



**FOGGS**

Foundation for Global  
Governance and Sustainability

**USE OF MILITARY RESOURCES  
TO ADDRESS  
NATURAL AND HUMAN-MADE DISASTERS**

Background Paper

*September 2021*

**M4CE Project**

## Background

At the Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability (FOGGS), we appreciate the role that military personnel and equipment can play and have already been playing in areas struck by natural or human-made disasters ranging from pandemics, like the current Covid-19 one, to floods, forest fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, and industrial accidents like oil spills. We believe that such use of military assets within countries and across borders has to be highlighted for policy makers and the public and can be further improved on the basis of best practices that need to be collected and shared broadly. The role of NATO for the coordination of large-scale, cross-border operations, as well as for standard setting and capacity building among a significant number of national militaries is central to all this, alongside other organizations, notably the United Nations that provides the global normative framework for such activities. This Background Paper is part of the Militaries for Civil(ian) Emergencies Project (The M4CE Project) of FOGGS, which also includes interviews with key stakeholders and an online discussion event due to take place in November 2021. Support for the project has been provided by NATO's Public Diplomacy Division. See further details on the project [web page](#) and this Katoikos.world [editorial](#). For regular updates and to contribute your views and experiences follow the project work on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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## BACKGROUND PAPER

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2021, we have witnessed record-breaking natural disasters sweep across the world, such as devastating floods in Western Europe, China, and India; extensive wildfires in California, around the Mediterranean, and even in sub-Arctic Siberia; extreme heat waves and droughts in the Americas, the Mediterranean and West Africa; and destructive hurricanes/tropical storms in the Caribbean and the US. Looking ahead towards the next five to ten years and considering the projections of the latest IPCC report,<sup>1</sup> climate change will undoubtedly upend the lives of millions, if not billions of people across the world, with the occurrence of more frequent and more deadly extreme weather events and natural disasters. Add to this the current and future pandemics, periodic earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis, as well as human-made disasters such as industrial accidents including oil spills, and this picture becomes particularly bleak. The resources that local, national, and international authorities have at their disposal to respond to such large-scale disasters are certainly finite and strained because of the increasing demands. The last resort in many of these cases is to ask for the support of the armed forces, whose special engineering and medical units, heavy equipment and logistics capabilities, as well as the sheer number of "bodies" they command can buttress the civilian defence capacities. They can indeed make the difference between life and death for thousands of people.<sup>2</sup>

Speaking at the 3<sup>rd</sup> German Ecumenical days on 15 May 2021, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg commended military forces for the support they provided on the front-lines during the Covid-19 health crisis: "I... welcome the fact that we have seen military – NATO and national military forces – providing a lot of support, everything from transporting equipment, patients, medical personnel, setting up military field hospitals and now also helping with the rollout of the vaccine ... for me, it illustrates that our armed forces, they play an important role also in helping, providing support to the civilian society". Mr. Stoltenberg proceeded to announce that North Macedonia would later host a "civil preparedness exercise, or disaster relief exercise ... trying to learn lessons and further strengthen our ability to provide military support dealing with, for instance, a pandemic or a disaster".<sup>3</sup>

Since the onset of the Covid-19 global health crisis, it has only become clearer that in today's globalized world the lives of civilians are increasingly in danger by threats of a non-military nature. In view of the billions invested by countries in military budgets for the security of their citizens, even at times of overall peace, it is not illogical to suggest that military assets should be used to also address these new threats, thus fulfilling their ultimate objective of protecting and saving lives.

In this Background Paper we review in a schematic way the legal framework and actual use of military assets by various countries in the face of emergencies caused by natural and human-made disasters, identifying initial good practices, as well as some emerging key issues. We then review briefly the role of the UN and NATO as international mechanisms for the coordination of disaster response and relief efforts across borders. We conclude with a set of initial findings and further research questions that we will try to find answers to through a series of interviews with key stakeholders and an online event due to take place in November 2021.

