

2015



*“Enhancing Volunteer Awareness
and education against Natural
Disasters through E-learning”*

Newsletter #1



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CONTENTS

1. Presentation of the EVANDE project ... p.2
2. Partnership ... p.2
3. Project context and actions ... p.3
4. Presentation of the partner organizations ... p.4
 - 4.1. Natural History Museum of Crete-University of Crete, Greece ... p.4
 - 4.2. Laboratory of Distributed Multimedia Information Systems and Applications, Technical University of Crete, Greece... p.6
 - 4.3. Consorci de la Ribera, Spain... p.7
 - 4.4. Beigua Regional Nature Park - European & Global Geopark, Italy... p.8
 - 4.5. Earthquake Planning and Protection Organization, Greece... p.9
 - 4.6. Education and Training Centre “Villa Montesca”, Italy ... p.10
 - 4.7. Center for Educational Initiatives, Bulgaria ... p.11
5. Project updates ... p.12

1. PRESENTATION OF THE EVANDE PROJECT



EVANDE is the acronym of the project entitled “Enhancing Volunteer Awareness and education against Natural Disasters through E-learning” which is co-funded by the Civil Protection Financial Instrument of the E.C. The project aims to create a new learning tool to educate and train civil protection volunteers and local authorities’ staff through the identification of best practices and knowledge, to develop a web platform to host e-learning courses and training activities, as well as to organize and

implement local - based dissemination and training actions. The project will explore and analyze pre-existing knowledge developed under E.U. projects, scientific research and civil protection strategies.

2. PARTNERSHIP

The partnership is formed by European partners that have wide experience in the civil protection and lifelong learning sectors. The EVANDE partnership is coordinated by the Natural History Museum of Crete-University of Crete, in Greece. The other partners, the Technical University of Crete and the Greek National Earthquake Planning and Protection Organization from Greece; the Consortium “Consorti De La Ribera” from Spain; the Beigua Regional Nature Park - European and Global Geopark; the Education and Training Centre “Villa Montesca” from Italy and the Centre for Educational Initiatives in Bulgaria, enrich the partnership with their expertise and country-based experience.

3. PROJECT CONTEXT AND ACTIONS

Nowadays societies are facing a great risk related to the extreme hazards that are induced either by the climate change and the natural processes of the Earth system or the human intervention (e.g. earthquakes, wild fires, floods). Several severe disasters, combined with vulnerable infrastructures and assets, have influenced large areas and thousands of citizens. Voluntary aid and human support have emerged as the greatest need during the first days of the disasters. Gained experience from former civil protection operations and drills have indicated that although many studies, projects and actions have been undertaken, still lack of knowledge, command chain missfunctions and weak preparedness can be identified in various operational levels, both in professionals and volunteers acting on civil protection.

As a result, it is necessary that all actors engaged in civil protection can be integrated in a continuous process of collaboration, communication, exchange of innovative methodologies, best practices and educational approaches in order to raise awareness and improve preparedness and effective response in all levels.

The EVANDE project aims towards this direction. Its actions and deliverables include the following:

1. Management meetings to be used to share experiences and practices by visiting other territories and organizations, to organize the

implementation of actions and monitor the activities.



2. Data Acquisition-Elaboration on the topic of natural disasters and civil protection.

The partners will:



- Collect, filter, elaborate and validate existing knowledge and best practices on the nature, consequences and response to natural disasters, like floods, forest (wild) fires, and earthquakes effects, and analyze intra-governmental and E.U. policies and strategies to mitigate risks.

- Compile technical reports on the above mentioned topics of interest.
- Produce publications and products (e.g. booklets, brochures), that explain the scientific information in a popular language for non-scientific staff.

3. Development of e-learning tools and trainings.

The e-learning tools and trainings that will be developed in collaboration with civil protection actors include:

- web-based e-seminars for floods, wild fires, earthquakes and the European policies specified for volunteers and civil protection operators, including multimedia presentations, lectures, practice tests and other resources;
- web-based games and mobile location-based educational games;
- training and educational seminars for volunteers and local authorities' staff in every country participating;
- four national meetings for volunteers in project countries, and
- an international volunteer training event in Italy.

4. Dissemination actions

For the project dissemination needs it is planned:

- the operation of the EVANDE website;
- the publication of 4 e-newsletters, brochures and publications on natural disasters and civil protection issues;
- the organization of national and international trainings and public meetings, and
- the development of a sustainability strategy in order to ensure the exploitation of the project outcomes and the follow-up.

