

Technical Report on Citizenship Awareness Campaign

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Partner in Charge	PP5 ALMA MATER STUDIORUM - UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA
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Background

Enhancing safety and resilience to natural and man-made disasters through innovative and participatory solutions was the underlying priority of the E-CITIJENS project with a view to easing Civil Protection in managing risks in Italy and Croatia also by including real-time, place-based information voluntarily provided by citizens through their social media profiles.

As of the Application Form, within WP3 “Modelling “social media based” Civil Protection emergency management system”, the E-CITIJENS Consortium was in charge of implementing a Citizens Awareness Raising Campaign as part of Work Package 3 Modelling “social media based” Civil Protection emergency management system. Activity 3.4 “Design of citizens dedicated Awareness Campaign”, was coordinated by PP7 Adriatic Ionian Euroregion (AIE) and a workgroup made of PP1 (Split-Dalmatia County), PP2 (Veneto Region), PP6 (Pescara Municipality), PP8 (Agency for the Rural Development of the Zadar County – AGGRA) and PP10 (City of Dubrovnik). The work group was joined by Molise Region (LP) as well. The work group implemented the Campaign as designed based the Citizens Participatory Awareness Raising Campaign Framework. The structure of the campaign was created as to overlap with activities of WP 2 Activity 2.4 (events) with those related with WP4 Activity 4.3 (pilot deployments, simulations and exercises).

The general objective of the Campaign was to stimulate a participatory process by activating selected subgroups of population as “active sensors” of emergencies and improving their knowledge of risks with a view to influencing their attitudes and behaviour during hazardous occurrences. The target groups of the action included: children, school-age youths, adults and civil protection volunteers and crisis management associations. The participation of relevant stakeholders (firefighters, police, Red Cross, county office for civil protection, port authorities, etc.) was also crucial to the success of the campaign. Stakeholders were able to contribute with suggestions, comments, ideas that had direct impact of the project and the achievement of its deliverables, accompanying the various stages of development, assessment and adoption of a “social media based” Emergency Decision Support System (EDSS) and its Adoption Plan.

In particular, it aimed at increasing the level of involvement of the population in risk prevention, monitoring and crisis management with reference to three common target risks (floods, forest fires and earthquakes), while educating about the role of civil protection, its structure and organisation in the two cooperation countries, as well as to inform about the importance of a responsible emergency communication between citizens and civil protection during emergencies, especially communication conveyed through the social media.

This was expected to result in:

- Producing a change in the status of citizens from “vulnerable element” to “active sensor” of hazardous occurrences while obtaining their contribution to Civil Protection activities in relation to natural and man-made risk forecasting, prevention, monitoring and management.
- Enhancing their knowledge of both the proper behaviour to held during emergencies and of risk mitigations measures by cooperating with emergency services.

Implementation

The E-CITIJENS project and the implementation of the Campaign was impacted by the Covid-19 outbreak. Events planning and implementation were frozen for a relatively long period, due to social distancing requirements, travel and mobility restrictions and, last but not least, to the fact that Civil Protection units that were the target beneficiaries of many of these activities were directly involved in the mitigation of the Covid-19 crisis.

The general situation with the global epidemic created concerns with regards the creation of public gatherings, that were regulated differently in Italy and Croatia (In Italy conferences were suspended for quite a long period, whereas in Croatia only small gatherings were allowed), in terms of minimum number of attendees, and require compliance to specific sanitary measures.

With the easing of the restrictions, it was possible to begin planning the implementation of the Campaign. It has however to be noted that, although the free movement of people and travel restrictions between Italy and Croatia have been lifted, civil protection units were still busy with the mitigation of the crisis, especially in Croatia that also faced two earthquakes in the meanwhile.