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<sup>1</sup> See "AR6 Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis", Report of Working Group I of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, September 2021, available online at <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/>. This reference URL, as well as the other URLs provided in this paper, were valid at the time the work on this paper was completed at the end of September 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Kostakos, Georgios, and Olivia Lazard. 2021. *2.2 Responding to Disasters*. Brussels / The Hague: Environment & Development Resource Centre - (EDRC). [https://static.s123-cdn.com/uploads/3692253/normal\\_60901af9e6c2f.pdf](https://static.s123-cdn.com/uploads/3692253/normal_60901af9e6c2f.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_183679.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_183679.htm?selectedLocale=en)

## 2. COUNTRY-LEVEL CASE STUDIES

Country Overview	
<b>France</b>	
Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection	<p><b>Civil Protection Modernization Act No. 2004-811 (2004)</b>  <b>French White Paper on Defence and National Security (2013)</b></p> <p>The latter defines natural and human-made disasters as a direct threat to the “essential functions of the nation”, thereby authorizing the French armed forces to intervene in such events. As a result, the French military is often called upon by civilian authorities during natural disasters or extreme weather events.</p>
Key civilian authority/ies	<p><b>General Directorate for Civil Protection and Crisis Management (DGSCGC)</b></p> <p>The General Directorate for Civil Protection and Crisis Management (<i>Direction Générale de la Sécurité Civile et de la Gestion des Crises</i> (DGSCGC)) serves as the organizing and coordinating body for civil protection at the national level, with additional responsibilities including disaster prevention research and training for relief operations.</p>
Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved	<p><b>Armed Forces</b> (all branches)</p>
Cases of use / Good practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>National &amp; international healthcare support, including Covid-19 response operations</b> Following the French President’s declaration of “war” against COVID-19 in March 2021, Operation “Resilience” was launched involving all branched of the French Armed Forces with the aim of alleviating the pressure on the French civilian infrastructures and focusing on three domains: healthcare, logistics (i.e. the supply and delivery of essential medical supplies), and protection (i.e. vaccination distribution). Under the instructions of the Ministry for Solidarity and Health, the French Defence Health Service (SSA) got fully involved in the fight against the virus by expanding healthcare capacities through the construction of supplementary intensive care beds, the organization of healthcare teams, and patient transfers.</li> <li>• <b>Fire-fighting operations</b> Operation Hephaestos (named after the ancient Greek god of fire) is an annual military operation to support local firefighter units control wildfires during peak summer temperatures.</li> <li>• <b>Natural disaster response and management</b> National military forces were deployed during the 2010 Cyclone Xynthia. The French military were also called upon to provide assistance in the French territory of Saint Martin in the Caribbean after the 2017 Hurricane Irma.</li> </ul>
Follow-up questions / concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At what stage and by whom are the troops called in for civil protection tasks?</li> <li>• What is the hierarchy and standard operating procedures between civilian and military authorities in civil protection operations?</li> <li>• Who pays for the civil protection activities of the military?</li> <li>• Any concern about bringing the military into civilian activities?</li> <li>• What about training within the military and between the military and civilian authorities?</li> <li>• What about cross border cooperation with other countries’ military and civilian authorities for civil protection operations?</li> <li>• What about engagement in coordination via NATO, the UN or other mechanism, e.g. the EU?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Indicative Bibliography</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opillard, Florian, Angélique Palle &amp; Léa Michelis. 2020. “Discourse and Strategic Use of the Military in France and Europe in the COVID-19 Crisis.” <i>Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie</i> 111(3): 239–59.</li> <li>• “The French General Directorate for Civil Protection and Crisis Management –.” <i>PROCULTHER Consortium</i>. <a href="https://www.proculther.eu/dgscgc/">https://www.proculther.eu/dgscgc/</a></li> <li>• Renda-Tanali, I., &amp; Mancebo, F. (2010). French Emergency Management System: Moving Toward an Integrated Risk Management Policy. In <i>Comparative Emergency Management: Understanding Disaster Policies, Organizations, and Initiatives from Around the World</i>. <a href="https://www.training.fema.gov/hiedu/aemrc/booksdownload/compemgmtbookproject/">https://www.training.fema.gov/hiedu/aemrc/booksdownload/compemgmtbookproject/</a></li> </ul>	