The main outcome will be a web-platform for e-learning activities that will be based on the Multimedia Open Learning Environment (MOLE: www.moleportal.eu). The EVANDE e-learning platform will be used as a communication and educational tool in order to make available the information collected by the partners to the public. The final tools will be disseminated and promoted during the various project trainings and public events.

4

4. PRESENTATION OF THE PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

A brief presentation of the partner organizations is following with special focus on their civil protection and risk mitigation activities.

4.1. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF CRETE UNIVERSITY OF CRETE, Greece, www.nhmc.uoc.gr



The Natural History Museum of Crete (N.H.M.C.) was established as a department of the Faculty of

Science of the University of Crete.

It has fully equipped laboratories and complementary infrastructures covering an area of 2,000 m². The museum is a pioneering institution at national and European levels, in the fields of:

- Basic and applied research for the protection and conservation of the natural environment, of its bio- and geo-diversity and of its endemic or rare forms of life.
- Management and conservation of the natural environment, geological heritage and ecosystems.
- Scientific consultancy to several public bodies and the UNESCO concerning the European and Global Geoparks Network.
- Development of complete geological, botanical and zoological collections.
- Education, public environmental awareness and lifelong learning. In the Museum's permanent exhibition halls that cover an area of about 4,000 m² several educational activities for school groups, young adults and families are carried out.



The N.H.M.C. has developed collaborations with many national and international organizations acting on environmental and lifelong learning education, as well as with many civil protection institutions. It has developed more than 110 research and applied projects funded by National and European sources. Many from its research studies have been related to seismic risk assessment and protection. Since summer 2009 the N.H.M.C. operates an Educational Seismic Simulator for schools and visitors in its permanent exhibition halls.

NHMC has participated in several civil protection oriented projects funded by the E.U. like PATCH, RACCE (coordinating partner), SEE, and RISK, whereas it is also participating as partner in two more projects running this period, the E-PreS and the CPMODEL.

The N.H.M.C., as coordinating organization of the EVANDE program, is responsible for the overall project planning; the implementation

and evaluation; the reporting to the E.U. and the implementation of the dissemination strategy. Additionally, the N.H.M.C. is leading the process of the production of the project's educational material. The N.H.M.C. will host a location-based game in its permanent exhibition facilities in Crete, and will organize training seminars and meetings for local authorities' staff and volunteers.



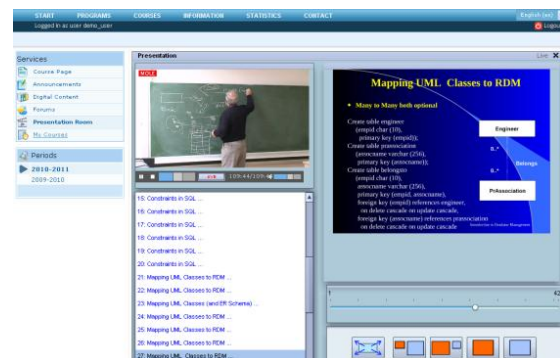
4.2. Laboratory of Distributed Multimedia Information Systems and Applications, Technical University of Crete, Greece, www.music.tuc.gr



The Laboratory of Distributed Multimedia

Information Systems and Applications (TUC/MUSIC) was established in 1990, and belongs to the School of Electronic and Computer Engineering (ECE) of the Technical University of Crete (TUC). It is a center for teaching; research and development in the areas of software engineering; distributed information systems; web applications and services; human-computer interaction and design, and graphics systems.

TUC/MUSIC has participated in over 50 European research and development projects and European Excellence Networks. In several it was prime contractor and/or technical leader. In those projects collaborated with over 250 leading European companies, universities and research centers. The projects range from excellence networks, to long term research, to high performance systems engineering, to applications and services, to digital T.V. systems, to digital



6

business ecosystems. TUC/MUSIC has participated in the major EU excellence networks in digital libraries and learning.

TUC/MUSIC has developed the Multimedia Open Learning Environment (MOLE), a blended learning platform for supporting and managing learning processes exploiting modern multimedia/communication technologies. It has also developed Octopus, an environment supporting collaboration between instructional designers and educators for the development of educational templates /scenarios. Moreover, TUC/MUSIC has developed infrastructures in the citizen science domain (crowdsourcing, mobile observation capturing, etc.).

With regards to the EVANDE project, TUC/MUSIC, under the guidance of the coordinator NHMC, will lead the creation and operation of the project's web platform and

official website as well as the development of the web based e-training seminars and games. Furthermore, MUSIC/TUC will organize training and dissemination activities.