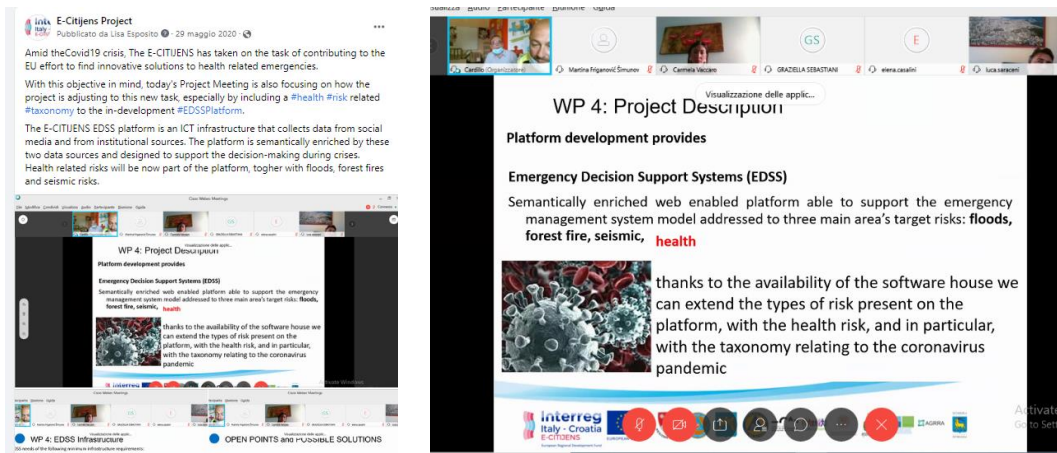
In this period, the involvement of students, the preferred target group of the campaign, was quite a challenge. Reaching out to children and students needed to be planned and agreed upon with the support of schools, which were busy with the distance learning methodologies. At the time when the Campaign needed to be planned, was not known how schools would organise the school year, which security and sanitary provisions they would have to enforce and if it would be possible to have access to schools. Legislation then defined schools as highly vulnerable places and sanitary restrictions to prevent the diffusion of the virus prevented access to Scholle premises to anyone who was not part of the school community for a long period. Later, when remote schooling begun to normalise (as the pandemic roared again across Europe), partners begun to plan the organisation of online rather than in-person meetings, not only in 2021 but also in 2022, when the epidemic was still harshly impacting on accessibility of schools.

The working group agreed to produce an informative communication for school aimed at exploring the situation and hopefully gather adhesions to the initiative. The communication included a short presentation of the E-CITIJENS project and an invitation to plan activities during the school year 2020/2021. However, this activity was put in stand-by and later dropped.

During this period, stimulated by the request of the Programme to include health risks in the project, it was decided to proceed with focusing a little bit more on Covid-19 related communication, that was

mainly conveyed through the digital activities as foreseen in Act. 2.3 (Project Digital Content), and especially through communication posted on project’s official social media profiles and the Newsletter.

The Covid was used as an opportunity to make the project more visible and to underline the usefulness and timeliness of its objectives. All along 2020 and 2021, the projects social media profiles, along with providing information about project progress, included a collection of posts and tweets, videos, hashtags, infographics and articles about the Covid-19 pandemic with a particular focus on the use of social media by civil protection. The project’s pages have been connected to social media profiles of the Croatian and Italian national and local civil protection, of ancillary organisations (e.g. Red Cross) as well as Covid-19 related pages (e.g. @koronavirus).



Posts were managed as to convey the Campaign main message:

“Simple and effective, the use of #infographics and #hashtags that can really make a difference in providing Croatian #citizens clear-cut indications on how to behave to fight the spread of #COVID19”-



The 2nd E-CITIJENS Newsletter also included an article addressing the topic of emergency communication from public administrations towards citizens. Here’s an excerpt.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE FIGHT OF CORONAVIRUS: A NEW COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Established social media networks are in widespread use across the population, allowing for the dissemination of data-rich, contextual multimedia including narrative, photos, and videos. By incorporating social media into their communication strategies, public safety organisations can leverage the power of these popular information-sharing technologies to enhance their efforts through all phases of an emergency.

These tools have been used by governments and safety/humanitarian agencies to help formulate popular messages and warnings and other communications to the public, proving to be significantly effective in disseminating information quickly and broadly.

During the lockdown and after, we have been collecting a few hashtags, infographics, and audio-visuals that have been created and diffused on the social media by Italian and Croatian public authorities including Civil Protection and the Red Cross.

Among the most popular hashtags: the Italian *#IoRestoACasa* and the Croatian *#OstanimoOdgovorni* have been repeated daily across the social media.

Infographics and posters have been diffused as well.