Country Overview	
<h2>Germany</h2>	
<p>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</p>	<p><b>Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany (Grundgesetz), also referred to as the German Constitution</b></p> <p>Article 35 allows a German state ("<i>Land</i>") to request the assistance of the national Armed Forces to support the police in responding to a disaster or emergency and permits the Federal Government to deploy Armed Forces in order to support the police where natural disasters or emergencies affect the German territory in general or more than one "<i>Land</i>". However, the Armed Forces have traditionally carried out purely humanitarian activities both domestically and abroad as their "deployment" (<i>Einsatz</i>) is tightly regulated by Article 87a(2), which stipulates that "Apart from defence, the Armed Forces may be employed only to the extent expressly permitted by this Basic Law." In addition, the German Constitutional Court has interpreted Article 24 of the Basic Law that deals with "Transfer of sovereign powers – System of collective security" within the context of transfer of sovereign powers to international organizations to permit the deployment of the Armed Forces abroad in the context of a "system of mutual collective security". Moreover, Article 24 (1a) states that "Insofar as the <i>Länder</i> are competent to exercise state powers and to perform state functions, they may, with the consent of the Federal Government, transfer sovereign powers to transfrontier institutions in neighbouring regions," thus potentially allowing German states to cooperate with neighbouring European countries.</p>
<p>Key civilian authority/ies</p>	<p><b>The Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (<i>Das Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat (BMI)</i>)</b> is the lead ministry on the Interministerial Panel on National Crisis Management.</p> <p>The <b>Federal Law on the Civil Protection and Disaster Relief (<i>Gesetz über den Zivilschutz und die Katastrophenhilfe des Bundes (ZSKG)</i>)</b> provide the legal basis for civil protection in Germany.</p> <p>Within the BMI, the <b>Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (<i>Das Bundesamt für Bevölkerungsschutz und Katastrophenhilfe (BBK)</i>)</b> is the executive agency responsible for matters related to civil protection and disaster assistance. The BBK can be considered a federal service centre offering a wide range of services for authorities at all administrative levels, organizations and institutions involved in civil protection, which includes emergency preparedness and contingency planning. In addition, the BBK provides information and coordination services through the <b>German Joint Information and Situation Centre (GMLZ)</b>.</p> <p><b>Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW)</b> crews boast special technical capabilities and expertise to provide effective assistance, notably in flood disasters and earthquakes.</p> <p>The term "<b>civil protection</b>" reflects a horizontal approach, regarding the protection of the population against all kind of natural and man-made disasters (including war).</p> <p>The term "<b>disaster assistance</b>" refers to the Federal Government's task of providing support to disaster management measures in the federal states in case of major disasters of all types, particularly support for information-sharing, coordination, managing scarce resources and conducting crisis management exercises.</p>
<p>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</p>	<p><b>Federal Armed Forces ("Bundeswehr")</b></p> <p>Since 2004, the Bundeswehr is a participant in the annual National Crisis Management Exercise (LÜKEX). During this exercise, federal- and state-level crisis management teams partake in simulations organized by the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (Bundeswehr, 2021).</p>

