



Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)

Invitation to submit a proposal

Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and human-induced disasters in the Eastern Partnership countries – phase 4 (PPRD East 4)

(UCPM-2025-PPRDEAST4)

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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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0. Introduction

This is an invitation to submit a proposal for EU **action grant** in the field of civil protection under the **Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)**.

The regulatory framework for this EU Funding Programme is set out in:

- Regulation 2024/2509 ([EU Financial Regulation](#)¹)
- Regulation 2021/947 ([Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe](#)²)
- the UCPM Decision [1313/2013](#)³.

The invitation is launched in accordance with the 2024 Annual Action Plan for Governance and EU Related reforms⁴ and will be managed by the **European Commission, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)**.

The call covers the following **programme**:

- **UCPM-2025-PPRDEAST4 – Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and human-induced disasters in the Eastern Partnership countries – phase 4 (PPRD East 4)**

We invite you to read the **call documentation** carefully, and in particular this Call document, the [Model Grant Agreement](#), the [EU Funding & Tenders Portal Online Manual](#) and the [EU Grants AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

These documents provide clarifications and answers to questions you may have when preparing your application:

- the [Call document](#) outlines the:
 - background, objectives, specific objectives, expected results and the activities that can be funded (sections 1 and 2)
 - timetable and available budget (sections 3 and 4)
 - admissibility and eligibility conditions (including mandatory documents; sections 5 and 6)
 - criteria for financial and operational capacity and exclusion (section 7)
 - evaluation and award procedure (section 8)
 - award criteria (section 9)
 - legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements (section 10)

¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024).

² Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, (OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p. 1–78).

³ Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 924).

⁴ Commission Implementing Decision C(2024)5375 on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of the NDICI Neighbourhood East Region for 2024.

- how to submit an application (section 11)
- the Online Manual outlines the:
 - procedures to register and submit proposals online via the EU Funding & Tenders Portal ('Portal')
 - recommendations for the preparation of the application
- the AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement contains:
 - detailed annotations on all the provisions in the Grant Agreement you will have to sign in order to obtain the grant (*including cost eligibility, payment schedule, accessory obligations, etc*).

You are also encouraged to consult previous PPRD East programmes ([PPRD East 1](#), [PPRD East 2](#) and [PPRD East 3](#)).

1. Background

The programme for Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and human-induced disasters in the Eastern Partnership countries (PPRD East) was initiated in 2010 under the [Eastern Partnership](#) (EaP) initiative. It aimed to strengthen disaster risk reduction and crisis management in the EaP countries, to promote regional cooperation and bring Partner Countries in cooperation with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)⁵.

The UCPM, established in 2001, has become a comprehensive framework for cooperation in disaster management in Europe and beyond. The overall objective of the UCPM is to strengthen the cooperation in the field of civil protection, to facilitate coordination, and to improve the effectiveness of the system for preventing, preparing for, and responding to natural and human-induced disasters. Currently, 37 EU Member States and Participating States, are participating in the UCPM⁶.

The programmes of PPRD East 1 (2010-2014) and PPRD East 2 (2014-2019) were directly linked with the "[Eastern Partnership – 20 deliverables for 2020](#)", which highlighted the importance of capacity building in crisis management. In line with the "[Recovery, resilience and reform: post 2020 Eastern Partnership priorities](#)", the PPRD East 3 significantly enhanced Partner Countries' preparedness, prevention and response to natural and human-induced disasters through capacity building activities.

The three phases of PPRD East have been transformative, significantly aiding Partner Countries in their efforts to align national legislation with EU acquis and adopt best practices in civil protection. These phases have facilitated important institutional changes and fostered closer ties between the EU and Partner Countries by creating a unique platform for both policy and technical dialogue, supported by extensive capacity building. In addition, cooperation between Partner Countries and the UCPM has been notably strengthened, with Ukraine joining as a Participating State in 2023 and the Republic of Moldova⁷ in 2024. While PPRD East is a regional program, it has maintained the flexibility to accommodate the differing needs and priorities of each Partner Country.

The overall aim of this invitation to submit a proposal is to identify and finance a programme of PPRD East 4. The beneficiary countries are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine⁸.

The new programme of PPRD East will continue capacity building in the Partner Countries to enhance resilience, deepen the engagements on local, national and regional level and consolidate recommendations identified under the previous phase. As per the results of PPRD East 3, continuous efforts should be focused on:

1. assisting and facilitating the development and/or update of National Disaster Risk Assessment, ensuring the integration of cross-cutting issues;
2. reinforcing risk assessments integration in national and local emergency planning to specific and/or multi-hazards;

⁵ The UCPM legal base is the [Decision No 1313/2013/EU](#).

⁶ In light of Article 28(1a) of Decision No 1313/2013/EU, where reference is made to Member States, it shall be understood as including Participating States as defined in Article 4(12) of Decision No 1313/2013/EU.

⁷ Hereinafter referred to as Moldova.

⁸ In line with the Council Conclusions of 12 October 2020 and in light of Belarus's involvement in the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, recognised in the European Council Conclusions of February 2022, the EU has stopped engaging with representatives of Belarus public bodies and state-owned enterprises. Should there be a change of the context this may be reconsidered.

3. operationalising and institutionalising early warning systems, broadening the scope of hazards, enhancing interinstitutional coordination for impact-based forecasting;
4. enhancing training capacities and training curriculums;
5. strengthening interagency coordination and cooperation for requesting and receiving international assistance, including Host Nation Support guidelines;
6. increasing networks between national authorities and civil society organisations/volunteers.

The programme is also expected to place emphasis on innovation/knowledge transfer and Disaster Risk Reduction, providing more systematic and integrated disaster prevention and preparedness for quicker recovery. The new elements of the programme include disaster recovery focusing on capacity building and technical guidance for preparedness for disaster reconstruction as well as facilitating the link between relief, rehabilitation and development. Moreover, the programme should focus on the integration of new and aspiring Participating States of the UCPM into the Mechanism.

The programme should take into account cross-cutting issues specified below. It should also focus on improving civil protection capacities in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the EU Disaster Resilience Goals.

PPRD East 4 will be the last phase of the action. With 15 years of programme implementation, the fourth phase of the programme shall focus on phasing out and ensuring sustainability of the results after the end of the programme. The following principles should be at the centre of these efforts:

1. **Building upon recommendations from previous PPRD East phases:** where applicable, ensuring continuity and follow up to already developed resources and capacities, taking lessons learned from previous programme, addressing challenges previously encountered and avoiding duplication of efforts.
2. **Enhancing ownership and sustainability of programme:** ensuring that developed capacities and cooperation structures at local, national and regional level respond to the needs of the beneficiaries and are further integrated into the relevant national structures in order to ensure sustainability of the results after the end of the programme.
3. **Address country specific needs while maintaining regional approach:** the programme should be flexible and tailored to address the needs and priorities of each Partner Country and identify cross-border/sub-regional and regional cooperation opportunities.
4. **Alignment with the UCPM and other disaster risk management initiatives in the region (in addition to the EU *acquis*, where applicable):** the Union Disaster Resilience Goals, the Article 6.1 report recommendations on disaster risk management⁹, mirroring programme activities to bring countries closer to the UCPM and creating synergies with initiatives funded by EU/UCPM and/or implemented by the international

⁹ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on progress on implementation of Article 6 of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism COM(2024)130 final.

community (UN, World Bank, EIB, NATO, INGOs, bilateral cooperation with EU Member States) and ensuring complementarity and coherence.

5. **Result-oriented approach:** placing focus on outcome-oriented rather than output-oriented project planning. A robust results framework should form the basis for adequate and timely monitoring and evaluation of the programme. Particular emphasis should be paid to the applicants' choice of indicators.

Context

The targeted region is characterised by a highly complex disaster profile. Despite their large geographical coverage, the targeted countries can be characterised by their considerably similar exposure to natural and human-induced disaster risks, ranging from earthquakes, floods, landslides, forest and ground fires, heat and cold waves. Environmental, industrial, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks are serious.

