



EMERGENCIES RESILIENCE AND TRAINING

PRESS RELEASE
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POP-ALERT Expert Group Meeting and Stakeholder Forum Workshop

The POP-ALERT Project Consortium is delighted to announce the conclusion of two successful events on 26th November 2014. The events brought together stakeholders from the crisis management community to **share ideas and experiences on populations' behaviour** in the context of a crisis, the ways in which different populations are **organised in communities**, the best ways to **reach and raise awareness within these communities**, the **priority issues for European citizens**, etc.

The **Expert Group Meeting** on 25th November brought together experts in preparedness training and advocacy and in crisis communication tools. The discussions of the meeting focused on the importance of preparedness training in the education sector, how changing mentalities about the perception of risks is the key to ensuring preparedness and the importance of tailoring training programmes to the community or age group that is targeted. Modern technologies were discussed as tools for communicating with the population and suggestions were made on nonverbal solutions to overcome the language and cultural barriers that are present in Europe.

The **Stakeholder Forum Workshop** on 26th November was structured in a way that maximised the exchanges between the participants and the POP-ALERT project team. The workshop alternated between presentations of POP-ALERT results and other relevant initiatives, and the launch of seven Forum discussions between the participants. Participants were invited to join different discussion tables where they were given the opportunity to suggest priorities for population preparedness. The suggestions revolved around investments in EU-wide preparedness campaigns, training schemes for schools (with simulations and exercises) and EU population alerting protocols and systems (using text alerts and social media).

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The Forum also illustrated the need for coordination and collaboration between key European crisis management stakeholders. The workshops promoted the exchange of lessons learnt and best practices and supported the creation of a sustainable network of key actors whose collaboration can be maintained beyond the project.

The main priorities identified during the discussion rounds will be sent to the EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Mr Christos Stylianides as well as widely distributed to all stakeholders across Europe.

The reports of the events will be made public on the POP-ALERT website (www.pop-alert.eu) and will be used to guide the Consortium's future activities.

Survey: The POP-ALERT Consortium is inviting emergency services personnel to fill in an online survey in order to assess their perception of preparedness in their area and its impact on emergency response.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BC7QWkZ8zdCFih79Nf0EWVYZjOBneOWUZp0EGuOkxyc/viewform>

About the project: POP-ALERT is a 2 year project financed by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme which runs from 2014 to 2016. The main objective of POP-ALERT is to prepare societies and populations to cope with crisis and disasters in a rapid, effective and efficient way by blending traditional crisis preparedness and first reaction strategies with the use of innovative and contemporary tools. The project develops mechanisms on how best to alert and support action by citizens under crisis conditions in familiar and unfamiliar surroundings using generic methodologies, strategies, training and a mix of technologies designed to improve population preparedness and increase community resilience. POP-ALERT seeks to improve the current practices revolving around the use of messaging and cultural sharing technologies to create awareness using technologies and approaches that offer the best form of accessibility and penetration by citizens and authorities. For more information, please visit www.pop-alert.eu.