Transfer Intervention of ESR Framework

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Work Package Title	Release of EDSS Platform and Transfer of Emergency Services Regulatory Framework
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Summary

1. Introduction

Civil protection system that are established in Croatia and Italy at national, regional and local level, is primarily based on risks such as earthquakes, forest fires, floods, landslides. In Croatia and in Italy, civil protection authorities such as the national government, counties, cities, and municipalities are responsible for establishing a civil protection system within their jurisdiction and for establishing and operating a civil protection headquarters in case of emergency. Each headquarter must make strategic decisions about the mobilization of response forces (firefighters, medical teams, police, mountain rescue, civil protection units) in the first hours of the emergency response and therefore needs information from the emergency area to determine priorities and the number of resources needed to save lives, protect property, and the environment. At the regional level, this information is usually collected by operations centres such as the 112 centre or the fire brigade centre and forwarded to the respective civil protection headquarter. Considering the new technology available in the EDSS platform, the civil protection system needs to be flexible to ensure the implementation of EDSS in the system.

1.1. Project Info

In last year's much had been done to increase safety and resilience of Croatian and Italian Adriatic Basin, in other words, to decrease exposure of coastal and internal ecosystems and population to the impact of hazards and increase their ability to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from their effects in a timely and efficient manner. But evidence show that both countries' safety and resilience level remain below expectation and only a more effective crossborder cooperation between both regional and national administrations in enhancing monitoring and civil protection measures shall increase resilience. E-CITIJENS approaches the above challenges and opportunities by making available to civil protection operational forces (firefighters, Red Cross, coast guard, police, mountain rescue, etc.) an efficient system to protect people and their properties, coordinate the emergency interventions, activate communication channels between institutions and citizens to integrate emergency data with those supplied by citizens via social media.

E-CITIJENS objective is to increase the safety of the Croatian and Italian Adriatic basin natural and man-made disaster by the improvement of monitoring and civil protection measures, harnessing the characteristics of the social media network to significantly enhance Civil Protection's capacity in reducing disaster risk.

The main goal of the E-CITIJENS project is to develop an innovative transnational decision support system (EDSS) able to integrate, in case of emergency, the data already available from traditional early warning systems with data provided by citizens through social media.

E-CITIJENS was implemented by 10 project partners where each of those 6 partners are administrative units in Italy and Croatia dealing with civil protection activities.

1.2. EDSS platform info

The EDSS platform will add new value to civil protection decision makers by collecting primary information from people near the emergency site with general information about the scale and impact

of the emergency. EDSS will process input data from social media together with data from institutional sources to obtain as output an assessment/alert that can support civil protection authorities in coping with emergencies. EDSS platform is able to select relevant information primarily from social media, validate it and effectively use it in the emergency management process. Main output will be to effectively use relevant information retrieved from social media for emergency management. Data from institutional sources will be collected and processed continuously by civil protection and competent authorities according to the protocols and risk grading scaled defined in Italy and Croatia. Both countries have well-structured criteria to define risk scenarios for civil protection system, and they have adopted indicators and parameters to define emergency severity scales to activate civil protection prevention, warning and rescue measures where EDSS will support decision making process in case of emergency. The EDSS platform primarily aims to identify and analyse relevant social media posts that can provide to civil protection authorities additional real-time data regarding potential or ongoing emergencies in a selected geographical area.

1.3. Purpose and objectives of Transfer Intervention of ESR Framework

Transfer Intervention of Emergency Service Regulatory Framework aims to directly and proactively involving in ESR assessment project partners by bringing together viewpoints from representatives of emergency services, citizens, environmental and professional Associations and local/regional elected members and public officials target groups per each territory. The ESR framework, as one of the primary outcomes of WP5, identified the existing situation with regards to the civil protection system and listed recommendations and guidelines to include EDSS in the civil protection system of project partners. ESR Framework included basic requirements, strategic overview, current state analysis on partners level, as well as recommendations in six key areas (legislation, plans and procedures, operational centers, early warning systems, training and exercises, and cross-border functional center).

The main output of the Transfer Intervention of ESR Framework will be further used to address relevant measure and actions to be included into Civil Protection Adaption Plan.

2. Emergency Service Regulatory Framework

The ESR Framework emphasized the importance of involving citizens in the function of "active sensors" in gathering information about the emergency event by using social networks. This proactivity of citizens and the recognition of information about the emergency event itself, which includes photos or videos with GPS data using social networks that can be selectively collected through the EDSS platform to support decision-making in emergency situations. Such a possibility that citizens in the function of "active sensors" can contribute to more successful management of emergencies should be recognized by the citizens themselves as one of the possibilities of using social networks to provide additional general information about the emergency in real time.