Strengthening resilience which includes enhancing capacities to prevent, prepare and respond to disasters across the entire region is one of the post 2020 Eastern Partnership priorities¹⁰. The EaP countries recognise the need to further enhance disaster management system. They have embarked into a process of capacity building at all phases of disaster management, involving various stakeholders at local and national level. Emergency planning, comprehensive disaster risk assessments and methodology, inter-agency coordination and early warning systems have been improved, with the support of previous PPRD East programme. These efforts have contributed to the gradual and ongoing shift from overtly response-based civil protection approach to prevention and preparedness one.

Nonetheless, capacities of the national authorities in the Partner Countries to effectively manage disasters vary significantly. Lack of financial, human or technical resources as well as inadequate capacities and expertise have often been cited as obstacles to concrete implementation of a sound disaster risk management.

The instructional, legislative and financial arrangements for comprehensive and gender-inclusive disaster risk management should be strengthened, taking into account climate change impacts. Adaptation to climate change, although closely related, is still not implemented in synergy and full coordination with disaster risk management policies.

It is also necessary to strengthen inclusion of gender and vulnerable groups into the disaster risk management process at both national and local levels, involving various stakeholders and national agencies (volunteers, civil society organisations, etc.). Civil protection education/training and volunteerism should be improved and further institutionalised. Procedures for requesting and receiving international assistance should be further developed and enshrined in the legislation. Effective disaster recovery is another element of importance that requires capacity development.

Most of the countries have established cross-border cooperation agreements with their neighbours regarding mutual assistance in case of major disasters, however in some cases actual contacts need to be developed/better maintained and frameworks for cooperation and international assistance in disasters should be strengthened.

In addition, Partner Countries cooperation with the UCPM is at different stages. Efforts should be dedicated for the integration of Moldova and Ukraine into the UCPM, as well

¹⁰ Commission Joint Staff Working Document SWD(2021)186 on Recovery, resilience and reform: post 2020 Eastern Partnership priorities.

as for Georgia, as a potential Participating State of the UCPM. Throughout the EaP region, Moldova and Ukraine, as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are particularly exposed to high transboundary risk in case of a disaster. These different layers of cooperation need to be further enhanced and implemented in practice for an efficient coordination in the region, with the UCPM, the EU Member States and other international actors.

National Civil Protection Authorities

In Armenia, the newly created Ministry of Internal Affairs has taken the responsibility of civil protection and disaster risk management. It incorporates the Rescue Service of Armenia. The Ministry is undergoing major reforms, including in the Rescue Service.

Azerbaijan has assigned Ministry of Emergency Situations with a wide range of powers and responsibilities confirmed by large financial support from the state budget.

In Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, the corresponding responsibilities are under the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Internal Affairs. In Georgia, the strategic and coordination functions (including the situation room) remain under the Prime Minister's office.

The capacities of the national authorities in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine can be characterised as advanced yet still unevenly distributed at national, regional, and local levels. Generally, limited resources create deficiencies of emergency assets for daily operations. However, it is worth noting that, given the ongoing war in Ukraine with its direct cascading effects in Moldova, the two countries have experienced non-negligible advancements in the area of civil protection over the last approximately 2.5 years.

Lessons Learned

The proposed action should build on the findings and lessons learnt from previously implemented PPRD East programmes.

The previous PPRD East actions have enhanced legal and institutional frameworks to improve disaster risk management and supported institutional coordination among all actors to a varying extent. To note, not all Partner Countries are facing the same level of difficulties or have the same needs and not all countries aspire to reach the same level of cooperation with the UCPM, or with each other. National ownership has been strong but varied throughout the implementation of the PPRD East programmes. It is therefore important to ensure a high-level of commitment for a successful implementation of PPRD East 4.

In addition, the recruitment of a local coordinator in each Partner Country during PPRD East 3 has significantly facilitated communication and collaboration between the programme team and national stakeholders.

Throughout phase 3 of PPRD East, adaptability and flexibility have been identified as crucial for success, enabling relevant solutions and effective programme implementation in view of changing circumstances (e.g. COVID-19) and challenges (e.g. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine).

The regional approach has been highlighted to be of great importance for the assessment of cross-border risks, regional risk prioritisation and development of similar national methodologies to enable the comparison of risks and exchange of experts. Regional activities (such as trainings, table-top and full-scale exercises

conducted) provided a unique platform for dialogue on technical level and operationalisation of programme outputs.

Furthermore, in order to ensure continuity and sustainability of the programme, it is advised that national civil protection services undertake close cooperation with the UCPM, particularly regarding policy alignment, thus ensuring an enduring implementation of the action. The aforementioned sustainability and long-term availability of the programme's results could be made available and accessed as needed via the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network (UCPKN) online platform.

Links with the relevant initiatives

To avoid duplication of activities, the action should pursue synergies and attempt to connect with other Commission-funded initiatives in the region. Efforts should already be made in the proposal design phase to avoid an isolated programme implementation. As part of their initial needs assessment, every proposal should include a mapping of relevant past and present initiatives in the target countries, especially if the initiatives received EU/UCPM funding. In cases in which relevant initiatives exist, applicants should explain how they will pursue synergies with ongoing initiatives or incorporate existing results from past initiatives into their programme implementation.

Coordination and complementarities with similar regional or bilateral initiatives through regular exchanges and the common anchoring to the UCPM are encouraged. Those include:

- Ongoing Prevention and Preparedness projects in civil protection¹¹;
- Multi-country mapping study on disaster risks and gaps: The applicants are encouraged to build upon the comprehensive analysis of the disaster risk landscape and capabilities/capacities of the countries in the targeted regions to respond to disasters. The analysis will provide evidence on where the main national, cross-border, regional risks, and gaps are in addressing those risks;
- On Site Technical Assistance: The overall objective of this programme is to provide civil protection technical support to DG ECHO and contribute to a smooth implementation of the civil protection cooperation programmes and enhance their regional impact in the beneficiary countries. In the framework of this action, *ad hoc* technical assistance is provided where the main national authorities, participants and stakeholders meet obstacles and difficulties;
- Peer Review on disaster risk management system was carried out under the UCPM in Moldova¹². The proposals are invited to take into account the recommendations from this Peer Review;
- Exchange of Experts programme which gives civil protection experts the opportunity to share experiences, gain valuable knowledge and strengthen operational skills by a system of exchange. Thus, this programme makes a significant contribution to the ongoing development of the UCPM and builds capacity in the field of civil protection;
- Other EU-funded bilateral projects in the Partner Countries complementing DG ECHO-funded actions;

¹¹ [Prevention and Preparedness Projects in Civil Protection - European Commission \(europea.eu\)](https://europea.eu)

¹² [Peer Review programme - European Commission \(europea.eu\)](https://europea.eu)

- Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network (UCPKN): Proposals are invited to use the UCPKN tools and activities to strengthen their dissemination and engagement efforts. At the time of publication of this call, the UCPKN online platform provides all UCPM-funded projects with a dedicated working space with features enabling communication and dissemination, as well as collaborative interaction with other users of the platform (discussion fora). With time, additional features may be developed, including based on needs identified by programme consortia during implementation stage.

Good practices can be drawn also from other regional programmes managed by DG ECHO in the European Neighbourhood, namely the ongoing regional programmes for Capacity for Risk Management of Earthquakes and Health Emergencies in Türkiye and the Western Balkans (IPA CARE)¹³ and Prevention, Preparedness, Response to natural and man-made Disasters in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (PPRD Med)¹⁴.

Coordination with current and upcoming EU programmes and programmes of other donors and partners (EU Member States, the OSCE, the US, the UN) will be sought throughout the programme implementation.

Intervention Logic

Within the UCPM, the activities open to neighbouring countries include training, exchange of experts, meetings, conferences, exercises, modules exercises, prevention and preparedness projects. However, the demand from the neighbourhood countries exceeds the offer.

In light of the above, the PPRD East 4 will be complementary to DG ECHO's support as it will allow a more regional and sub-regional focus including:

- provision of activities mirroring the activities of the UCPM, where the demand of Partner Countries exceeds the offer by the UCPM or where activities shall be tailor-made to the needs in the Eastern Neighbourhood;
- provision of technical support in understanding the financial components of the Mechanism (e.g. calls for proposals for single- and multi-country grants, full-scale exercises, etc.);
- provision of support beyond the scope of the activities traditionally offered to neighbourhood countries, but in line with the UCPM principles and approaches;
- organisation of (sub)regional activities.

