if, at any time, an immediate revision of the budgetary resources available for response actions is needed.