

Union Civil Protection Mechanism

2019/0070(COD) - 10/03/2020 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Nikos ANDROULAKIS (S&D, EL) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission's proposal as follows.

As a reminder, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (CPM) has supported Member States to save lives in the midst of earthquakes, hurricanes and floods, fighting forest fires and evacuating EU nationals in crisis - including during the current COVID-19 outbreak in China - by coordinating and assisting in civil protection efforts. However, it only has limited resources and restricted capacity to respond to specific types of natural disaster.

Sufficient financial means

A significant allocation of funds to prevention and preparedness actions should be made in order to guarantee continued investments. Therefore, Members proposed that the financial envelope for the implementation of the Union Mechanism for the period 2021 to 2027 should be EUR 1.4 billion. They also called for this financial allocation to cover expenses pertaining to preparatory, monitoring, control, audit and evaluation activities, which are required for the management of the Union Mechanism and the achievement of its objectives.

The Commission shall implement the Union's financial support in direct management.

Percentages and principles for allocation of the financial envelope for the implementation of the Union Mechanism

In order to increase transparency about the use of EU funding, Members specified how money shall be allocated across the three pillars of the mechanism 'prevention, preparedness and response'.

For the period 2014 to 2020

- Prevention: 10 % +/- 10 percentage points;
- Preparedness: 65 % +/- 10 percentage points;
- Response: 25 % +/- 10 percentage points.

For the period 2021 to 2027

- Prevention: 8 % +/- 10 percentage points;
- Preparedness: 80 % +/- 10 percentage points;
- Response: 12 % +/- 10 percentage points.

Further to these transparency measures, the report stated that a communication strategy shall be developed by the Commission in order to make the tangible results of the actions taken under the Union Mechanism visible to citizens. The Commission shall also develop measures together with local authorities, taking into account the collection of input to improve Union Mechanism activities.

The Commission, in partnership with Member States and in coordination with local authorities, shall take awareness-raising and prevention measures for the benefit of local populations. Those activities shall be carried out on a regular basis with a view to enabling populations to respond immediately in the event of a disaster.

Voluntary pool

Members proposed that in order to support Member States to deliver this assistance, the European Civil Protection Pool should be further reinforced by co-financing the operational costs of the committed capacities under the same rules for deployment both inside and outside the Union.

Galileo

It is also proposed that the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and Member States should make use of Union infrastructures such as Galileo. When the emergency service provided by Galileo becomes available, each Member State may use it. Where a Member State decides to use the emergency service, it shall identify and notify to the Commission the national authority authorised to use that emergency service.

Cultural heritage

Members proposed to focus more on the protection of cultural heritage during disasters. Cultural heritage sites and monuments require specialised treatment; otherwise, there is a risk to do more harm than good during an emergency intervention. The network should make sure that heritage specialists are included in the trainings and preparedness actions.