The phase 4 of the PPRD East programme is aimed at supporting policy development in the broader area of disaster risks management to improve the countries' capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from natural and human-induced hazards. In addition, the programme aims to complement DG ECHO's efforts in integrating the recent and potential Participating States of the UCPM into the Mechanism. Lastly, the programme should have a high level of flexibility in order to correspond to the changing needs and political situations in Partner Countries.

The programme will remain the platform for exchange and support on policy dialogue within the institutional EaP architecture. Moreover, the platform should increase its role as catalyser for synergies and partnerships with other actors present in the region (e.g. the UN, the World Bank, etc.), in order to ensure consistency of EU funding opportunities.

¹³ <https://www.ipacare.eu/>

¹⁴ <https://www.pprdmed.eu/>

Phase 4 of the programme is also intended to ensure that the results are sustainable over time, and that durable cooperation links are established.

Cross-cutting principles

Cooperation with the Eastern Neighbourhood aims not only to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters in the Partner Countries, but also to contribute to social and political stability.

The applicants should address and integrate relevant cross-cutting issues. Proposals are therefore invited to highlight their contribution to the Commission's horizontal commitments such as: resilience and conflict sensitivity, good governance and human rights; environmental sustainability; the reduction of climate impacts associated with programme implementation as well as the broader concept of greening in civil protection; the promotion of gender balance and equality in programme implementation; as well as the consideration of needs and perspectives of vulnerable groups and persons with disabilities¹⁵.

Disaster Risk Reduction should be the central principle of the action, in full coherence with the Sendai Framework: to prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters as well as to better adapt to climate change. The Sendai Framework stresses the importance of mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into all policies and sectors as well as the of the preservation of ecosystems. The action should therefore focus on the development of early warning systems and community-based planning to prepare for potential hazards and disasters, national and community-level training and strengthening of legislative frameworks that foster Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction also emphasises the role of vulnerable groups (including women, children, youth, elderly persons or persons with disabilities) and advocates for resilient communities and an inclusive and all-of-society disaster risk management. To this effect, awareness and understanding of cultural specificities and differences will be considered throughout this action.

Programme Management

A Steering Committee (SC) will be established with the participation of the Contracting Authority (DG ECHO) as well as the implementing consortium and the beneficiary countries. The EU Delegations should be invited to the Steering Committee as observers. The Steering Committee should meet at least once a year and receive updates from the programme expert team regarding the implementation of the programme and provide feedback. It will advise on the programme's progress, discuss the scheduled activities, and review results related to the activities completed.

The implementing consortium will prepare the agenda, supporting documents and the minutes of the SC meetings and further distribute these documents to all SC members. The Implementing consortium will submit these documents as part of its reports to DG ECHO.

The EU Delegations in the Partner Countries will receive regular updates on the progress of the Programme and will have the opportunity to provide comments and input. The Delegations could also rely on the expertise of the Programme team, in close collaboration with the Programme Manager of the Action.

¹⁵ Guidelines on integrating cross-cutting issues into Disaster Risk Management can be found in PPRD East 3 page on Knowledge Network: [Prevention Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made disasters | UCP Knowledge Network \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge-network/en/prevention-preparedness-and-response-to-natural-and-man-made-disasters)

National Programme Coordinators and Thematic Focal Points shall be appointed and specific guidelines for these roles should be developed to ensure smooth cooperation. National Programme Coordinators will be the main national interlocutors for the programme expert team and will be directly involved in the implementation and overall monitoring of the programme in their respective countries. Thematic Focal Points will ensure continuous cooperation between the programme expert team and Partner Countries' institutions in specific thematic areas by coordinating all sectors concerned (e.g. Disaster Risk Assessment, Host Nation Support, etc.). In order to ensure involvement of all relevant sectors and actors, national multistakeholder mechanism(s) shall be established to share information.

The working language of the programme is English. Translation/interpretation into the national languages of the countries where the programme is implemented in should be foreseen for relevant documents and when necessary for meetings.

For the indicative logical framework including general/specific objectives, outcomes, outputs, indicators, sources of verification and assumptions please refer to Appendix I. The general objective, specific objectives and expected results are pre-defined. The proposal must define specific indicators, activities and deliverables that contribute to the achievement of all specific objectives and the general objective. All components of the proposed logical framework (overall objective, specific objectives, results, activities, and indicators) should be linked through a logical, result-driven chain and should demonstrate how the proposed action will contribute to achieving specific objective 1, 2 and 3.

2. Objectives – Specific objectives – Expected impact – Activities that can be funded

UCPM-2025-PPRDEAST4-IBA – Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and human-induced Disasters in the Eastern Partnership countries (PPRD East 4)

Objective

The **general objective** of the PPRD East 4 programme is to increase the resilience to natural and human-induced disasters in the EaP countries.

Specific objectives

The specific objectives are to:

- Strengthen the capabilities of Partner Countries to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from natural and human-induced disasters, and to further enhance their disaster risk management governance;
- Support the further integration into the UCPM of the new Participating States, as well as the countries eligible to join the UCPM;
- Increase Partner Countries participation in and cooperation with the UCPM, including regional and cross-border cooperation.

Expected results

Related to Specific Objective 1: Strengthen the capabilities of Partner Countries to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from natural and human-induced disasters, and to further enhance their disaster risk management governance

- Improved national legal and institutional framework on disaster risk management and aligned to the EU *acquis*, building on the progress of phase three and the other EU-funded projects, and ensuring the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues. This entails:
 - Comprehensive risk assessment and risk management planning at national and/or sub-national level, private sector and critical entities, including local communities, civil society organisations, volunteers as well as cross-cutting issues;
 - Risk prevention and preparedness measures, including institutionalised multi-hazard early warning systems, disaster loss data collection, contingency and emergency planning, public awareness and risk communication, innovation and knowledge services, nature-based solutions and comprehensive prevention and preparedness action plans and synergies between climate change adaptation and disaster risk management;
 - Strengthened capabilities to monitor, detect, forecast and assess the impacts of natural and anthropogenic hazards using early warning and information systems;
 - Strengthened risk assessment methodologies considering cross-border, high impact low probability and emerging risks and considering multi-sectorial elements and areas such as climate change and geopolitical risks;
 - Strengthened cross-sectorial disaster risk management by considering

other areas such as critical infrastructure;

- Enhanced mapping and identification of capacity gaps to fill and understanding of the causes (lack of technology, of knowledge, of funding, of human resources) to allow targeted policies and investments;
 - Clearer distribution of tasks among relevant authorities and organisations, in relation to the above-mentioned topics;
 - Strengthened cooperation with the private sector, research and academia, civil society organisations and the public should be further promoted to favour the adoption of a whole-of-society approach.
- Enhanced knowledge and capacities for emergency response, including interministerial/interagency coordination and in line with EU practices and international standards (e.g. INSARAG standards, quality requirements for assets in the European Civil Protection Pool, Host Nation Support, etc.); increased interoperability of capacities with UCPM Member and Participating States;
 - Enhanced planning and preparedness for disaster recovery and reconstruction on local, regional and national level, in line with build-back better principles, and the improvement of disaster loss data collection;
 - Civil protection actors are better trained in the entire disaster risk management cycle; national training programmes and capacities are strengthened as well as interlinked with UCPM training; a needs-driven and training-of-trainers approach is pursued; ability to participate in regional and international training and exercises, including leading, organising, and hosting them, is increased;
 - Strengthened network of civil protection national and regional volunteers;

Related to Specific Objective 2: Support the further integration into the UCPM of the new Participating States, as well as the increased capacity in other Eastern Partnership countries to potentially join the UCPM

- Increased awareness and use (quantitative and qualitative) of the UCPM tools and the services available to Partner Countries; among the tools, the reporting exercise to the Commission under Article 6.1 and the participation in the Disaster Prevention Expert Group which contribute to the provision of policy recommendations and the sharing of good practices;
- Strengthened network and exchanges between UCPM Member States/Participating States and new integrated countries into the Mechanism.