HRVATSKI CRVENI KRIŽ

PRAVILNO PRANJE RUKU

 1 Namočite ruke pod tekućom vodom.	 2 Nanesite tekući sapun za pranje ruku.	 3 Trljajte dlan o dlan obje ruke.
 4 Trljajte dlan desne o nadlaničnu lijeve ruke i obratno.	 5 Isprepletite prste i trljajte dlan o dlan obje ruke.	 6 Obuhvatite prste suprotne ruke i trljajte.
 7 Kružnim pokretima jedne ruke trljajte palac druge ruke i obratno.	 8 Vrhove prstiju desne ruke kružno trljajte o dlan lijeve ruke i obratno.	 9 Isperite ruke tekućom vodom.
 10 Osušite obje ruke papirnatim ručnikom.	 11 Upotrebljenim papirnatim ručnikom zatvorite slavinu za vodu.	<p>TRAJANJE POSTUPKA 30 sekundi</p> <p> HRVATSKI ZAVOD ZA JAVNO ZDRAVSTVO</p>

CORONAVIRUS

RACCOMANDAZIONI PER LE PERSONE IN ISOLAMENTO DOMICILIARE E PER I FAMILIARI CHE LE ASSISTONO

Assicuratevi che la persona malata riposi, beva molti liquidi e mangi cibo nutriente

Indossa una maschera chirurgica quando sei nella stessa stanza con la persona malata. Non toccarti il viso o la maschera durante l'uso e gettala subito dopo

Lavati spesso le mani con acqua e sapone o con una soluzione alcolica, in particolare:

- dopo qualsiasi tipo di contatto con la persona malata
- o con gli oggetti della stanza in cui è in isolamento
- prima, durante e dopo la preparazione dei pasti
- prima di mangiare
- dopo aver usato il bagno

Usa stoviglie, posate, asciugamani e lenzuola dedicate esclusivamente alla persona malata. Lava vestiti, lenzuola, asciugamani, ecc. del malato a 60-90°C con un normale detersivo e asciuga accuratamente

Pulisci e disinfetta ogni giorno le superfici toccate frequentemente dalla persona malata

Se la persona malata peggiora o ha difficoltà respiratorie contatta il 112 o il 118









 Ministero della Salute

www.salute.gov.it

LASCIA IL VIRUS FUORI DALLA PORTA



RESTA A CASA


#IORESTOACASA


ES01 SOLO PER ESIGENZE ESSENZIALI

OSTANIMO  ODGOVORNI

Local events organisation

During the course of the project, the Campaign work group met periodically to plan and implement several activities. The Campaign in fact foresae citizens-centred activities such as:

- N. 12 Info Days focusing on raising awareness about the crucial role of risk communication via social media can play in improving the promptness and effectiveness of emergency operations;
- N. 30 Work Cafes to let local emergency management structures (and supporting organisations) and local communities discuss assess the EDSS
- N. 6 Pilot deployments through which citizens will contribute to testing the EDSS platform in simulated emergency environments.

Each partner chose to involve target groups based on a previous pre-selection. Here's a list of local events, divided by implementing partner.

Molise Region (LP):

- Work Cafe in Campitello Matese with Firefighters 31.3.2022
- Work Cafe in Campobasso for journalists and technical professionals, 3.5.2022
- Work Cafe in Campochiaro with mayors and technical staff of municipalities, 7.5.2022
- Work Cafe in Civitacampomarano for journalists, 25.5.2022
- Info Day (webinar) with school teachers, 1.2.2022

Split and Dalmatia County (PP1):

- Work Cafe for civil protection units, firefighters and specialised rescue units, 14.6.2021
- Work Cafe for operational forces as first respondents 20.12.2021
- Work Café on the occasion of the Civil Protection Day, 01.3.2022
- Work Café for stakeholders of the Civil Protection system, 19.5.2022
- Fire and evacuation drill at Primary School 'Kamen-Šine' in Split, 12.5.2022
- Work Café for the Civil Protection System and Port Authority, 13.6.2022
- Field rescue exercise at sea, 21.6.2022
- Earthquake exercise in Trilje at Cetinka factory building, 23.6.2022
- Capacity Building Workshop, 27-28.6.2022
- Info Days for students at University of Split, 5.5.2022
- Info Day at University of Split, 12.5.2022

Veneto Region (PP2):

- Online Work Café, 24.6.2020
- Online Work Café on emergency communication, 24.11.2020
- Work Café on emergencies and social networks, 14.10.2021
- Work Café for citizens on emergency communication, 12.3.2022

