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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Accompanying the document

**Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE
COUNCIL**

**on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and financing of health emergency
preparedness and response, and repealing Decision No 1313/2013/EU (Union Civil
Protection Mechanism)**

{ COM(2025) 548 final } - { SEC(2025) 545 final } - { SWD(2025) 545 final }

What are the problems to be addressed?

The policy area of civil protection, preparedness, and response to crises has been increasingly challenged by a worsening threat and risk landscape over the last decades. This landscape is characterised by a volatile mix of health, geopolitical, security, socio-economic, climate change, and environmental risks. The security and resilience of the EU and its Member States are increasingly intertwined with those of its partners beyond its own borders. This new reality calls for resolute EU-level actions to protect citizens, societies, economies, and our democracy.

In this context, the impact assessment has identified **three core problems and their associated problem drivers**:

1. **EU crisis management is mostly reactive** rather than pro-active, driven by an insufficient use of strategic foresight, anticipation, innovation, and early warning; a lack of integrated risk assessments and risk management.
2. **The EU crisis management toolbox is fragmented, lacking a whole-of-government approach**, driven by sectoral and cross-border coordination gaps; deficits in civil-military coordination; and disconnect between internal and external EU coordination efforts.
3. **The EU is insufficiently able to act in solidarity**, driven by a limited whole-of-society engagement, including with the private sector; shortcomings in EU funding mechanisms for crisis response; insufficient strategic alignment of national budgets; and persisting capacity gaps. Part of this problem is that different types of crises are addressed in the same way.

What is to be achieved?

To address the identified issues, the EU crisis management system must be equipped to meet four general objectives. These all contribute to the overarching goal to protect people in the Union against crises.

The General Objectives are reflective of the principles enshrined in the Preparedness Union Strategy. As such, they are not only ways of achieving the overarching goal to protect people in the Union against crises but are also objectives in and of themselves.

- **General Objective 1 (GO1):** implement an integrated all-hazards, anticipatory, and proactive approach to threat and risk management;
- **General Objective 2 (GO2):** implement an efficient and effective cross-sectoral coordination framework for various crises in a whole-of-government approach;
- **General Objective 3 (GO3):** ensure a whole-of-society approach to preparedness and response to crises;
- **General Objective 4 (GO4):** ensure the Union is equipped to act timely, flexibly and in solidarity, to protect people in the Union against crises, including health.

Why should the EU level act?

As crises grow more multi-dimensional and cross-border, capability gaps must be addressed at EU level - either through EU-owned capacities or coordinated efforts among Member States. This would not only allow for better coordination of crisis response mechanisms operated at Union and national also ensure that EU assistance can reach all EU citizens in need, while having a longer-term positive impact to EU societies and economies. Critical capabilities, such as offered by the Galileo and Copernicus programmes, are sustainable only through collective action, creating strategic infrastructures that no Member State can achieve on its own.

Strengthening EU-level preparedness will enhance citizens protection against cross-border threats, have a dissuasive effect, address the sense of profound uncertainty among citizens and contribute to the fundamental pre-conditions of economic prosperity and competitiveness. As demonstrated in recent crises, the EU plays an instrumental role in upholding our Union's preparedness and resilience.

Policy Options

The Impact Assessment proposes three policy options which address these four General Objectives to varying degrees and from different angles. The scope of the policy options is in line with the legal proposal associated with this impact assessment.

A fundamental difference in the budget architecture between policy options 1 and 2, on the one hand, and policy option 3, on the other, needs to be highlighted (see also figure 1):

- Policy options 1 and 2 propose a “complementary” approach to preparedness is, as horizontal priority integrated in both the UCPM/UCPM 2.0 in synergy with other programmes.¹
- Policy option 3 proposes to centralise all preparedness elements under a single Preparedness Fund. In contrast to options 1 and 2, option 3 would thus disconnect preparedness from the other relevant policies.