Related to Specific Objective 3: Increase Partner Countries participation in and cooperation with the UCPM, including regional and cross-border cooperation

- Strengthened institutional and operational coordination between the Emergency Response Coordination Centre and Partner Countries;
- Improved national frameworks in each Partner Country on requesting and receiving assistance through the UCPM, as well as interinstitutional coordination on national and regional level (in the case of transboundary risks);
- Enhanced cross-border and sub-regional cooperation among Eastern Partnership countries, including transboundary risk assessment and response

planning.

Activities that can be funded

The choice and design of the PPRD East 4 activities should be aligned with the principles and approaches underpinning the UCPM and, to the extent possible, mirror the tools and support provided under the UCPM, without duplicating efforts.

Related to all Specific Objectives (1, 2, 3)

In order to develop a sound ownership of the proposed programme and to tailor the programme according to Partner Countries' needs, the action will commence with the inception period (9 months¹⁶). This period will allow for stakeholder mapping and identification of the current needs and priorities in each Partner Country as well as discussion and review of proposed activities with Partner Countries. They will then be submitted for endorsement by the Steering Committee (SC) and validated by DG ECHO.

During the inception phase, on site visits to the Eastern Partnership countries will be organised, with the expected additional support of the expert involved in the On Site Technical Assistance. Activities validated at the end of inception phase by the SC will be implemented throughout the remaining duration of the programme.

In addition, all activities should be coherent and must demonstrate contribution to the objectives of the Action. Activities should have tangible outputs/outcomes with relevant objectively verifiable indicators and clearly show complementarity with other existing programmes mentioned above in the sub-section on *Links with relevant initiatives*.

Any purchase of small-scale equipment should clearly contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the programme and shall not exceed the 20% of the total value of the Action and should be handed over to the final beneficiaries by the end of the programme implementation.

Related to Specific Objective 1: Strengthen the capabilities of Partner Countries to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from natural and human-induced disasters, and to further enhance their disaster risk management governance

- Technical assistance missions on the basis of needs assessment building on the PPRD East 3 programme recommendations and/or specific demands by the Partner Countries' authorities *inter alia* covering legislative, regulatory, management and technical needs. Cross-cutting issues in disaster risk management should be reflected during needs assessment;
- Based on PPRD East 3 results, continue providing technical and expert support on standardised operational procedures, forecast, early warning systems, damage/need assessment, disaster loss data collection, risk assessment, emergency communication tools and international assistance, including how to use the most readily available technology and tools. Science use for decision-making is encouraged;
- Mapping of needs with regard to Early Warning Systems and Public Warning capabilities and recommendations to address these in a comprehensive manner;

¹⁶ This 9-month period might be adapted to the circumstances if approved by the SC.

- Technical assistance to support the disaster management authorities in translating scientific information deriving from national, European or global early warning systems to operational activities;
- Preparation of investment plans to increase disaster risk management capacities;
- Public risk awareness and preparedness campaigns;
- Operational Recommendations for integration of selected actions into national disaster risk management governance;
- Expert support on evaluation and improvement of legislation in disaster risk management;
- National table top exercises, risk based mapping of existing response capacities and identification of gaps in relation to the quality requirements set by the EU. Multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach is encouraged;
- Technical assistance including for developing multi-hazards disaster recovery framework to better manage pre- and post-disaster planning and operations. This also includes development of solutions to integrate lessons learnt into existing structures and processes;
- Mentoring, workshops and training courses for managers, experts and volunteers. The training should be targeted based on national needs and complement, when necessary, the courses offered by the UCPM Training Programme (e.g. Union Civil Protection Introduction Course and the Operational Management Course). Integration of cross-cutting issues in disaster risk management is encouraged;
- Support to strengthen national training programmes and curricula;
- Support to incorporate and strengthen existing volunteer-based organisations within the national and local civil protection system. Support in integrating them within legal framework of the Partner Country.

Related to Specific Objective 2: Support the further integration into the UCPM of the new Participating States, as well as the increased capacity in other Eastern Partnership countries to potentially join the UCPM

- Meetings and workshops on UCPM tools and opportunities for collaborations;
- Technical assistance for civil protection experts in Partner Countries to develop capacities in preparing quality proposals for call for proposals of UCPM grants;
- Training, mentoring and workshops mirroring the courses available under the UCPM Training Programme (conducted only in English language);
- Participation in the Disaster Prevention Expert Group and other related workshops;
- Exchange of Experts programme to other EU Member/Participating States of the UCPM;
- Technical support for the reporting to the Commission on the Disaster risk Management under Article 6.1;

- Trainings on the use of the Early Warning and Information Systems and of the ARISTOTLE Scientific Partnership for natural hazards in order to acquire complementary support in detection and monitoring activities.

Related to Specific Objective 3: Increase Partner Countries participation in and cooperation with the UCPM, including regional and cross-border cooperation

- Meetings, workshops and conferences: Organise events promoting regional and international cooperation, involving to the extent possible UCPM Member and Participating States;
- Study visits to other Eastern Partnership or UCPM Member States/Participating States; exchange programme to go on an exchange mission or invite civil protection expert(s);
- Develop procedures for requesting and receiving international assistance through UCPM, as well as facilitate operationalisation of the procedures on a national level;
- Exercises: At least one joint regional table-top and joint full-scale exercise involving the EaP beneficiary countries at the end of the programme, following relevant national table-top exercises. The regional full-scale exercise should test the quality of the response capacities and their operability and efficiency in a real-life situation. The exercise should include the following topics: activation of the UCPM; EU Civil Protection Team, deployment of modules and/or other response capacities; national operational structures, Host Nation Support Guidelines; Observers and Evaluation Programmes;
- Technical assistance in developing transboundary disaster risk assessments and response plans, as well as facilitating the institutionalisation and operationalisation of these measures.

3. Available budget

The estimated available call budget is **EUR 5 000 000**. The Commission envisages to sign one Grant Agreement.

The Commission reserves the right not to award all available funds depending on the proposals received and the results of the evaluation.

4. Timetable and deadlines

Timetable and deadlines (indicative)	
Call opening:	30 January 2025
<u>Deadline for submission:</u>	<u>29 April 2025 – 17:00:00 CET</u> <u>(Brussels)</u>
Evaluation:	May-June 2025
Information on evaluation results:	June-July 2025
GA signature:	October-November 2025

5. Admissibility and documents

Proposals must be submitted before the **call deadline** (see *timetable section 4*).

Proposals must be submitted **electronically** via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System (accessible via the link in the invitation letter). Paper submissions are NOT possible.

Proposals (including annexes and supporting documents) must be submitted using the forms provided *inside* the Submission System (⚠ NOT the documents available on the Topic page – they are only for information).

Proposals must be **complete** and contain all the requested information and all required annexes and supporting documents:

- Application Form Part A – contains administrative information about the participants (future coordinator, beneficiaries and affiliated entities) and the summarised budget for the programme (*to be filled in directly online*)
- Application Form Part B – contains the technical description of the programme (*template to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed, assembled and re-uploaded*)
- mandatory annexes and supporting documents (*templates to be downloaded from the Portal Submission System, completed, assembled and re-uploaded*):
 - detailed budget table (*template available in the Submission System*)
 - CVs (standard) of core programme team
 - list of previous projects/programmes (key projects for the last 4 years) (*template available in Part B*)
 - Letter of support from the competent national civil protection authority: not applicable to national civil protection authorities themselves.


Please note that the amounts entered into the summarised budget table (filled in directly online) must correspond to the amounts calculated in the detailed budget table. In case of discrepancies, the amounts in the online summarised budget table will prevail.

At proposal submission, you will have to confirm that you have the **mandate to act** for all applicants. Moreover, you will have to confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete and that all participants comply with the conditions for receiving EU funding (*especially eligibility, financial and operational capacity, exclusion, etc*). Before signing the grant, each beneficiary and affiliated entity will have to confirm this again by signing a declaration of honour (DoH). Proposals without full support will be rejected.

Your application must be **readable, accessible and printable** (please check carefully the layout of the documents uploaded).

Proposals are limited to maximum **60 pages** (Part B). Evaluators will not consider any additional pages.

You may be asked at a later stage for further documents (*for legal entity validation, financial capacity check, bank account validation, etc*).

 For more information about the submission process (including IT aspects), consult the [Online Manual](#).