- Work Café and Capacity Building Workshop, 21.6.2022
- Online Info Days for secondary-school students in Padoa, 9 dates in Feb-May 2021

Pescara Municipality (PP6):

- Online Work Cafe, 26.11.21
- Online Work Cafe for citizens, 13.04.22
- Online Work Cafe for students, 14.4.22
- Online Work Cafe for control room operators, 19.4.22
- Online Work Cafe for CP volunteers, 21.4.22
- Online Work Cafe institutional actors, 18.5.22
- Capacity Building Workshop, 23-25.6.2022
- Online Info Day with schools, 28.2.2022

Agency for rural development of Zadar County (AGGRA)

- Work Cafe in Zadar, 11.11.2021
- Work Cafe in Zadar, 26.4.2021
- Work Cafe in Zadar, 2.6.2021
- Capacity Building Workshop and Work Cafe 20-21.06.2022
- Info Days, 20-21.6.2022

City of Dubrovnik:

- Work Cafe at civil protection headquarters, 26.10.2021
- Work Cafe at civil protection headquarters, 10.11.2021
- Work Cafe at civil protection headquarters to present ongoing pilot activities, 10.05.2022
- Simulation on Lopud Island and exercise “Open Space Fire”, 10.11.2021.
- Info Day in Dubrovnik City Centre, 14.5.2021
- Info Day at Montovjerna Elementary School, 2.5.2021
- Info Day at the City Hall, 11.5.2021
- Info Day at Montovjerna Elementary School 31.20.21

The events were the occasions to present the project goals and results as well as to enhance knowledge of territorial cooperation in the fields civil protection and beyond. A particular focus was put on citizens involvement in informal debating sessions about the proper behaviour to be held during emergencies and disasters. Also, these activities provided a deep understanding of the role of emergency communication as applied to social media and, consequently, helped to enhance target groups’ awareness about the difficulties that may emerge if emergency decision-making was based on untrustworthy information. A summary presentation of the events, with photographic evidence of all the meetings held across Italy and Croatia is available at the project’s official website <https://www.italy-croatia.eu/web/e-citijens/site> section docs&tools.

Communicaiton materials

Target groups were targeted with a bulk of ad hoc communication tools and materials that were created to be easily accessible and available online (e.g. official webpage of the project, official social media profiles and partners' official communication channels). These included:

- more than 36 press releases
- web communication and constant content sharing on 4 social media Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube
- 5 newsletters
- project's promotional materials (brochure, poster, roll-up, folder, pens and other giveaways) produced in three languages (Italian, Croatian and English)
- 6 videos, cinemagraphs and infographics
- 6 thematic publications

With these activities, Croatian and Italian citizens got the opportunity to interact with emergency structures, to better understand their work and how to responsibly cooperate with them when posting information about emergencies on social media. Citizens were thereby stimulated to take on the role of "active sensors" of emergencies and to understand the difficulties associated with untrustworthy information.

The Campaign unfolded throughout the project duration and accompanied the various stages of development, assessment and adoption of a "social media based" Emergency Decision Support System in Italy and Croatia.

As the project image recalls, the Campaign put a particular focus was put on emergency communication via the social media. For almost 20 years now social media have been used in crisis management. The Haiti earthquake of 2010, the Ebola crisis of 2014, the UK floods of 2019, as well as the current Covid-19 crisis all provide examples of risk communication happening through the social media. Social media are used by governments, emergency respondents and non-governmental organisations to disseminate early warnings, monitor situational awareness and in relief operations. Also, affected population increasingly use their social media profiles to communicate during emergencies.

With 3.2 billion people currently using social media and 91% accessing them via mobile devices, it is quite crucial to understand how to exploit the incredible potential of these technologies in an effective way to improve prevention, monitoring and management capacities. Many challenges in fact can be triggered by incorrectness, inaccuracy, insufficiency or obsolescence of information. In order to solve this puzzle, the E-CITIJENS project created the first Emergency Decision Support System (EDSS) platform in the cross-

border area capable to process data extracted from social media and thus support a more accurate, prompt and effective decision-making. The platform systematically searches such kind of data and analyses them against information collected through sensors and emergency institutions. For a greater accuracy and consistency, the platform relies on a taxonomy including mainly standard language but also local slangs and/or narrative used by young people like abbreviations or short versions of words. The final assessment of the reliability of social media-based information is however left to civil protection workers.

