



PRESS RELEASE

28 March 2019, Brussels

PPRD East 2 contributed to bringing the Eastern Partnership Countries closer in the mutual civil protection cooperation

On 28 March 2019, 60 participants attended in Brussels the closing ceremony of the second phase of the PPRD East Programme, the EU-funded Flagship Initiative increasing disaster risk management capacities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. In 4,5 years of implementation, the PPRD East 2 Programme built on the achievements of the first phase to step up Eastern Partnership Countries towards a stronger mutual civil protection cooperation.

Partnership, ownership and networking have been paramount in the Programme implementation in all fields of activities and enhanced the Partner Countries' readiness to upgrade their disaster risk management capacities and get closer to the Union's Civil Protection Mechanism. The implementation has been centred on 3 axes: aligning national legislation to the EU *acquis communautaire* and the good practice in civil protection and disaster risk management, establishing institutional sustainability, and extensive capacity building and development.

Major progress has been accomplished by Partners Countries in hosting and coordinating international rescuers when a disaster strikes (Host Nation Support), prevent and contain flood consequences (Flood Risk Management), improve national authorities capacities (training programmes), involving citizens in the rescue operation and disaster risk management (Civil Protection Volunteerism), and inform population (Raising Awareness about Disasters).

The regional full-scale civil protection field exercise, EU MOLDEX 2017, the milestone of the civil protection training programme, was a spur for the Partners Countries to strengthen their legislative measures and to move further towards a closer relation with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. Some 800 participants from 9 countries took part in this event to train, test and improve their capacities to save lives of citizens through a real-time scenario of earthquake, followed with floods and chemical incidents.

"Being part of the same civil protection community and being able to count on each other, using the same approach to and understanding of disaster risk management, improves the safety of the population in Europe and beyond", said Mr Sergej Anagnosti, the Team Leader of the PPRD East 2 Programme.

Thanks to the Programme, Partners Countries are now better prepared to respond to disasters, and to help each other as it was the case during the latest forest fires in Georgia when Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Ukraine provided their assistance to put "the fire down". By bringing the EaP Countries closer to the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, PPRD East 2 paved the way for mutual support between the Partners Countries and the EU Member States.

In terms of key facts and figures, PPRD East 2 led, organised, managed and supported the participation of almost 3000 experts at in total 97 events – regional and national training courses, workshops, meetings, conferences, study tours, table-top and filed exercises. Various manuals, guidelines and technical tools were developed and disseminated. Above all, the Programme assisted national authorities to secure an institutional sustainability with the creation of working-groups and the appointment of national focal points.

Background

The EU-funded Programme on Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters (PPRD East) was designed to contribute to peace, stability, security and prosperity of the Eastern Partner Countries by strengthening the countries' resilience, preparedness and response to man-made disasters and disasters caused by natural hazards. Currently in its 2nd phase, the PPRD East Programme facilitated the strengthening of disaster risk management capacities at the national level in the 6 Partners Countries, reinforced regional cooperation among them and brought Partner Countries progressively closer to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. This 2nd phase runs from December 2014 to May 2019 with a budget of €5.5 million.

For more information, please see the link: www.pprdeast2.eu



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The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

"The European Union is made up of 28 countries and the people of those countries. It is a unique political and economic partnership founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, equality, the rule of law and human rights. Over more than fifty years we have created a zone of peace, democracy, stability and prosperity on our continent while maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The EU looks to share its values and achievements with neighbouring countries and peoples and those farther afield."