6. Eligibility

Eligible participants (eligible countries)

In order to be eligible, the applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must:

- be national and/or sub-national civil protection authorities (or relevant competent authorities or entities)
- be established only in one of the EU Member States or Participating States (including overseas countries and territories (OCTs)) according to the Regulation 2021/947.

Beneficiaries and affiliated entities must register in the [Participant Register](#) – before submitting the proposal – and will have to be validated by the Central Validation Service (REA Validation). For the validation, they will be requested to upload documents showing legal status and origin.

Other entities may participate in other consortium roles, such as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions, etc (*see section 13*).

Specific cases and definitions

Natural persons – Natural persons are NOT eligible (with the exception of self-employed persons, i.e. sole traders, where the company does not have legal personality separate from that of the natural person).

International organisations – International organisations are NOT eligible. The rules on eligible countries do not apply to them.

Entities without legal personality – Entities which do not have legal personality under their national law may exceptionally participate, provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf, and offer guarantees for the protection of the EU financial interests equivalent to that offered by legal persons¹⁷.

Associations and interest groupings – Entities composed of members may participate as 'sole beneficiaries' or 'beneficiaries without legal personality'¹⁸. ⚠ Please note that if the action will be implemented by the members, they should also participate (either as beneficiaries or as affiliated entities, otherwise their costs will NOT be eligible).

Countries currently negotiating association agreements – Beneficiaries from countries with ongoing negotiations for participation in the programme (*see list of participating countries above*) may participate in the call and can sign grants if the negotiations are concluded before grant signature and if the association covers the call (i.e. is retroactive and covers both the part of the programme and the year when the call was launched).

EU restrictive measures – Special rules apply for entities subject to [EU restrictive measures](#) under Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)¹⁹. Such entities are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, associated partners, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

¹⁷ See Article 200(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

¹⁸ For the definitions, see Articles 190(2) and 200(2)(c) EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

¹⁹ Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list and, in case of conflict, its content prevails over that of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

EU conditionality measures – Special rules apply for entities subject to measures adopted on the basis of EU Regulation 2020/2092²⁰. Such entities are not eligible to participate in any funded role (beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc.). Currently such measures are in place for Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain (see [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16 December 2022).

 For more information, see [Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment](#).

Consortium composition

Proposals must be submitted by a consortium of **at least two national or sub-national civil protection authorities** (or relevant competent authorities or entities) coming from a minimum of **two different EU Member States**.

Reminder: Only entities from EU Member States are eligible.

The proposal needs to show that a meaningful contribution to the programme is made by all of the beneficiaries participating in the consortium, which ensure that the minimum eligibility criteria are met, and to demonstrate that activities and results will be developed jointly in partnership. All the proposals, regardless of the composition of the consortium, must demonstrate relevance and added value for the UCPM.

In order to ensure a strong focus on the results it is strongly recommended that the composition of the consortium be very targeted and that the number of consortium members does not exceed 5 entities.

Eligible activities

Applications will only be considered eligible if their content corresponds wholly (or at least in part) to the programme description for which they are submitted.

Eligible activities are the ones set out in section 2 above.

Activities should take place in the EaP countries stipulated in the background section. They may also take place in other countries (EU Members States and UCPM Participating States if it is relevant and duly justified).

All actions under this grant should be for the benefit of the EaP countries. The results of the programme shall be transferred to the target institutions/final beneficiaries of the action, at the latest when the final report is submitted to DG ECHO.

Programmes must comply with EU policy interests and priorities (*such as environment, social, security, industrial and trade policy, etc*). Programmes must also respect EU values and European Commission policy regarding reputational matters (*e.g. activities involving capacity building, policy support, awareness raising, communication, dissemination, etc*).

The following activities are not considered as eligible for funding under this invitation:

- Online platforms: To avoid duplication with the UCPKN online platform, proposed action should make use of the existing features and tools available

²⁰ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget (OJ L 325, 20.12.2022, p. 94).

on the platform for their programme activities. If relevant, outputs and activities should be linked to the UCPKN platform and shall not replicate or foresee the development of similar online platforms. It is possible that some programme outputs may be selected to become integrated into the UCPKN online platform.

- Activities which consist exclusively or primarily in capital expenditure, e.g. buildings, vehicles.
- Works.

Financial support to third parties is not allowed.

Geographic location (target countries)

Proposals must relate to activities taking place in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine²¹.

²¹ In line with the Council Conclusions of 12 October 2020 and in light of Belarus's involvement in the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, recognised in the European Council Conclusions of February 2022, the EU has stopped engaging with representatives of Belarus public bodies and state-owned enterprises. Should there be a change of the context this may be reconsidered.

7. Financial and operational capacity and exclusion

Financial capacity

Applicants must have **stable and sufficient resources** to successfully implement the programme and contribute their share. Organisations participating in several projects must have sufficient capacity to implement all projects.

The financial capacity check will be carried out on the basis of the documents you will be requested to upload in the [Participant Register](#) during grant preparation (*e.g. profit and loss account and balance sheet, business plan, audit report produced by an approved external auditor, certifying the accounts for the last closed financial year, etc*). The analysis will be based on neutral financial indicators, but will also take into account other aspects, such as dependency on EU funding and deficit and revenue in previous years.

The check will normally be done for all beneficiaries, except:

- public bodies (entities established as public body under national law, including local, regional or national authorities) or international organisations
- if the individual requested grant amount is not more than EUR 60 000.

If needed, it may also be done for affiliated entities.

If we consider that your financial capacity is not satisfactory, we may require:

- further information
- an enhanced financial responsibility regime, i.e. joint and several responsibility for all beneficiaries or joint and several liability of affiliated entities (*see below, section 10*)
- prefinancing paid in instalments
- (one or more) prefinancing guarantees (*see below, section 10*)

or

- propose no prefinancing
- request that you are replaced or, if needed, reject the entire proposal.

 For more information, see [Rules for Legal Entity Validation, LEAR Appointment and Financial Capacity Assessment](#).

Operational capacity

Applicants must have the **know-how, qualifications** and **resources** to successfully implement the programme and contribute their share (including sufficient experience in programmes of comparable size and nature).

This capacity will be assessed together with the 'Quality' award criterion, on the basis of the competence and experience of the applicants and their programme teams, including operational resources (human, technical and other) or, exceptionally, the measures proposed to obtain it by the time the task implementation starts.

If the evaluation of the award criterion is positive, the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

Applicants will have to show their capacity via the following information:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing the programme
- description of the consortium participants
- list of previous projects/programmes (key projects for the last 4 years)
(template available in Part B)

It is suggested that profiles listed below are included in the team responsible for managing and implementing the action. Evidence will consist of CVs of the key staff responsible for the implementation of the action. Each CV should indicate the intended function in the programme implementation and percentage of expected engagement. Proficiency in English is required for all roles. The team should be gender-balanced.

- **Programme Manager:** Extensive experience in project/programme management for programmes of similar size and coverage, with experience in cooperating closely with different stakeholders, including public administrations, civil society, private sector and scientific communities; Experience in the Eastern Neighbourhood and the UCPM.
- **Senior Civil Protection Experts** with experience in respective areas covered by the programme activities (e.g. disaster risk reduction and assessment, contingency/emergency planning, early warning); Experience in international disaster risk management cooperation or multi-national programmes/projects in the field of civil protection.
- **Senior Training & Exercises Experts:** extensive experience in UCPM trainings and exercises. Experience in designing, organising and evaluating civil protection training activities and exercises; Recruitment of experts from various Member States/Participating States is encouraged to further promote synergies between UCPM and Partner Countries and increase EU added value.
- **Evaluation and Monitoring Expert:** The expert should ensure adequate and timely monitoring and evaluation of the overall programme.
- **Communications Expert:** The expert should be fluent in English and Russian, has excellent communication skills and have good knowledge about the UCPM.

Additional supporting documents may be requested, if needed to confirm the operational capacity of any applicant.

Public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

Exclusion

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate²²:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)

²² See Articles 138 and 143 of EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

- guilty of grave professional misconduct²³ (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of EU Regulation [2988/95](#) (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- intentionally and without proper justification resisted²⁴ an investigation, check or audit carried out by an EU authorising officer (or their representative or auditor), OLAF, the EPPO, or the European Court of Auditors.