Tools and materials were enriched with the following elements:

Slogan Increasing safety in the Adriatic basin through social media-based tools

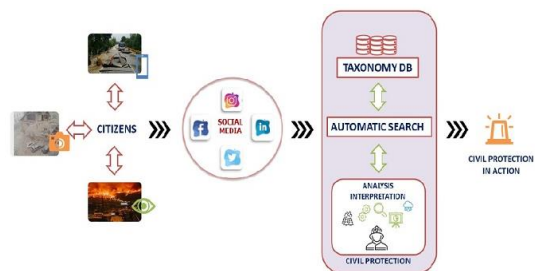
Hashtag #EDSS

Key message citizens can have role of “active sensors” of emergencies by properly using their social media during occurrences

Project image



Diagram explaining the functioning of the EDSS



Application of project logo and visuals as well as project image to promotional materials and give-away items distributed during the events.

Project poster



Roll-up



Folder

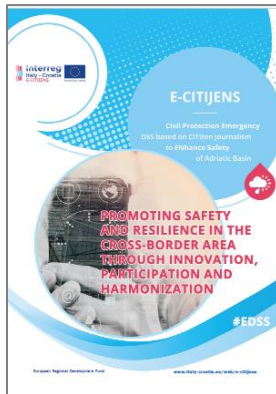


Project brochure





Publications on project results available in three languages.



Conclusions

Overall, the action resulted successful and useful to collect positive feedback from participants. Most reactions highlighted the willingness to broaden their knowledge about how civil protection works, especially when it comes to school-age young people. Very frequently participants have asked to be informed about next events and activities and their feedbacks led us to the conclusion that citizens are willing to engage personally and take action especially when it comes to the concern about the responsible use of social media and the impact of fake news. Work Cafés and Info Days were a successful awareness raising methodology, although organising such events during the Covid-19 pandemic was quite challenging. By combining information to debating, this methodology allows the active involvement of participants, which in turn results in a participatory exchange of ideas and points of views that helps explore topics from different angles.

In order add value to this success, it is important to continue raising awareness on the responsible and conscious use of social media during emergencies and to involve target groups more actively in co-designing and co-deciding civil protection actions related to the use of the EDSS to prevent, monitor and manage risks.

Despite these merits of the EDSS, the platform has its own challenges especially when it comes to credibility, responsiveness and reliability of the information. The EDSS platform processes data and selects information by classifying social media posts according to scores assigned to key-words, an additional focus could be done on the minimization of unresponsive alerts.

Considering that the system allows the user to read each of the posts that have contributed to the generation of the alert, it could be useful to add targeted controls by both the platform and the operators of certain types of posts.

The Campaign was based on an integrated approach aimed at facilitating the exchange of information between different actors in the civil protection system (firefighters, police, Red Cross, county office for civil protection, port authorities, etc.) and favoring interinstitutional cooperation. Different entities of the civil protection system were actively involved in work cafés, simulations and pilot deployment, and a great collaboration and cooperation was registered proving the common objective of achieving greater security and preparedness in the area. Moreover, civil protection experts and local administrators involved in the CARC expressed a deep appreciation of the EDSS and demanded access to the platform in order to improve their response capacities as soon as possible. A very positive synergy was also put int place with the education system, in some cases activating memoranda of understanding with a particular focus on

the responsible and conscious use of social media by younger generations as possible and future “active sensors” of the EDSS.

Extending the experience to other territories could benefit to the coordination and collaboration between Croatian and Italian civil protection, by permanently involving stakeholders in the optimization and territorial application of the EDSS. Moreover, the EDSS should be used as an interface between local/regional and national entities as to develop framework scenarios that can serve as a point of reference for national risk management as well. This could be achieved by means of networking and exchange opportunities, further dissemination activities, more simulations and directly experiencing the EDSS platform, identification of new financial sources.

The EDSS was used mainly to create event scenarios, guaranteeing that Italian and Croatian civil protection operators that use it are able to monitor their areas and activate adequate resources in case of occurrences. A possible and desirable action towards more effective interventions in case of emergencies would be to activate EDSS related first response training courses involving both operators and citizens. It is hence recommended to systematize the involvement of schools can lead to a satisfying assessment of the platform and its applications as well as educational action that will lead to a concrete change of citizens’ behaviour.