4.3. CONSORCI DE LA RIBERA, SPAIN, www.manra.org/val/consorci



“ConSORCI de la Ribera” is an entity created by an association of two counties (Ribera Alta and Ribera Baixa) placed in the Region of Valencia, which is made up of 47 municipalities. The aim of “ConSORCI de la Ribera” is to manage

collaboration agreements with both counties in the field of environment and cultural heritage, tourism, energy, socioeconomic development, maintenance of rivers and landscaping improvement.

Other activities of the “ConSORCI de la Ribera” include the collaboration with the National Hydrographic Authority (Confederacio Hidrografica del Xuquer) for the flood prevention and the forest restoration. Furthermore, “ConSORCI de la Ribera” has organized the First International Simulation to an Earthquake in June 2012, and it has created a digital platform for the training of the members of the civil protection in the region. Indicative examples of civil protection projects that “ConSORCI de La Ribera” has carried out include the European project

“PATCH: Prevention, Analysis and Tools for Cultural Heritage”, a project on conservation of cultural heritage in earthquakes, and the project “SEE: Safeguarding Educational Environment”, a project on procedures and rules to be respected in case of natural or anthropic disasters.

With regards to the EVANDE project, “ConSORCI de la Ribera” will contribute to the development of the educational material and the web-platform and will organize training and dissemination activities. Furthermore, “ConSORCI de la Ribera” will host the second project meeting in Alzira, Spain, in September 2015.



4.4. BEIGUA REGIONAL NATURE PARK - EUROPEAN & GLOBAL GEOPARK, Italy, www.parcobeigua.it



The Beigua Regional Nature Park – European & Global Geopark is a public body established in Italy with the Liguria Regional Law n. 12/1995 and strictly connected with the Regional Authority. It plays a fundamental role in local development in the rural area between Genoa and Savona (Liguria Region - Italy) and is member or partner in several local research and tourism organizations. The Beigua Park Authority includes all the local public bodies of the area and several private organizations (farmers, hoteliers, craftsmen, environmentalists, tourist operators).

Since 2005, the Beigua Park is involved as Beigua Geopark in the European Geopark Network and in the Global Geopark Network under the auspices of UNESCO. Beigua Geopark is working on several topics and has wide experience in geotourism; educational programmes; interpretation activities; scientific researches; geosites management; awareness-raising in natural risks and civil protection; conservation of the geological heritage and local development strategies. It includes also several info-centers and museums that promote educational, awareness-raising and training activities about natural risks.

The Beigua Park has implemented many projects on natural hazards aiming at increasing public awareness and preparedness, in collaboration with the Liguria Regional Department of Civil Protection, the CIMA Foundation, the local municipalities, volunteer associations and school departments.

With regards to the EVANDE project, the Beigua Park will contribute to the development of the educational material of the web-platform and will organize training and dissemination activities. Furthermore, the Beigua Park, in collaboration with the Natural History Museum of Crete, will coordinate the project's dissemination strategy. Finally, the Beigua Park hosted the kick-off project meeting in Italy, from 5th to 6th March 2015.



4.5. EARTHQUAKE PLANNING AND PROTECTION ORGANIZATION, Greece, www.oasp.gr



Earthquake Planning and Protection Organization (E.P.P.O.) is a Legal Entity of Public Law under the supervision of the Ministry of

Infrastructure, Marine and Tourism. From its foundation in 1983 and up to now, E.P.P.O. has contributed substantially towards the formulation of the national earthquake policy and consequently the reduction of seismic risk. The main activities of E.P.P.O concern the following sectors:

- Planning of State earthquake preparedness measures.
 - Support of applied research in the sectors of seismic technology and social seismic defence at national and European levels.
 - Confrontation in case of earthquake: E.P.P.O. is activated immediately after the seismic event and collaborates with other involved parties, publishes and distributes leaflets with instructions for the safety of public, and participates in Greek missions to other earthquake-affected countries.
- Provision of public information – education related to the development and the understanding of earthquake consciousness and public behavior (e.g. organization of preparedness drills; training seminars; lectures and publication of informative material).
 - Provision of valid and timely notification to the state authorities regarding seismic risk (e.g. through the operation of more than 200 accelerographs throughout the Greek territory).
 - Improving the seismic capacity of structures through its scientific committees that monitor, adapt and support modern European construction regulations, as well as process special issues of seismic technology.