Applicants will also be rejected if it turns out that²⁵:

- during the award procedure they misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information
- they were previously involved in the preparation of the call and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

²³ 'Professional misconduct' includes, in particular, the following: violation of ethical standards of the profession; wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility; breach of generally accepted professional ethical standards; false declarations/misrepresentation of information; participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition; violation of IPR; attempting to influence decision-making processes by taking advantage, through misrepresentation, of a conflict of interests, or to obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain an advantage; incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence or similar activities contrary to the EU values where negatively affecting or risking to affect the performance of a legal commitment.

²⁴ 'Resisting an investigation, check or audit' means carrying out actions with the goal or effect of preventing, hindering or delaying the conduct of any of the activities needed to perform the investigation, check or audit, such as refusing to grant the necessary access to its premises or any other areas used for business purposes, concealing or refusing to disclose information or providing false information.

²⁵ See Article 143 EU Financial Regulation [2024/2509](#).

8. Evaluation and award procedure

The proposals will have to follow the **standard submission and evaluation procedure** (one-stage submission + one-step evaluation).


An **evaluation committee** will assess all applications. Proposals will first be checked for formal requirements (admissibility, and eligibility, *see sections 5 and 6*). Proposals found admissible and eligible will be evaluated against the operational capacity and award criteria (*see sections 7 and 9*) and then ranked according to their scores.

For proposals with the same score (within a budget envelope) a **priority order** will be determined according to the following approach:

Successively for every group of *ex aequo* proposals, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

- 1) Programme focusing on a theme/activities that is not otherwise covered by higher ranked programme will be considered to have the highest priority.
- 2) The *ex aequo* proposals will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the award criterion 'Relevance'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Impact'. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on their scores for the criterion 'Quality'.
- 3) If this does not allow to determine the priority, a further prioritisation can be done by considering the overall programme portfolio and the creation of positive synergies between other programmes/projects, or other factors related to the objectives of the call. These factors will be documented in the panel report.

All proposals will be informed about the evaluation result (**evaluation result letter**). Successful proposals will be invited for grant preparation; the other ones will be put on the reserve list or rejected.

 No commitment for funding — Invitation to grant preparation does NOT constitute a formal commitment for funding. We will still need to make various legal checks before grant award: *legal entity validation, financial capacity, exclusion check, etc.*

Grant preparation will involve a dialogue in order to fine-tune technical or financial aspects of the programme and may require extra information from your side. It may also include adjustments to the proposal to address recommendations of the evaluation committee or other concerns. Full compliance will be a pre-condition for signing the grant.

If you believe that the evaluation procedure was flawed, you can submit a **complaint** (following the deadlines and procedures set out in the evaluation result letter). Please note that notifications which have not been opened within 10 days after sending will be considered to have been accessed and that deadlines will be counted from opening/access (*see also [Funding & Tenders Portal Terms and Conditions](#)*). Please also be aware that for complaints submitted electronically, there may be character limitations.

9. Award criteria

The award criteria facilitate the evaluation of proposals in relation to the set objectives and priorities. They enable the selection of proposals which the Contracting Authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities.

The **award criteria** for this call are as follows:

1. Relevance (min. 15 / max. 30 points):

The criterion refers to the contribution of the proposed action to the achievement of the general and specific objectives of the action (section 2); the extent to which the proposed action balances between regional and specific national needs of the Eastern Partnership countries; coherence with ongoing initiatives in the region and the relevance of the proposed action to the UCPM in general (section 1).

For all specific objectives:

- Extend to which the proposed action takes into account the needs and the specific situation in each Eastern Partnership countries, as well as cross-border, regional, cross-cutting issues and climate change impacts.
- Extent to which the proposed action addresses lessons learnt identified in previous PPRD East programmes, including as concerns regional cooperation and cooperation with the UCPM;
- Extend to which the proposed action takes into consideration the broad policy context and relevant existing initiatives in the region;
- Extend to which the proposed action complements ongoing initiatives and programmes in the region in the area of civil protection.

For the activities related to the specific objective 1:

- Extent to which the proposed action contributes to enhance the national prevention, preparedness, response and recovery measures;
- The proposed action plans/guidelines for developing risk assessments are in line with the Guidelines for disaster Management²⁶, Sendai Framework priorities and the EU good practices, and facilitate development of regionally harmonised methodology;
- Extent to which the proposed action takes into account current disaster risk management governance structures in the selected Partner Countries, addresses its potential areas for improvement focusing on interinstitutional and multi-stakeholder coordination, early warning systems, climate change adaptation, risk and post-disaster assessment;
- Extent to which the proposed action follows the needs-based and training of trainers approach;
- Effectiveness and sustainability of proposed cooperation structures involving non-civil protection actors, including volunteers.

For the activities related to the specific objective 2:

²⁶ SEC(2010) 1626 final

- Extent to which the proposed action takes into account the current needs and gaps of each (aspiring) Participating State to further integrate into the Mechanism;
- Extent to which the proposed action is improving the operational cooperation with UCPM and its tools.

For the activities related to the specific objective 3:

- Extent to which the proposed action is promoting the local, national and regional inter-ministerial/interagency cooperation;
- Extent to which the proposed action is promoting synergies with other initiatives/actions and relevant actors in the region and with the EU;
- Extent to which the proposed action is improving the operational cooperation with UCPM and its tools;
- The proposed action includes at least one regional table-top and full-scale exercise.

2. Quality (min. 20 / max. 40 points):

This criterion will evaluate:

- Quality of the proposed logical framework matrix with particular emphasis on the choice of indicators. Outcome-oriented approach instead of focusing on outputs.
- Adequacy and quality of the implementation structure/methodology and resources deployed in relation to the objectives envisaged (particularly in terms of cost-effectiveness);
- Clarity of the budget requested to carry out the action, as indicated in the budget (Application Form Part A);
- If the planning of the action is reasonably developed, if monitoring and quality control measures (e.g. Logical Framework Matrix, mitigation measures, reporting) are in place and if the organisation of the action is well adapted to its nature and objectives. Demonstration on how monitoring and evaluation will be ensured based on the results framework. Risk management plan is elaborated and addresses most relevant risks to be faced during the programme implementation.

3. Impact (min. 15 / max. 30 points):

This criterion will evaluate the proposed action in terms of:

- Actions enhance ownership of the programme outputs at national and regional level;
- Outcomes respond to the needs of the beneficiaries and are used by the targeted groups of beneficiaries. Outcomes can also be maintained after the end of the programme;
- Full involvement of concerned stakeholders in the activities of the action to ensure long-term impact and transferability of expected results.

Award criteria	Minimum pass score	Maximum score
Relevance	15	30
Quality	20	40
Impact	15	30
Overall (pass) scores	65	100

Maximum points: 100 points.

Individual thresholds per criterion: 15/30, 20/40 and 15/30 points.

Overall threshold: 65 points. The overall threshold is not the result of the addition of the minimum pass scores per award criteria.

A decision to reject an application can be based on the following grounds:

- the application was submitted after the closing date;
- the application is incomplete or otherwise non-compliant with the stated administrative conditions or in any other way does not comply with the eligibility criteria as set out the call for proposals.

Proposals that pass the individual thresholds AND the overall threshold will be considered for funding – within the limits of the available budget (i.e. up to the budget ceiling). Other proposals will be rejected.

10. Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements

If you pass evaluation, your programme will be invited for grant preparation, where you will be asked to prepare the Grant Agreement together with the EU Programme Officer.

This Grant Agreement will set the framework for your grant and its terms and conditions, in particular concerning deliverables, reporting and payments.

The Model Grant Agreement that will be used (and all other relevant templates and guidance documents) can be found on [Portal Reference Documents](#).

Starting date and programme duration

The programme starting date and duration will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 1*). Normally the starting date will be after grant signature. A retroactive starting date can be granted exceptionally for duly justified reasons – but never earlier than the proposal submission date.

Programme duration: the initial duration of the programme cannot exceed **48 months**.

Extensions are possible, if duly justified and through an amendment.

Milestones and deliverables

The milestones and deliverables for the programme will be managed through the Portal Grant Management System and will be reflected in Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement.

