Council of the European Union

Brussels, 4 July 2019
(OR. en)

10971/19

Interinstitutional File:
2019/0070(COD)

PROCIV 48
JAI 776
COHAFA 65
FIN 491
CODEC 1290

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Working Party on Civil Protection
No. Cion doc.:	7271/19
Subject:	Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism
	- Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee

Delegations will find attached a copy of the above opinion, adopted by the European Economic and Social Committee on 19 June 2019.[1]

---

[1]   Translations will be available at the following website:
    https://dmsearch.eesc.europa.eu/search/opinion

European Economic and Social Committee

NAT/774

Union Civil Protection Mechanism - amendment

OPINION

European Economic and Social Committee

Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism
COM(2019) 125 final – 2019/0070 (COD)

Rapporteur: Panagiotis GKOFAS

Referral	Parliament, 14/03/2019
	Council, 27/03/2019
Legal basis	Article 304 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
Bureau decision	19/03/2019
Section responsible	Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment
Adopted in section	23/05/2019
Adopted at plenary	19/06/2019
Plenary session No	544
Outcome of vote (for/against/abstentions)	171/01/04

1.	**Context**

1.1	A new Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) was approved on 13 March 2019 by the Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision 1313/2013/EU. The Union Civil Protection Mechanism provides a framework for cooperation and assistance in the event of major emergencies inside and outside the EU. Since 2001, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has been activated more than 300 times. All EU Member States, two EEA countries (Iceland and Norway), as well as Montenegro, Serbia, FYROM and Turkey, are party to the Civil Protection Mechanism, as well as the United Nations (Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030) and relevant international organisations. The act provides for the setting up of an additional pool of resources, rescEU, to provide assistance in situations where overall existing capacities are insufficient. RescEU will include in particular aerial means to combat forest fires, as well as resources to respond to medical emergencies and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents. The Civil Protection Knowledge Network for training and knowledge-sharing will also be a strategic factor in preparedness and prevention.

1.2	With this amendment, risk prevention should be improved by requiring Member States to further develop their assessment of their risk management capability and their risk management planning, in particular when Member States are simultaneously affected by the same type of disasters, whether natural or man-made, or linked to unexpected climate changes or unpredictable, strong earthquakes with high rate of recurrence, causing loss of human life and massive destruction of ecosystems, civil and public infrastructures, economic activities and small businesses[2].

2.	**Conclusions**

2.1	The EESC welcomes this proposal to revise and reinforce the current framework of the UCPM.

---

[2]	We refer to the workshop held in Naples on 10 February 2018 through a partnership between the EESC and the European Commission (DG ECHO) in collaboration with ETUC and SMEUnited representatives, CoR representatives, civil society organisations (WWF, CIME), national SME organisations (GSEVEE, CMA Corse, CNA) and trade unions, specialised EU and national academics, research and training networks (Sapienza University, Federico II University, INGV Volcanology Institute of Naples, SMEs Academy Avignon, Anodos Centre), EU resilient cities and region networks (Athens, Naples and Thessaloniki), media and specialised press.

2.2   In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of the UCPM and with a view to the establishment and organisation of the Civil Protection Knowledge Network, the EESC may contribute in specific advisory groups to the periodical revision of the guidelines on risk mapping and through appropriate inter-institutional initiatives (e.g. "Civil Society Annual Forum on Risk Assessment, Mitigation, Prevention and Preparedness"), in partnership with recognised, representative social and economic partners and regional crossborder resilient cities networks.

2.3   The EESC asks the Council, the Parliament and the Commission to explore the feasibility and plan the implementation of a European Training Centre and Knowledge Hub connected with existing national and sub-national structures, including centres of excellence, specialised, independent research networks and other experts able to deliver immediate intervention analysis on unusual disasters. This centre and knowledge hub could be a permanently updated, tangible and accessible tool for basic competences in effective risk mitigation for young professionals and also experienced volunteers in the area of emergency management training for local resilient communities and, where possible, be extended to involve third countries, particularly neighbouring countries, vulnerable groups in isolated areas, mobility and tourism actors, media, etc.

2.4   The EESC deems it necessary to integrate appropriately the new UCPM objectives and approach into the framework of existing structural and investment policies. It is essential to ensure an adequate territorial and community-led dimension (particularly in remote, insular, mountain and rural areas). Local community action is the fastest and most effective way of limiting the damage caused by a disaster.

Brussels, 19 June 2019

Luca JAHIER

The president of the European Economic and Social Committee

_____