Union Civil Protection Mechanism 2014-2020

2011/0461(COD) - 10/12/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 608 votes to 78, with 10 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of a compromise negotiated between the European Parliament and the Council.

General objective and subject matter: the Union Civil Protection Mechanism shall aim to strengthen the cooperation between the Union and the Member States and to facilitate coordination in the field of civil protection in order to **improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters**.

The protection to be ensured by the Union Mechanism shall 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,
- acute health emergencies, occurring inside or outside the Union.

In the case of the consequences of acts of terrorism or radiological disasters, the Union Mechanism may cover only preparedness and response actions.

The proposed Decision recalled the Member States' primary responsibility in this area through laying down the general rules for the Union Mechanism and the rules for the provision of financial assistance under the Union Mechanism.

Technical details outline the scope of the mechanism in terms of its specific objectives. The three-fold themes are as follows:

1) Preventive action: this arm shall seek to:

- take action to improve the knowledge base on disaster risks ;
- facilitate the sharing of knowledge, best practices and information, including among Member States that share common risks;
- establish and regularly update a cross-sectoral overview and map of natural and man-made disaster risks the Union may face ;
- promote and support the development and implementation of Member States' risk management activity through the sharing of good practices, and facilitate access to specific knowledge and expertise on issues of common interest;
- compile and disseminate the information made available by Member States; organise an exchange of experiences about the assessment of risk management capability;
- report periodically to the European Parliament and to the Council on the progress made in the implementation of the risk assessment actions;
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promote the use of various Union funds which may support sustainable disaster prevention and encourage the Member States and regions to exploit those funding opportunities;
- promote prevention measures in the Member States and third countries through the sharing of good practices, and facilitate access to specific knowledge and expertise on issues of common interest;
- take additional necessary supporting and complementary prevention action.

Risk management: in order to promote an effective and coherent approach to prevention of and preparedness for disasters, Member States shall develop risk assessments at national or appropriate sub-national level and make available to the Commission a summary of the relevant elements every three years and make available the assessment of their risk management capability. Member States shall also **participate, on a voluntary basis, in peer reviews on the assessment of risk management capability**.

2) Preparedness action: an **Emergency Response Coordination Centre** (ERCC) is hereby established. The ERCC shall ensure 24/7 operational capacity, and serve the Member States and the Commission in pursuit of the objectives of the Union Mechanism. The Commission shall carry out a series of preparedness actions such as the management of the ERCC.

The preparedness arm shall put in place:

- **modules**, in particular to meet priority intervention or support needs under the Union Mechanism;
- **response capacities**, which could be available from the competent services, or which may be provided by non-governmental organisations and other relevant entities
- **a planning for disaster response under the Mechanism**, including the development of disaster response scenarios, identifying resources and developing plans to deploy response capabilities;
- a **European Emergency Response Capacity** (EERC) shall be established. It shall consist of a voluntary pool of pre-committed response capacities of the Member States and include modules, other response capacities and experts;
- measures addressing response capacity gaps, either individually or through a consortium of Member States cooperating together on common risks, any strategic capacity gaps that have been identified;
- **training, exercises, lessons learnt and knowledge dissemination**. The training programme shall aim to enhance the coordination, compatibility and complementarity between capacities and to improve the competence of experts. A training network shall be established to enhance all phases of disaster management, taking into account adaptation to and mitigation of climate change.

3) Reponse action: the response mechanism includes a enhanced coordination system including:

- 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.

Reserve in case of disaster: in order to improve the planning of disaster response operations under the Union Mechanism and to enhance the availability of key capacities, it is necessary to develop an EERC in the form of a voluntary pool of pre-committed capacities from the Member States and a structured process

to identify potential capacity gaps. Experts from the Commission and from other services of the Union may be integrated in the team in order to support the team and facilitate liaison with the ERCC. Experts dispatched by OCHA or other international organisations may be integrated in the team in order to strengthen cooperation and facilitate joint assessments. In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Decision, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission with respect to the interaction of the ERCC with the Member States' contact points and the operational procedures for the response to disasters inside and outside the Union.

On a technical level, provisions are laid down as regards logistical support in terms of transport and the mobilisation of equipment.

Pursuant to a request for assistance, the Commission may take additional necessary supporting and complementary action in order to ensure consistency in the delivery of the assistance.

Financed actions: all actions of prevention, preparedness and operations eligible for financial assistance under the European Union Mechanism as well as access to equipment and transport resources within the mechanism are also detailed in the text of the draft decision.

The draft decision further details:

- the type of aid beneficiaries;
- the types of financial assistance;
- types of intervention procedures and implementing procedures.

Budgetary resources: 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.

Percentages for allocation of the financial envelope for the implementation of the Union Mechanism are as follows:

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

This amount shall derive from Heading 3 ‘Security and Citizenship’ and Heading 4 ‘Global Europe’.

N.B. The Commission shall review the breakdown set out in Annex I in the light of the outcome of the interim evaluation. The Commission shall be empowered to adopt, where necessary in light of the results of that evaluation, **delegated acts** in accordance with Article 30, to adjust each of the figures in Annex I by more than 8 percentage points and up to 16 percentage points. Those delegated acts shall be adopted **by 30 June 2017**.

Where, in case of a necessary revision of the budgetary resources available for response actions, **imperative grounds of urgency so require**, the Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts to adjust each of the figures in Annex I, within the available budgetary allocations.

Complementarity and consistency of Union action: actions receiving financial assistance under this Decision shall not receive assistance from other Union financial instruments. Synergies and complementarity shall be sought with other instruments of the Union. In the case of a response to humanitarian crises in third countries, the Commission shall ensure the complementarity and coherence of actions financed under this Decision.

Third countries and international organisations: the Union Mechanism shall be open to the participation of:

EFTA countries which are members of the EEA;

acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates;

candidate countries and potential candidates not participating in the Union Mechanism, as well as to countries that are part of the ENP, to the extent that that financial assistance complements funding available under a future Union legislative act.

Evaluation: actions receiving financial assistance shall be monitored regularly in order to follow their implementation. The Commission shall evaluate the application of this Decision and submit to the European Parliament and to the Council:

- an interim evaluation report on the results obtained and the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the implementation of this Decision 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.

The interim evaluation report and the communication respectively shall be accompanied, if appropriate, by proposals for amendments to this Decision.