<p>Cases of use / Good practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2021 floods</b> In the summer of 2021, Germany witnessed the worst flooding recorded in its history, with over 200 confirmed deaths and 750 injured. In response and at the request of civil authorities, the Bundeswehr deployed around 1,000 soldiers in the stricken areas, supplied heavy equipment (i.e. armoured recovery trucks, all-terrain ambulances, bridge-laying tanks, etc.), and provided a satellite communication system, field kitchens, helicopters, and firefighting trucks.</li> <li>• <b>Covid-19 pandemic response</b> The Bundeswehr also played an active role during the Covid-19 pandemic, with 15,000 staff on standby for deployment to support the distribution of medical supplies, administration of Covid-19 testing, and the implementation of contact tracing, among other things. However, given the political-cultural context of the country, expanding the military's role is met with a certain level of apprehension. Thus, several politicians have called for the Bundeswehr to be used only as a last resort, when civilian resources are completely exhausted.</li> </ul>
<p>Follow-up questions / concerns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At what stage and by whom are the troops called in for civil protection tasks?</li> <li>• What is the hierarchy and standard operating procedures between civilian and military authorities in civil protection operations?</li> <li>• Who pays for the civil protection activities of the military?</li> <li>• Any concern about bringing the military into civilian activities?</li> <li>• What about training within the military and between the military and civilian authorities?</li> <li>• What about cross border cooperation with other countries' military and civilian authorities for civil protection operations?</li> <li>• What about engagement in coordination via NATO, the UN or other mechanism, e.g. the EU?</li> </ul>
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<i>Country Overview</i>	
<b>Greece</b>	
<i>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</i>	<b>The National Civil Protection Plan "Xenokrates" (Ministerial Decision no. 1299/2003)</b> This is Greece's national framework for risk management planning for natural and human-made disasters, which is coordinated by the General Secretariat for Civil Protection (GSCP).
<i>Key civilian authority/ies</i>	<b>General Secretariat for Civil Protection (GSCP)</b> <b>Ministry for the Climate Crisis and Civil Protection</b> (newly established after the devastating wildfires in August 2021) <b>Directorate General of Natural Disaster Recovery</b> (under the Greek Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport)
<i>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</i>	Under the National Civil Protection Plan, the GSCP deploys different "operating actors" dependent on the scale of the emergency. These "operating actors" can include the Hellenic Army, the Hellenic Air Force, the Hellenic Navy and the paramilitary Hellenic Coast Guard, in addition to first responders, health authorities, and nongovernmental organizations such as the Hellenic Rescue Team.  <b>Hellenic Armed Forces</b> Within the scope of their mission, all branches of the armed forces carry out a series of social contribution activities and initiatives and provide assistance to state services and local communities in case of emergencies and disasters. A formation dedicated to such tasks is the Hellenic Army's "747 Special Engineer Battalion" which, inter alia, undertakes missions related to natural and technological emergencies to protect civilians. The Battalion comprises Special Units, such as the Water Purification Squad and the Special Disaster Response Unit (ETAK) that deals with natural - technological disasters, searching, rescuing and releasing people in distress.  <b>Hellenic Coast Guard</b> The Hellenic Coast Guard is a paramilitary organization and is under the administration of the Greek Ministry of Shipping and Island Policy. Its mission is to patrol, monitor and safeguard Greece's territorial waters and apply law enforcement at sea. It can support the Hellenic Navy in various operations, while its role includes marine protection, search and rescue operations, emergency response, and maritime medevacs.
<i>Cases of use / Good practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Firefighting</b> In 2019, in the framework of the National Civil Protection Plan "Xenokrates", the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the General Plan for Emergency Response due to Forest Fires was developed, under the code name "Iolaos". In the summer of 2021, Greece was devastated by hundreds of wildfires, which were further exacerbated by severe heatwaves. To best manage the wildfires, the GSCP requested that all available military resources be deployed to increase wildfire patrols and aerial surveillance, which was endorsed by the Defence Ministry in early August 2021. In addition, the Hellenic Coast Guard assisted with evacuations of residents. Overall, the Hellenic Armed Forces provided relief to local firefighting services by supplying personnel, vehicles, fire-fighting aircraft, and helicopters.</li> <li>• <b>Earthquakes</b> Disaster response capabilities in Greece have strengthened in part due to peacebuilding efforts with neighbouring countries. An obvious example of this occurred after devastating earthquakes, which struck both Greece and Turkey in 1999. Diplomatic discussions resulted in a protocol signed in November 2001 that established a joint Greece-Turkey disaster response unit, known as the Joint Hellenic-Turkish Standby Disaster Response Unit (JHET-SDRU). Greek-Turkish civil defence teams have since taken part in training sessions led by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and have participated in several joint search-and-rescue exercises. In 2020, in the framework of the National Civil Protection Plan "Xenokrates", a "General Plan for Emergency Response and Immediate/Short-Term Management of Earthquakes Effects" with the code name "Enceladus" was introduced. Currently (September 2021), "Enceladus" has been set</li> </ul>