The following deliverables are mandatory:

Name of report	Content	Time of submission
Inception Report	Analysis of existing situation and work plan for the programme. The work plan shall include a time schedule with milestones and specific outputs, as well as estimated resources for successful implementation of the contract.	No later than 9 months after the start of implementation
Visibility plan and communication plan	Clear strategy for communication activities. Plan for ensuring visibility (in compliance with guidelines) throughout the programme duration.	No later than 9 months after the start of implementation. It could be part of the Inception report.
12-month Technical Reports	In line with Periodic Report	No later than 3 months after the end of each 12-month implementation period.
12-month Financial	In line with Detailed Cost	No later than 3 months after the end of each 12-

Reports	Reporting Table	month implementation period.
Draft Final Report	<p>Covers the full period of implementation.</p> <p>Description of achievements, results and impacts. Shall also include problems encountered and recommendations.</p> <p>Includes a summary to be published on the UCPKN programme website when approved.</p> <p>An analysis of the contribution of the programme to the results should be provided as part of the report (focus on outcome and results, and potential impact, not only on activities). The report contains a two-page annex per country (for distribution to Delegations of concerned countries).</p>	No later than 1 month before the end of the implementation period.
Final Report	<p>Covers the full period of implementation.</p> <p>Description of achievements, results and impacts. Shall also include problems encountered and recommendations.</p> <p>Includes a summary to be published on the UCPKN programme website when approved.</p> <p>An analysis of the contribution of the programme to the results should be provided as part of the report (focus on outcome and results, and potential impact, not only on activities). The report contains a two-page annex per country (for distribution to Delegations of concerned countries).</p>	Within 60 days after receiving comments on the draft final report from the Programme Manager.

Form of grant, funding rate and maximum grant amount

The grant parameters (*maximum grant amount, funding rate, total eligible costs, etc*) will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3 and art 5*).

The programme budget (requested grant amount): EUR 5 000 000.

The grant awarded may be lower than the amount requested.

The grant will be a budget-based mixed actual cost grant (actual costs, with unit cost and flat-rate elements). This means that it will reimburse ONLY certain types of costs (eligible costs) and costs that were *actually* incurred for your programme (NOT the *budgeted* costs). For unit costs and flat-rates, you can charge the amounts calculated as explained in the Grant Agreement (*see art 6 and Annex 2 and 2a*).

The costs will be reimbursed at the funding rate fixed in the Grant Agreement (**100%**).

Grants may NOT produce a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). For-profit organisations must declare their revenues and, if there is a profit, we will deduct this from the final grant amount (*see art 22.3*).

Moreover, please be aware that the final grant amount may be reduced in case of non-compliance with the Grant Agreement (*e.g. improper implementation, breach of obligations, etc*).

Budget categories and cost eligibility rules

The budget categories and cost eligibility rules are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 3, art 6 and Annex 2*).

Budget categories for this call:

- A. Personnel costs
 - A.1 Employees, A.2 Natural persons under direct contract, A.3 Seconded persons
 - A.4 SME owners and natural person beneficiaries
- B. Subcontracting costs
- C. Purchase costs
 - C.1 Travel and subsistence
 - C.2 Equipment
 - C.3 Other goods, works and services
- E. Indirect costs

Specific cost eligibility conditions for this call:

- personnel costs:
 - SME owner/natural person unit cost²⁷: Yes
 - volunteers unit cost²⁸: No

²⁷ Commission [Decision](#) of 20 October 2020 authorising the use of unit costs for the personnel costs of the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises and beneficiaries that are natural persons not receiving a salary for the work carried out by themselves under an action or work programme (C(2020)7115).

- travel and subsistence unit cost²⁹: Yes³⁰
- equipment costs: depreciation + full cost for listed equipment
- indirect cost flat-rate: 7% of the eligible direct costs (categories A-D, except volunteers costs and exempted specific cost categories, if any)
- VAT: VAT is NOT eligible
- other:
 - in-kind contributions for free are allowed, but cost-neutral, i.e. they cannot be declared as cost
 - programme websites: communication costs for presenting the programme on the participants' websites or social media accounts are eligible; costs for *separate* programme websites are not eligible
 - other ineligible costs: No

Reporting and payment arrangements


The reporting and payment arrangements are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 21 and 22*).

After grant signature, the implementing consortium will normally receive a **prefinancing** corresponding to **20%** of the maximum grant amount to start working on the programme (exceptionally less or no prefinancing). The prefinancing will be paid 30 days from entry into force financial guarantee (if required) — whichever is the latest.

There will be one or more additional **prefinancing payments** linked to a prefinancing report. In addition, you are expected to submit progress reports linked to payments (*see milestones and deliverables section*).

Payment of the balance: At the end of the programme, we will calculate your final grant amount. If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, we will ask you (your coordinator) to pay back the difference (recovery).

All payments will be made to the coordinator.

 Please be aware that payments will be automatically lowered if you or one of your consortium members has outstanding debts towards the EU (granting authority or other EU bodies). Such debts will be offset by us — in line with the conditions set out in the Grant Agreement (*see art 22*).

Please also note that you are responsible for keeping records on all the work done and the costs declared.

Prefinancing guarantees

²⁸ Commission [Decision](#) of 10 April 2019 authorising the use of unit costs for declaring personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or a work programme (C(2019)2646).

²⁹ Commission [Decision](#) of 12 January 2021 authorising the use of unit costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs under an action or work programme under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial framework (C(2021)35).

³⁰ See [EU Grants AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement](#), art 6 on eligible costs: travel and subsistence costs must be declared using the unit cost according to Annex 2a of the grant agreement. If a particular instance of travel, accommodation or subsistence in the action is not covered by one of the unit costs mentioned in Decision C(2021)35 the actual costs may be used.

If a prefinancing guarantee is required, it will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4*). The amount will be set during grant preparation and it will normally be equal or lower than the prefinancing for your grant.

The guarantee should be in euro and issued by an approved bank/financial institution established in an EU Member State. If you are established in a non-EU country and would like to provide a guarantee from a bank/financial institution in your country, please contact us (this may be exceptionally accepted, if it offers equivalent security).

Amounts blocked in bank accounts will NOT be accepted as financial guarantees.

Prefinancing guarantees are normally requested from the coordinator, for the consortium. They must be provided during grant preparation, in time to make the prefinancing (scanned copy via Portal AND original by post).

If agreed with us, the bank guarantee may be replaced by a guarantee from a third party.

The guarantee will be released at the end of the grant, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Grant Agreement (*art 23*).

Certificates

Depending on the type of action, size of grant amount and type of beneficiaries, you may be requested to submit different certificates. The types, schedules and thresholds for each certificate are fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4 and art 24*).

A CFS must be provided for each beneficiary and affiliated entity when the requested EU contribution at interim or final payment is EUR 325 000 or more.

Liability regime for recoveries

The liability regime for recoveries will be fixed in the Grant Agreement (*Data Sheet, point 4.4 and art 22*).

For beneficiaries, it is one of the following:

- limited joint and several liability with individual ceilings — *each beneficiary up to their maximum grant amount*
 - unconditional joint and several liability — *each beneficiary up to the maximum grant amount for the action*
- or
- individual financial responsibility — *each beneficiary only for their own debts.*

In addition, the granting authority may require joint and several liability of affiliated entities (with their beneficiary).

Provisions concerning the programme implementation

Security rules: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 13 and Annex 5)*

IPR rules: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 16 and Annex 5):*

- rights of use on results: Yes

Communication, dissemination and visibility of funding: *see Model Grant Agreement*

(art 17 and Annex 5):

- additional communication and dissemination activities: Yes
- limited communication and visibility to protect persons involved: Yes
- visibility in field operations outside the EU: Yes

Specific rules for carrying out the action: *see Model Grant Agreement (art 18 and Annex 5):*

- zero tolerance: Yes
- transfer of assets at the end of the action: Yes
- EU restrictive measures: Yes

Other specificities

Consortium agreement: Yes

Non-compliance and breach of contract

The Grant Agreement (chapter 5) provides for the measures we may take in case of breach of contract (and other non-compliance issues).



For more information, see [AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement](#).

11. How to submit an application

All proposals must be submitted directly online via the Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Submission System. Paper applications are NOT accepted.

Submission is a **2-step process**:

a) create a user account and register your organisation

To use the Submission System (the only way to apply), all participants need to [create an EU Login user account](#).