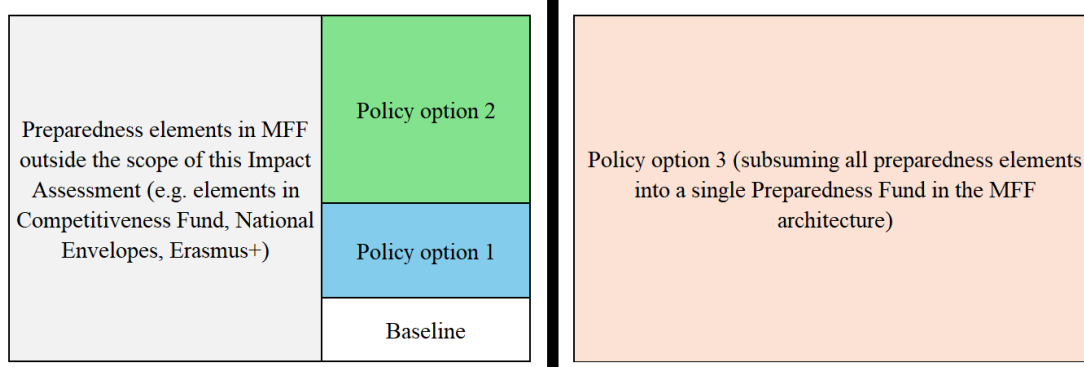


Figure 1- Preparedness in MFF architecture under the different options (indicative, the size of the fields does not resemble the share of the MFF portfolio)

Under **Option 1**, a strengthened sectoral Union Civil Protection Mechanism, including a targeted strengthening of the ERCC, is put forward. Activities on the EU-level need to be complemented by significant efforts on the national level, including with view to response capacities, which on the EU level are limited to the ‘traditional’ civil protection sector (medical stockpiles, CBRN stockpiles, aerial forest firefighting, etc.). While increased national efforts allow to successfully address all objectives, the added value of EU-level action is not fully utilised. As a result, this option lacks in effectiveness, efficiency, external coherence, and simplification, compared to Option 2.

Under **Option 2**, a cross-sectoral UCPM brings together UCPM and relevant activities for public health security preparedness. Compared to Option 1, synergies and complementarities between civil protection and health emergency preparedness activities are achieved through a single instrument under the UCPM 2.0. The integrated budget structure ensures flexibility and agility in the management of the instrument. Option 2 foresees the establishment of an EU crisis coordination hub, thus becoming the central EU capacity for cross-sectoral risk preparedness, including stockpiling, and

¹ For example: Competitiveness Fund, including specialised research and innovation; National Envelopes, including forestry and floods management, energy, and critical infrastructure; Erasmus+ especially regarding population preparedness; or the Connecting Europe Facility, including cross-border critical infrastructure projects, satellite imagery.

operational crisis management. Response capacities at EU level go beyond the ‘traditional’ civil protection sector, including for example mobile/pontoon bridges, broad band telecoms and secured connectivity, and medical countermeasures, including through virtual stockpiling. Further pertinent health emergency activities are encompassed to combat cross-border threats to health in line with the general cross-sectoral nature of the initiative.

In addition, a third Policy Option is described, which is discarded at an early stage: **Policy Option 3** entails as its main element the creation of a single funding instrument (Preparedness Fund) at EU level comprising all preparedness-relevant mechanisms and activities for the entire MFF. Policy Option 3 would be sub-optimal due to (i) an inconsistency with the Preparedness Union Strategy; (ii) increased complexity in the financial management systems; and (iii) an amalgamation of different types of competences, both supporting and shared. In addition to these inherent limitations of the instrument, due to its complexity it is very unlikely that Member States would support it during the negotiation process. Given this, **Policy Option 3 is considered non-viable and is thus discarded.**

The preferred policy option and its main impacts

The preferred policy option is Option 2 as it fully utilises the EU added value and, in doing so, comprehensively achieves the objectives. In the context of a crisis landscape that is becoming more multi-dimensional, and cross-border, opting for policy option 2 bring about important social (e.g. higher common denominator in population preparedness), environmental (e.g. more successful preservation of natural spaces and biodiversity), as well as economic (e.g. costs associated with comprehensive prevention and preparedness are significantly lower than those for response) benefits.