	<p>in motion and the Hellenic Armed Forces have been deployed in Crete to provide assistance (tents set-up) after a magnitude 5.8 earthquake struck the Greek island.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Covid-19 response</b> During the Covid-19 crisis, the Hellenic Armed Forces were deployed in ports and airports to support Covid-19 testing and contract tracing services. Additionally, the Armed Forces were responsible for setting up field hospitals in severely affected areas and for distributing vaccines around the country.</li> <li>• <b>Medical assistance in remote areas</b> The Hellenic Armed Forces are involved in providing medical assistance in remote areas when necessary. Specifically, in 2020, 59 air medevac flights (58 patients and 1 transplant) of a total duration of 159 hours were carried out. In the first half of 2021 the corresponding figures have been 162 air medevac flights of 521 hours. The Hellenic Army also contributes military medical personnel and equipment to hospitals and local medical centres around the country.</li> <li>• <b>Other</b> The Hellenic Armed Forces contribute to civil protection often and services can include: assistance in natural disasters, search-and-rescue operations, creation of refugee accommodation structures, and construction of certain infrastructure projects (e.g. construction and maintenance works at schools in Greek cities/villages/islands, snowploughing, stream clean-ups etc.).</li> </ul>
<p>Follow-up questions / concerns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At what stage and by whom are the troops called in for civil protection tasks?</li> <li>• Is there a standardized risk level/type explicitly described in the National Civil Protection Plan “Xenokrates” according to which the Armed Forces are called in to intervene?</li> <li>• What is the hierarchy and standard operating procedures between civilian and military authorities in civil protection operations? Do they have regular joint training sessions?</li> <li>• Who pays for the civil protection activities of the military?</li> <li>• Are there any concerns about bringing the military into civilian activities? How does the public perceive the role of the military in civilian-related affairs?</li> <li>• What about cross border cooperation with other countries’ military and civilian authorities for civil protection operations?</li> <li>• What about engagement in coordination via NATO, the UN or other mechanism, e.g. the EU?</li> </ul>
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Country Overview

