

Within the framework of the EU Month of Implementation, the Director Generals for Civil Protection and their Representatives met in Brussels on the 21th of May to discuss the role of implementing authorities in the EU policy process.

To guarantee the effective application of EU legislation, the needs and conditions for national implementation should be taken into account when drafting and achieving ambitious European goals. Within this context the DG's and representatives from the civil protection agencies have exchanged experiences and ideas in the field of Civil Protection, Civil Defense, Societal Resilience and Crisis Management.

Session I - The role of implementing authorities in the national preparation for the EU policy process

Baseline: The world is changing and so are the threats; new threats and classic threats. Civil Protection, Civil Defense, Societal Resilience, Crisis Management are high on the agenda. Nevertheless it is sometimes unclear how they connect and overlap.

In general the participants describe that the national coordination of their input on new EU legislation is rather well organized within their respective national structures. Horizontal coordination within different departments and agencies is a challenge for everyone. Some MS describe that new legislation on civil protection, disaster management and resilience is being prepared on a national level also to face new threats.

At national level implementing authorities play a role, *individually*, by formulating expected implementation consequences of proposed EU legislation at an early stage when the national lobby and negotiation strategy is under preparation by:

- Inserting expertise into the national preparation for the EU policy process as early as possible.
- At national level; carrying out inquiries and consultations (informal/formal), with the involvement of implementing agencies but also the private sector.
- Conduct impact assessment and ex ante evaluations to have a better sense of consequences for the implementing authorities of legislation concerned.
- To map these consequences, crucial to look not only at the national and regional level, but also at the local level (cooperation with municipalities).
- Communicate and share information on consequences and impact with the public and parliament.

What can Civil protection agencies do collectively, to influence and effect EU policies and agenda setting?

- Although there are several fora and working parties (DG Meeting, PROCIV, PROCIV CER, CER Group) in which civil protection professionals meet, the need exists of a forum to discuss broader and strategic long term challenges;
- PROCIV and Civil Protection DG Meeting work well to get voices of Civil Protection authorities heard in Brussels arena;

- Potential improvements:
 - Put impact of what is happening in other policy areas on civil protection on the agenda (responsibility EU Commission and presidencies). Connecting the dots with other fields and working parties;
 - Use these fora for agenda setting (responsibility Member States);
 - Continue using PROCIV as preparatory body for Civil Protection DG Meeting;
 - Increase operational exchanges of good practices.

Session II – Designing a positive and operational agenda for European legislation and cooperation

As a result of these discussions, the representatives of the national civil protection agencies presented their findings and conclusions to the CIE (DG ECHO):

- Vision on the role and responsibilities of civil protection: what do we want to achieve on the EU-level and what can Member States expect from the EU?
- Prioritize the civil protection pool by creating adequate incentives for Member States to contribute.
- Continue funding for existing rescEU resources, organize gap analysis backed-up by a rescEU resource process.
- Abolish ineligibility of VATs.
- Diminish bureaucracy by simplification; Cutting red tape. For example by allowing funds for recurring operations, multi-action grants, digitalization. Focus and tailor made approach for more complex operations.
- Increase trainings, adapt to evolving risks.
- Exemptions for civil protection in Working Time Directive.
- Exemptions for civil protection in acquisitions (e.g. green energy, environmental protection).
- Report on the effects of new technologies such as AI for civil protection (challenges and opportunities).
- Clearinghouse, platform, tool for sharing technological innovations and negotiations with industry.