Under EVANDE project E.P.P.O. will lead the collection, filtering and elaboration of information on natural disasters risks and the best practices applied in the civil protection sector in order to develop the educational material of the web-platform. Additionally, it will organize training and dissemination activities.

4.6. CENTRO STUDI E FORMAZIONE VILLA MONTESCA, ITALY, www.montesca.it



The Educational and Training Centre Villa Montesca (Centro Studi

Villa Montesca, C.S.V.M.) is an organization working on educational research and professional training, cultural and local development. Its main aims are to develop local and European projects in the fields of education, training, research and experimentation of innovative teaching methods.

In the framework of civil protection, C.S.V.M. aims to:

- safeguard the cultural heritage in case of natural and anthropogenic disasters, and
- train operators in civil protection and develop new strategies for the protection of the territory.



More specifically, C.S.V.M. has carried out considerable agreements under the A.P.Q.

Programme “Preservation and prevention of Cultural Heritage in Umbria” (Institutional Agreement between the Italian Government, the Umbria Region and the Presidency of the Council of Ministries). Furthermore, C.S.V.M. has been coordinating the following E.U. projects supported by the Civil Protection Financial Instrument of the E.U.:

- “PATCH: Prevention Analysis and Tools for Cultural Heritage” aiming to implement instruments for prevention and preparedness in case of disaster events affecting cultural heritages.
- “SEE: Safeguarding Educational Environment” aiming to offer a complete set of educational resources to all the categories involved in the prevention, preparedness, self protection and cultural compensation of risks.
- “CP-MODEL: Civil Protection Massive Open Developed E-Learning” aiming to create a massive learning strategy for resilient (learning) communities.

For the EVANDE project, C.S.V.M. will contribute to the development of the educational material and the web-platform and will organize training and dissemination activities. Concerning the educational material, C.S.V.M. will lead the collection of the information and the publication of the technical reports on the response to natural disasters and the intra-governmental and E.U. policies and strategies to mitigate risks. Furthermore, C.S.V.M. will host the international training event for the civil protection volunteers in May 2016, in Italy.

4.7. CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES, BULGARIA, <http://cei-bg.org>



The Center for Educational Initiatives (C.E.I.) is a non-governmental, non-profit association aimed at enhancing innovative educational initiatives and facilitating educational reforms in the Bulgarian educational system.

The main objectives of the organization are to encourage co-operation in the field of education on local, regional and European levels, to implement new teaching methods and to enhance co-operation between public institutions, educational and scientific organizations and N.G.O.s via professional networks and platforms. In 2010, the Center for Educational Initiatives established a Training Center, whose main objective is to train teachers; school principals; university professors and education experts in e-learning skills and digital competencies.

Significant part of C.E.I. portfolio are several international projects aiming to promote new pedagogical and teaching approach, based on I.C.T. tools and focused on training students; staff; civil protection volunteers and professionals about procedures and rules to

be respected in case of natural or anthropic disaster.

Due to the implementation of European projects on civil protection (e.g. "RACCE: Raising earthquake Awareness and Coping Children's Emotions", "SEE: Safeguarding Educational Environment" and "E-PreS: Monitoring and Evaluation of Natural Hazard Preparedness at School Environments"), C.E.I. has accumulated significant experience and has established contacts with geologists; psychologists; museum workers; government experts and volunteers.

With regards to the EVANDE project, C.E.I. will contribute to the development of the educational material and the web-platform and will organize training and dissemination activities. Furthermore, C.E.I. will host the third project meeting in April 2016 in Sofia, Bulgaria.



5. PROJECT UPDATES

The kick-off project meeting at the headquarters of the Beigua Regional Nature Park at Arenzano, Italy, that took place from 5th to 6th March 2015, concluded with the concrete working plan to be followed by the partners.

At the moment, the partners are working on the collection and the validation of knowledge and best practices on the nature, consequences and response to natural disasters, (floods, forest (wild) fires, and earthquakes), as well as the analysis of the intra-governmental and E.U. policies and strategies to mitigate risks. Following the

conclusion of this process, the partners will engage to the development of the project publications and the educational material that will be uploaded to the EVANDE e-learning platform. The next project meeting is planned to take place from 24th to 25th of September 2015. It will be hosted in Alzira, Spain by the partner organization “Consorci de la Ribera”.

Please visit the EVANDE website www.evande.eu to be informed about further project updates.

Contact information: evande@nhmc.uoc.gr

12