## India

<p><i>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</i></p>	<p><b>Disaster Management Act (2005)</b>  <b>National Policy on Disaster Management</b>  <b>Armed Forces Act (1970) – Aid to Civil Authorities</b>  <b>Manual of Indian Military Law, Chapter VII</b></p> <p>-The above Act of the Indian Parliament is described as “An Act to provide for the effective management of disasters and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto”. It is an all-encompassing piece of legislature dealing with all types of natural disasters and regulations concerning them at national, state and local level. It can be invoked by either the central or a state government depending on the area affected by disaster.</p> <p>-The second is a policy put in place by the Ministry of Home Affairs, to promote a culture of prevention, preparedness and resilience at all levels through knowledge, innovation and education.</p> <p>-The “Aid to Civil Authorities” chapter in the Armed Forces Act empowers the Government of India to call on the armed forces for tasks, which are non-military in nature and under normal conditions handled by civilian authorities. For some exceptional circumstances, even state governments or local governments can call the military for help.</p> <p>-The Manual of Indian Military Law, Chapter VII – Aid to Civil Authorities, specifically deals with natural disasters. It provides for the role of the armed forces under the command of the central government in dealing with calamities.</p>
<p><i>Key civilian authority/ies</i></p>	<p><b>National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)</b>  <b>State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs)</b></p> <p>NDMA is responsible for framing policies, laying down guidelines and best practices for coordinating with the State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) to ensure a holistic and distributed approach to disaster management. Owing to the federal structure of government in India, the central government at national level leads and sets down the guidelines, but the implementation is handled by each state government, including disaster management.</p>
<p><i>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</i></p>	<p><b>National Disaster Response Force (First line of relief)</b>  <b>State Disaster Response Forces</b> (each state is empowered &amp; required to raise their own SDRF – currently 24 out of 28 states have done so)  <b>Indian Armed Forces</b> (any and all branches can be called depending on intensity and geographical distribution of the calamity)</p>
<p><i>Cases of use / Good practices</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Extensive Covid-19 response operations</b>  When the spread of virus was slow in 2020, due to a nation-wide lockdown, the army had helped set up quarantine facilities and assisted in the evacuation of Indian citizens stranded abroad. Special military medical teams were sent to neighbouring nations to help establish Covid testing facilities.</li> <li>In the wake of the second wave, or more aptly the tsunami of Covid-19 in March 2021, all branches of the Indian Armed Forces were called upon to provide “aid to civil authority”. Treating the Covid wave as war, operation “COJEET” was launched. The Air Force was deployed to ferry oxygen and critical medical supplies from donor countries across the world. The Indian Navy also brought in medical supplies from neighbouring countries. The Indian Army created dedicated Covid hospitals for civilians across the nation.</li> <li>● <b>Flood Relief</b>  Northern and North-eastern areas of India see regular heavy rainfalls, resulting in floods almost every year. Recent major examples include Maharashtra in 2021, Kashmir in 2014 and Uttarakhand in 2013. In each of these situations, the Army and Air Force were deployed to rescue civilians, build temporary shelters, and to rebuild infrastructure destroyed in the floods.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assistance to neighbouring countries</b> In the aftermath of the Nepal Earthquake of 2015, the Indian Armed Forces launched Operation Maitri (<i>Friendship</i>) to help and rescue civilians, provide supplies and also rescue Indian citizens. During Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh in 2007, the Indian Army supplied medicines, food, blankets and tents to the civilians rescued from affected areas. Most recently, in 2020, Sri Lanka called for help from India to control fire onboard an oil tanker. The Indian Navy sent three action ships and a Dornier aircraft, after which the fire was doused.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Follow-up questions / concerns</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In India's federal system, with its three levels (district, state, central), what factors like scale, intensity etc. of disaster affect the decision of who calls in the army – the district collector, the chief minister, or the prime minister?</li> <li>• India does not have a policy on armed forces providing humanitarian relief to other nations, hence on what basis are the decisions taken for international assistance and who is empowered to take such decisions?</li> <li>• The Indian Armed Forces have come under criticism at international fora for their handling of the North Eastern crisis and Kashmir. What steps have been taken to ensure there is no abuse of power by armed forces when dealing with civilians?</li> <li>• In almost every major disaster in the territory of India in the last 20-25 years, the armed forces have to be called in by civilian governments. Perhaps the time has come for India to dedicate more resources to civilian handling of disaster relief?</li> </ul>
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Country Overview	
<h2>Poland</h2>	
<p><i>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</i></p>	<p><b>Act on General Defence Obligation (1967)</b>  <b>Act on the State of Calamity (2002)</b>  <b>Act on Crisis Management (2007)</b></p> <p>Historically, the integration of civil-military efforts has been a critical tenant of Poland's defence and national security strategy. Since 1967, the Polish legal framework has supported a civil defense system as per the Act on General Defense Obligation. In the Post-Cold War era, civil defense protocols have become reprioritized to tackle non-military threats. The 2002 Act on the State of Calamity and the 2007 Act on Crisis Management explicitly mandate the use of armed forces to support civil authorities in emergencies.</p>
<p><i>Key civilian authority/ies</i></p>	<p><b>State Fire Service and the National Rescue and Fire-Fighting System (KSRG)</b>  <b>State Medical Rescue</b></p> <p>The civil protection system in Poland covers both crisis management and rescue through the coordination of the State Fire Service and the National Fire-Fighting System (KSPRG), the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, and the State Medical Rescue.</p>
<p><i>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</i></p>	<p><b>The Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, including the Territorial Defence Force</b></p> <p>Since its foundation in 2017, non-military operations are assigned to the Territorial Defence Force (<i>Obrona Terytorium Kraju</i>, OTK), the fifth branch of the Polish Armed Forces, which works with the civilian sector within the national boundaries of Poland. Additionally, Poland's National Security Strategy supports paramilitary organisations, which are most often comprised of young Polish citizens. In times of crisis through they are used in emergency response operations or local administration to ensure the security of citizens and state structures.</p>
<p><i>Cases of use / Good practices</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Covid-19 mitigation and distribution of essential supplies</b></li> </ul> <p>The Territorial Defence Force played a leading role in mitigating the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, by becoming integrally involved in supporting citizens, authorities, and local institutions. The Territorial Defence Force was deployed to undertake two operations, using the codenames 'Immune Spring' and 'Lasting Immunity' to support local communities, regional governments and NGOs by transporting and distributing food and medical supplies. Remarkably, the Covid-19 pandemic became one of the largest national crisis response operations for the first time since the country's 1989 transition to democracy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tornados</b></li> </ul> <p>In June 2019 in the midst of damaging hailstorms, a local outbreak of tornados occurred in the Lubuskie province in Central Poland. In response, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lubuskie Territorial Defence Force deployed 200 soldiers to help restore electricity to households and remove trees that were damaged by the storms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flood Prevention and Mitigation</b></li> </ul> <p>In the summer of 2019, the south of Poland was devastated by severe storms and flooding. Over 1,200 soldiers from the Territorial Defence Force were deployed to assist in disaster relief efforts. A year later, in May and June 2020, the Territorial Defence Force, alongside local crisis management teams, local authorities and firefighters, were praised by the government for helping to build a dry reservoir in Racibórz to reduce the risk of flooding, a project which was co-financed by the EU, World Bank, Council of Europe Development Bank, and the Polish government.</p>
<p><i>Follow-up questions / concerns</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What role can Polish paramilitary organisations assume between the military and civilian authorities?</li> <li>• Who pays for the civil protection activities of the military and of paramilitary organisations?</li> <li>• What is the hierarchy between civilian and military authorities in dealing with civil emergencies?</li> <li>• Is there any concern about bringing the military into civilian activities?</li> <li>• Is there joint training involving civilian authorities, paramilitary organizations and the military?</li> </ul>

