

European Civil Protection Forum 2018: "*Civil Protection in a Changing Risk Landscape*" Brussels, 5 – 6 March 2018

Report by Ingval Maxwell, Chair: Council on Training in Architectural Conservation

Organised by the DG ECHO Civil Protection Forum Organising Team, the "*European Civil Protection Forum 2018: Civil Protection in a Changing Risk Landscape*" was held in the EC Charlemagne Building, Rue de la Loi, Brussels on 5 and 6 March 2018. The event brought together some 900 representatives of the European civil protection community, including EU Member States, European Neighbourhood governments, first-line responders, academia, international organisations, NGOs and European institutions. The aim was to discuss current developments in the Union's Civil Protection Mechanism framework and put forward policy recommendations on how to tackle common challenges.

Strengthening Europe's ability to prevent and respond to disasters was recognised as a shared responsibility that could only be achieved by working closely together. The aim was that the 2018 Forum results would contribute to fostering a greater understanding of the shared efforts and goals, whilst also encouraging mutual learning and cooperation within the civil protection and disaster risk management communities.

Over the two days, the Forum was developed on four strategic pillars:

1. *Strengthening Preparedness*
2. *Simplifying Response*
3. *Scaling up Prevention*
4. *Fostering Resilience in Europe's Neighbourhood*

A brief video of the event is available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2aoMEPwvZU&feature=youtu.be>

The final report, summarising key points raised during the various Four Pillar Sessions, and the web-streamed discussions, is available on the Forum's webpage at:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partnerships/civil-protection-partners/civil-protection-forum_en

Forum Pillar 3: Session 11 Protecting cultural heritage

Of particular interest as to how the needs of cultural heritage will be incorporated in future EU policy decisions, the Forum's 'Pillar 3: Session 11 Protecting cultural heritage', moderated by Erminia Sciacchitano, Policy Officer for Culture, Heritage & Economy of Culture, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission, offered a series of related presentations with a subsequent discussion. The four presenting panel members were:

- Alessandra Bonazza, Research Group: Natural, environmental and anthropic hazards of cultural heritage (RICH), CNR-ISAC, Italy
- Giovanni Boccardi, Chief of Emergency Preparedness and Response Unit, United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- Christian Hanus, Dean of the Faculty of Education, Arts and Architecture, Danube University Krems, Austria

- Ingval Maxwell, International Consultant in Architectural Conservation

The multi-language translated presentations built upon the results of the “*Study on Safeguarding Cultural Heritage from Natural and Man-Made Disasters*”, commissioned by the European Commission’s Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) and undertaken by Panel members, along with colleagues from The Czech Academy of Science and the National Technical University of Athens.

These soon to be published findings [in April 2018] provides the first overview of risk assessment and prevention measures available at EU and international level on safeguarding cultural heritage from the effects of natural and man-made disasters. It also maps strategies, existing competence centres and related ‘tools’ in the 28 EU Member States. Bringing some of the study authors together with UNESCO in the Session created an opportunity to discuss recommendations to integrate cultural heritage into national disaster and risk reduction strategies developed by EU Member States (in line with the Sendai Framework Action Plan), and with a specific focus on the role of the Union’s Civil Protection Mechanism.



In the Forums’ Final Report, and resulting from the ‘Pillar 3 Scaling up Prevention: 11th Session’, cultural heritage comes centre stage in future civil protection agencies policies, by stating:

Adequate preparedness, improved coordination at EU level and enhanced capacity building is needed for better protection of cultural heritage. The facilitation of pre-event assessments and pre-defined recovery actions and targets can lead to greater and more effective protection of cultural heritage in emergencies. Disaster risk assessment and the related risk reduction measures should be introduced into the planning and management cultural heritage resources. The proposed Civil Protection Knowledge Network should develop in-depth knowledge, analysis and data collection and assessment of risks to cultural heritage. Strengthening coordination at EU level among National cultural heritage authorities, research centres, and emergency response actors is fundamental. In the context of the ongoing revision of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, capacity-building initiatives and best practices should be harnessed and scaled-up to address the existing gaps. Dedicated cultural heritage units within civil protection agencies should be created.

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Context: EU Civil Protection Forum: I Maxwell, 23 March 2018