Also, no less important, more such information about the threat or event is a broader basis that allows a more active role of civil protection headquarters at all levels for coordination of responding to an emergency event through more efficient use of operational civil protection forces. Although very generic, this can be an incentive for citizens to participate in collecting and sharing general information on the scale and consequences of such emergency events with the use of social networks and the possibility of their selective use through the EDSS platform, especially:

- encouraging citizens to actively use social networks in collecting and providing general information (location of the emergency event - GPS data, date and time, photo and/or video) about emergencies or threats

- establishment of the EDSS platform as a tool and an integral part of the information system in the operational-communication centers of emergency services to use (receive and process) information sent by citizens to social networks to support decision-making process in emergencies

- ensuring the visibility and importance of this specific use of social networks by sending appropriate promotional messages to the interested public to raise awareness and importance of their participation and contribution using social networks as support in the decision-making system

- continuous education or training of the younger population (school-age children) for the use of social networks by recognizing the importance of posting credible information about possible threats or emergencies on social networks

- linking emergency operations communication centers and early warning systems at the regional (and local) level to support the decision-making process and their better coordination in operational actions to eliminate threats or consequences

- providing initiative for enhancing cross-border cooperation between Italy and Croatia through the exchange of important information on threats and disasters at the regional/national level and consequently increasing the impact on mitigation.

In order to successfully implement the objectives of this project, recognizing its importance by citizens as well as by decision makers in emergency situations, the implementation of further activities and tasks should be focused on the amendments to planning documents in the segment of defining proposals related to the role of operational and communication centers with the establishment of protocols for receiving and exchanging information between the Republic of Croatia and the Italian Republic, putting in place agreements between the two countries on cooperation in the field of civil protection, through the section of the EDSS platform that allows you to cooperate and exchange information, share scenarios for remote support.

3. Partners suggestions for transfer intervention

Recognizing the goal of this project related to the creation of an innovative emergency support system based on social networks in the Republic of Croatia and the Italian Republic and related to increasing the safety of citizens on the one hand and increasing the ability to manage natural and other risks in the Adriatic with more active role of citizens as "sensors" for reporting such threats or sudden events, it is necessary to make small adjustment for interventions. Respecting the set goal of this project and the desire to promote more active participation of citizens in collecting important information on the threat and occurrence of emergencies, it will be necessary to implement adequate changes in regulations governing civil protection and emergency response system.

In order to create conditions for receiving (receiving) information from citizens who want to share information about emergencies with the use of social networks, there is a need to create unambiguous procedures for receiving, processing and forwarding "important" information to known users.

Considering the set goal of the project related to the use of EDSS platform that can collect data on natural disasters submitted by citizens as "active sensors", it is necessary to perform additional training of employees of operational and communication centers.

Early warning systems are one of the components of the action plans of the civil protection system and all information related to the possible threat or initial phase of an emergency coming from EWS should be available in the EDSS platform.

It is important to implement education and training of all participants in the innovative emergency support system and raising awareness of citizens about their opportunities to contribute to increasing their safety and ability to manage natural risks is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving the basic goal of this project, putting citizens in the function of “active sensors”.

Considering the new technology available in the EDSS platform, the civil protection legislation needs to be updated to ensure the implementation of EDSS in the civil protection system, especially for the following activities: Information management, Strategic contingency planning, Crisis communication, Search and rescue operations (land and sea), Firefighting activities, Maritime pollution, etc.

The key to the system’s efficient operation lies in an effective normative framework, a strong institutional position of central state and county authorities competent for emergency services to implement new information technologies in the decision-making process. -

4. Conclusion

EDSS platform will provide relevant information to operational centre to have better understanding on the emergency and in this respect to make better decisions to active appropriate civil protection operation forces to save life, property and environment.

The key to more efficient operation of the operational forces of the civil protection system is to adequately change the normative framework that should create the basic preconditions or framework for involving citizens in the process of responding to possible threats or emergencies. It is necessary to continuously upgrading and further developing operational centres by implementing new technologies that will facilitate urgent transmission of information to the operational forces of the civil protection system, all on the basis of information collected by citizens using social networks.

It is necessary to emphasize the obligation to create optimal conditions for the use of general information thus obtained and shared by citizens on social networks regarding the development of protocols (procedures) for processing and subsequent sharing of information collected and their use in decision-making by relevant headquarters.