- What about cross border cooperation with other countries' military and civilian authorities for civil protection operations?
- What about engagement in coordination via NATO, the UN or other mechanism, e.g. the EU?

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Country Overview	
<b>Russia</b>	
<i>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</i>	<p><b>Federal Law of the Russian Federation (1998, as amended in 2021) on Civil Defense</b></p> <p>The 1998 Federal Law of the Russian Federation, as amended in 2021, articulates the role the military can play for civil defence, which includes but is not limited to: evacuations, life-saving activities, firefighting, or carrying out rescue missions.</p>
<i>Key civilian authority/ies</i>	<p><b>Ministry for Civil Defense, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM)</b></p> <p>The “organization of activities related to response to emergencies, protection of the population and territories against emergencies and fires, as well as carrying out of humanitarian response operations” is one of the tasks of the Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters, also known as EMERCOM.</p>
<i>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</i>	<p><b>Ministry of Defense / Russian Armed Forces</b></p> <p>The Russian Ministry of Defense (MOD) also actively engages in responding to large-scale disasters such as floods, wildfires or man-made hazards. It is important to note that there has long been a strong connection between the two government ministries, EMERCOM and MOD. Notably, the current Russian Minister of Defence, Sergey Shoigu, previously served as Minister of Emergency Situations from 1991 until 2012 and, although not part of the armed forces, the EMERCOM ranking structure uses the same hierarchy.</p>
<i>Cases of use / Good practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Environmental disaster mitigation and response</b> According to the official information provided on the Russian Ministry of Defense website, EMERCOM’s tasks involve, among others, “prevention of environmental disasters and other emergencies, as well as the elimination of their consequences.”</li> <li>• <b>Fire-fighting operations</b> In July 2021, the Russian Armed Forces were assisting EMERCOM in the region of Yakutia in Siberia with fighting large-scale forest fires covering more than 800,000 hectares. A specialized aviation unit was created to that end by the Ministry of Defense consisting of Mi-8 helicopters and Il-76 water-dropping aircraft of the Russian Aerospace Forces.</li> <li>• <b>Covid-19 mitigation and response</b> The Covid-19 response has become another area where the Russian Armed Forces have played a significant role. Special and medical units of the MOD were involved in solving most of the logistical problems related to civilian medical services in different regions. Military support for the medical response has covered all types of assistance. This included the construction of semi-permanent and mobile Covid-19 hospitals, deployment of field hospitals in remote and inaccessible areas, establishment of mobile testing facilities and vaccination centres, and the opening of military sanatoriums for post-Covid rehabilitation. Additionally, there was the prominent use of military teams for the disinfection of public spaces.</li> </ul>
<i>Follow-up questions / concerns</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the hierarchy and standard operating procedures between civilian and military authorities in civil protection operations? Do they have regular joint training sessions?</li> <li>• Who pays for the civil protection activities of the military? We note that the resources of EMERCOM are limited, with its 2020 budget amounting only to around 10% of that of the MOD.</li> <li>• Are there any concerns about bringing the military into civilian activities? How does the public perceive the role of the military in civilian-related affairs?</li> <li>• Is there cross border cooperation with other countries’ military and civilian authorities for civil protection operations?</li> <li>• If there is cross border cooperation, to what extent, if any, could this be used as an instrument of military diplomacy / confidence building? What are the geopolitical consequences?</li> </ul>

