



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 6 January 2015
(OR. en)

5032/15

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NOTE

From: Presidency

To: Working Party on Civil Protection

Subject: Work programme of the Latvian Presidency in the field of Civil Protection

Delegations will find annexed the work programme of the Latvian Presidency in the field of civil protection.

Work Programme of the Latvian Presidency in the field of Civil Protection
January – June 2015

As the country holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Latvia is in the advantageous position of being able to continue the work of previous Presidencies and prioritise new aspects of ways to strengthen EU civil protection.

The work already done – the rules on implementation of the new Decision on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, the new principles strengthening cooperation between civil protection and humanitarian aid authorities, and the accepted European priorities for the new global framework for actions in the area of disaster risk reduction – constitutes a good basis for the Presidency to deal with new challenges.

The Latvian Presidency will focus on one of the specific objectives of the Union Mechanism: increasing public awareness and preparedness for disasters, particularly for persons with disabilities.

1. Increasing public awareness and preparedness for disasters – the needs of persons with disabilities throughout the disaster management cycle

The recent Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism recognises new areas of action – prevention and preparedness, and each new instrument should be shaped accordingly.

The Decision provides that the Union Mechanism support, complement and facilitate coordination of Member States' action undertaken *inter alia* in pursuit of the common specific objective of increasing public awareness of and preparedness for disasters. The Latvian Presidency will therefore focus on raising awareness of and preparedness for disasters for persons with disabilities.

Various EU strategic documents in different policy areas, including that of civil protection, aim to ensure equality for persons with disabilities; however, not all commitments have been met. In the light of an increasing number of disasters both within and outside the EU, it is vital to understand and integrate the needs of persons with disabilities in disaster management planning and to consider these needs in practice. A great deal of good practice exists in this area but this has not been disseminated effectively.

For this reason, the Latvian Presidency will dedicate a workshop to "*The needs of persons with disabilities throughout the disaster management cycle*", with the objective of identifying the gaps between the needs of persons with disabilities and provision under the disaster management cycle, collecting best practices in this area, and examining this issue from the perspective of new technologies and innovative solutions.

The outcome of the workshop will be included in the final report to be made available to all Member States, and draft **Council Conclusions on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities throughout the Disaster Management Cycle** will be presented and submitted for discussion in the Civil Protection Working Party (PROCIV).

2. Empowering a new International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Given that the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction is to be held in Sendai, Japan, in the first semester of 2015, one of the tasks for the Latvian Presidency will be to inform Member States about the next steps towards developing the new International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (DRR Strategy).

The position of the Union and the Member States on the main priorities for the future DRR Strategy is set out in the Council conclusions on the post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action: Managing risks to achieve resilience. The Latvian Presidency will contribute to ensuring consistency of this position within the process of international negotiations on the new DRR Strategy.

The Latvian Presidency intends to adopt Council Conclusions on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities throughout the Disaster Management Cycle prior to the Conference to enable it to present the EU approach for empowering vulnerable groups within the context of the new DRR Strategy.

3. Strengthening cooperation between civil protection and humanitarian aid authorities

One of the Trio Presidency priorities is to strengthen cooperation between civil protection and humanitarian aid authorities. The Latvian Presidency will therefore follow up on the *Council Conclusions on cooperation between humanitarian aid and civil protection authorities: building a new partnership for disaster management* and will invite UN representatives to share information on cooperation with the European Civil Protection Team (EUCP Team) during recent disasters.

This will ensure continuity in the Trio Presidency work programme and will make clear the necessity for closer cooperation between civil protection and humanitarian aid authorities.

4. New approach to the European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection (EPCIP) and the new CBRNE Agenda

If necessary, PROCIV will be informed on the state of play and implementation in the field of critical infrastructure protection and the new CBRNE Agenda.

Issues relating to civil protection

5. Solidarity Clause Implementation (SCI) / Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR)

PROCIV will be kept informed about the lessons identified process, conducted in the Friends of the Presidency Group IPCR/SCI, on the first IPCR exercise "Crisis Response 2014", which was held on 27 November 2014 during the Italian Presidency.

Events in Latvia

6. Workshop on the needs of persons with disabilities throughout the disaster management cycle, Riga, 12-13 January 2015

Experts and representatives from EU Member States, third countries, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the General Secretariat of the Council, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and the European Disability Forum will be invited to participate in the *Workshop on the needs of persons with disabilities throughout the disaster management cycle*.

The main objectives of the Workshop will be discussion of the needs of persons with disabilities throughout disaster management, best practices in civil protection of persons with disabilities, and innovative solutions and technologies for persons with disabilities throughout the disaster management cycle. As these topics are complementary they will produce coherent results, which are to be incorporated into the Council conclusions.

7. The 34th Meeting of the Directors-General for Civil Protection, Jurmala, 29-30 April 2015

The 34th Meeting of the Directors-General will be held on 29-30 April 2015 in Jurmala, Latvia. The objective of the Latvian Presidency is to draw attention to progress made in the area of civil protection, in particular the Presidency's priority area concerning the needs of persons with disabilities throughout the disaster management cycle, as well as to the results of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, especially the state of play of the new DRR Strategy.

**TIMETABLE OF EVENTS AND MEETINGS DURING THE LATVIAN PRESIDENCY OF
THE COUNCIL OF THE EU**

JANUARY 2015

12-13 January Workshop on the needs of persons with disabilities throughout the disaster management cycle, Riga

FEBRUARY 2015

6 February PROCIV

25 February PROCIV

MARCH 2015

12-13 March JHA Council

APRIL 2015

17 April PROCIV

29-30 April 34th Meeting of the Directors-General for Civil Protection, Jurmala

JUNE 2015

11-12 June JHA Council, Luxembourg

16 June PROCIV

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