Once you have an EU Login account, you can [register your organisation](#) in the Participant Register. When your registration is finalised, you will receive a 9-digit participant identification code (PIC).

b) submit the proposal

Access the Electronic Submission System through the following hyperlink:

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/submission/manage/screen/submission/create-draft/39720?topic=UCPM-2025-PPRDEAST4-IBA>

Submit your proposal in 3 parts, as follows:

- Part A includes administrative information about the applicant organisations (future coordinator, beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners) and the summarised budget for the proposal. Fill it in directly online
- Part B (description of the action) covers the technical content of the proposal. Download the mandatory word template from the Submission System, fill it in and upload it as a PDF file
- Annexes (*see section 5*). Upload them as PDF file (single or multiple depending on the slots). Excel upload is sometimes possible, depending on the file type.

The proposal must keep to the **page limits** (*see section 5*); excess pages will be disregarded. Additional information on the technical content of the proposal could be included as Annexes.

Documents must be uploaded to the **right category** in the Submission System, otherwise the proposal may be considered incomplete and thus inadmissible.

The proposal must be submitted **before the call deadline** (*see section 4*). After this deadline, the system is closed and proposals can no longer be submitted.

Once the proposal is submitted, you will receive a **confirmation e-mail** (with date and time of your application). If you do not receive this confirmation e-mail, it means your proposal has NOT been submitted. If you believe this is due to a fault in the Submission System, you should immediately file a complaint via the [IT Helpdesk webform](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal (and, if possible, screenshots to show what happened).

Details on processes and procedures are described in the [Online Manual](#). The Online Manual also contains the links to FAQs and detailed instructions regarding the Portal Electronic Exchange System.

12. Help

As far as possible, ***please try to find the answers you need yourself***, in this and the other documentation (we have limited resources for handling direct enquiries):

- [Online Manual](#)
- [Portal FAQ](#) (for general questions).

Please also consult the Topic page regularly, since we will use it to publish call updates. (For invitations, we will contact you directly in case of a call update).

Contact

For individual questions on the Portal Submission System, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#).

Non-IT related questions should be sent to the following email address: ECHO-CP-EAST@ec.europa.eu.

 Please:

- send your questions at the latest 7 days before the submission deadline (see *section 4*)
- indicate clearly the reference of the call and topic to which your question relates (see *cover page*).

13. Important



IMPORTANT

- **Don't wait until the end** — Complete your application sufficiently in advance of the deadline to avoid any last minute **technical problems**. Problems due to last minute submissions (*e.g. congestion, etc*) will be entirely at your risk. Call deadlines can NOT be extended.
- **Consult** the Portal Topic page regularly. We will use it to publish updates and additional information on the call (call and topic updates).
- **Funding & Tenders Portal Electronic Exchange System** — By submitting the application, all participants **accept** to use the electronic exchange system in accordance with the [Portal Terms & Conditions](#).
- **Registration** — Before submitting the application, all beneficiaries, affiliated entities and associated partners must be registered in the [Participant Register](#). The participant identification code (PIC) (one per participant) is mandatory for the Application Form.
- **Consortium roles** — When setting up your consortium, you should think of organisations that help you reach objectives and solve problems.

The roles should be attributed according to the level of participation in the project. Main participants should participate as **beneficiaries** or **affiliated entities**; other entities can participate as associated partners, subcontractors, third parties giving in-kind contributions. **Associated partners** and third parties giving in-kind contributions should bear their own costs (they will not become formal recipients of EU funding). **Subcontracting** should normally constitute a limited part and must be performed by third parties (not by one of the beneficiaries/affiliated entities). Subcontracting going beyond 30% of the total eligible costs must be justified in the application.

- **Coordinator** — In multi-beneficiary grants, the beneficiaries participate as consortium (group of beneficiaries). They will have to choose a coordinator, who will take care of the project management and coordination and will represent the consortium towards the granting authority. In mono-beneficiary grants, the single beneficiary will automatically be coordinator.
- **Affiliated entities** — Applicants may participate with affiliated entities (i.e. entities linked to a beneficiary which participate in the action with similar rights and obligations as the beneficiaries, but do not sign the grant and therefore do not become beneficiaries themselves). They will get a part of the grant money and must therefore comply with all the call conditions and be validated (just like beneficiaries); but they do not count towards the minimum eligibility criteria for consortium composition (if any). If affiliated entities participate in your project, please do not forget to provide documents demonstrating their affiliation link to your organisation as part of your application.
- **Associated partners** — Applicants may participate with associated partners (i.e. partner organisations which participate in the action but without the right to get grant money). They participate without funding and therefore do not need to be validated.
- **Consortium agreement** — For practical and legal reasons it is recommended to set up internal arrangements that allow you to deal with exceptional or unforeseen circumstances (in all cases, even if not mandatory under the Grant Agreement). The consortium agreement also gives you the possibility to redistribute the grant money according to your own consortium-internal principles and parameters (for instance, one beneficiary can reattribute its grant money to another beneficiary). The consortium agreement thus allows you to customise the EU grant to the needs inside your consortium and can also help to protect you in case of disputes.

- **Balanced project budget**— Grant applications must ensure a balanced project budget and sufficient other resources to implement the project successfully (*e.g. own contributions, income generated by the action, financial contributions from third parties, etc*). You may be requested to lower your estimated costs, if they are ineligible (including excessive).
- **Completed/ongoing projects** — Proposals for projects that have already been completed will be rejected; proposals for projects that have already started will be assessed on a case-by-case basis (in this case, no costs can be reimbursed for activities that took place before the project starting date/proposal submission).
- **No-profit rule** — Grants may NOT give a profit (i.e. surplus of revenues + EU grant over costs). This will be checked by us at the end of the project.
- **No cumulation of funding/no double funding** — It is strictly prohibited to cumulate funding from the EU budget (except under 'EU Synergies actions'). Outside such Synergies actions, any given action may receive only ONE grant from the EU budget and cost items may under NO circumstances be declared under two EU grants; projects must be designed as different actions, clearly delineated and separated for each grant (without overlaps).
- **Combination with EU operating grants** — Combination with EU operating grants is possible, if the project remains outside the operating grant work programme and you make sure that cost items are clearly separated in your accounting and NOT declared twice (see [AGA – Annotated Grant Agreement, art 6.2.E](#)).
- **Multiple proposals** — Applicants may submit more than one proposal for *different* projects under the same call (and be awarded funding for them).
Organisations may participate in several proposals.
BUT: if there are several proposals for *very similar* projects, only one application will be accepted and evaluated; the applicants will be asked to withdraw the others (or they will be rejected).
- **Resubmission** — Proposals may be changed and re-submitted until the deadline for submission.
- **Rejection** — By submitting the application, all applicants accept the call conditions set out in this this Call document (and the documents it refers to). Proposals that do not comply with all the call conditions will be rejected. This applies also to applicants: All applicants need to fulfil the criteria; if any one of them doesn't, they must be replaced or the entire proposal will be rejected.
- **Cancellation** — There may be circumstances which may require the cancellation of the call. In this case, you will be informed via a call or topic update. Please note that cancellations are without entitlement to compensation.
- **Language** — You can submit your proposal in any official EU language (project abstract/summary should however always be in English). For reasons of efficiency, we strongly advise you to use English for the entire application. If you need the call documentation in another official EU language, please submit a request within 10 days after call publication (for the contact information, see *section 12*).

- **Transparency** — In accordance with Article 38 of the [EU Financial Regulation](#), information about EU grants awarded is published each year on the [Europa website](#).

This includes:

- beneficiary names
- beneficiary addresses
- the purpose for which the grant was awarded
- the maximum amount awarded.

The publication can exceptionally be waived (on reasoned and duly substantiated request), if there is a risk that the disclosure could jeopardise your rights and freedoms under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights or harm your commercial interests.

- **Data protection** — The submission of a proposal under this call involves the collection, use and processing of personal data. This data will be processed in accordance with the applicable legal framework. It will be processed solely for the purpose of evaluating your proposal, subsequent management of your grant and, if needed, programme monitoring, evaluation and communication. Details are explained in the [Funding & Tenders Portal Privacy Statement](#).