

## EU civil protection forum eyes “host nation support”

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On 25-26 November, the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment hosted its third [forum on civil protection](#), under the theme of “Towards a more resilient society.” Bringing together over 800 participants from member state governments and civil societies, the event was “designed to strengthen Europe's emergency management capacity.”

One session of the event was devoted to “Preparing Europe to receive assistance” and featured presentations by senior civil protection officials from Italy, Norway, Romania and the Netherlands as well as from the IFRC's IDRL programme.

Agostino Miozzo, General Director of the Voluntary Service and International Relations Office, Civil Protection Department, Italy, described some of the difficulties his country encountered in responding to the many offers of outside help received after the L'Alquila earthquake. He noted that most European countries are unprepared to find themselves in the receiving role and that this can make it more difficult for them to make the best use of external help.

Per- Kristen Brekke, Deputy Director General, Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, Norway, reported on the comprehensive review that his government is undertaking to ensure that Norway has the systems and laws it needs for adequate “host nation support” in the case of a major disaster. Similarly, Peter Glerum, Deputy Director, National Operational Coordination Centre, Netherlands, described a recent multi-nation exercise carried out in the Netherlands, examining how outside assistance could be facilitated in case of a massive flood.

The IFRC's IDRL Programme Coordinator David Fisher reported on the progress thus far of a regional study of legal preparedness for international disaster assistance in the EU, which the IFRC is undertaking with the National Societies of Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Discussion from the floor indicated a feeling among some participants that more attention needs to be paid to solving regulatory issues in international disaster cooperation in Europe. In his summing up, session Chair and Civil Protection Mechanism Deputy Director Hans Das noted that the development of new legislation and standard operating procedures at the European level should be considered. He further suggested that the IDRL Guidelines could be the starting point for this endeavour.

A video of the presentations and discussions of this session was recorded and can be accessed on the [European Commission's website](#).