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Country Overview	
<h2>United Kingdom</h2>	
<p><i>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</i></p>	<p><b>2004 Civil Contingencies Act</b></p> <p>According to the 2004 Civil Contingencies Act (CCA 04), the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence (MOD) had "no statutory responsibility [...] to plan and prepare for civil crises." This has changed in subsequent years, though, and the MOD now encourages close civil and military cooperation during periods of crisis or emergencies, noting though that the deployment of UK forces should take place under exceptional circumstances and in a supporting role, not assuming leadership of the overall response to the non-military emergency at hand.</p>
<p><i>Key civilian authority/ies</i></p>	<p><b>Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS)</b>  <b>Strategic Coordination Centre (SCC)</b>  <b>Regional Civil Contingencies Committee (RCCC)</b></p>
<p><i>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</i></p>	<p><b>UK Armed Forces</b>  <b>Military Aid to Civil Authorities (MACA)</b></p> <p>MACA is the official term to describe instances of UK armed forces supporting civil authorities. It can only be activated when there is a definite need to act because the competent civil authority does not have the required capability, or cannot mobilize it speedily enough, and alternatives like mutual aid or resort to commercial services cannot do the job or the cost is prohibitive.</p>
<p><i>Cases of use / Good practices</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Natural disaster response and management</b>            During the winter floods impacting Cumbria, Yorkshire, and Lancashire in 2015 and 2016 the army was mobilized. Due to the high flows and repeated flooding the civil authorities' capacities struggled to restore local basic infrastructure. With military assistance transport links could be rebuilt and clear-up operations were carried out.</li> <li>• <b>2010 Icelandic ash cloud that stranded UK travellers abroad</b>            When the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull erupted, it caused five days of flight restrictions in the UK and large parts of Europe. In order to repatriate stranded British citizens and help mitigate risks for them overseas, the Royal Navy and Air Force were activated.</li> <li>• <b>National and international healthcare support, including extensive Covid-19 response operations</b>            The growing relationship between the UK Armed Forces and civil authorities was underscored during the Covid-19 pandemic, which is considered to be the largest peacetime resilience operation ever undertaken by the UK Armed Forces. As part of the Covid Support Force, over 5,000 military personnel were committed to Covid-19 related operations in order to support National Health Service (NHS) hospitals and community testing or vaccination centres. Moreover, armed forces assisted to set up seven NHS Nightingale hospitals, or temporary critical care facilities across the UK. Additional military support included the opening of additional Covid-19 wards and providing ambulance services in highly effected communities.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Follow-up questions / concerns</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do civilian authorities and the military cooperate in emergency situations in the UK? How are decisions made and which hierarchy prevails in case of disagreement? Are joint exercises organized to smoothen such cooperation and improve preparedness and response?</li> <li>• Is there specialized training carried out for the military divisions that are deployed in disaster-stricken areas?</li> <li>• Are there entities in place other than MACA that coordinate the military deployments in disaster situations and gather practical information for future events?</li> <li>• Are there any concerns about bringing the military into civilian activities? How does the public perceive the role of the military in civilian-related affairs?</li> <li>• What about cross border cooperation with other countries' military and civilian authorities for civil protection operations?</li> <li>• What about engagement in coordination via NATO, the UN or other mechanism, e.g. the EU?</li> </ul>



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- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/apr/19/iceland-volcano-naval-ships-rescue>

Country Overview

## United States

<p><i>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</i></p>	<p><b>2012 National Defence Authorization Act</b></p> <p>The 2012 National Defense Authorization Act permits the United States Armed Forces to engage in non-military operations as requested by civilian authorities, “during emergencies with capabilities such as aviation lift, search and rescue or extraction, quartermaster (food, shelter, potable water, heated tents, etc.), civil affairs and public information as well as a significant portion of full-spectrum engineer capability” to ensure the safety of citizens and communities.</p>
<p><i>Key civilian authority/ies</i></p>	<p><b>Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</b></p> <p>The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the main U.S. federal disaster response agency. FEMA is charged with the responsibility to intervene and coordinate federal aid when state governments necessitate external resources and support, as mandated by the National Response Framework and the 1988 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.</p>
<p><i>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</i></p>	<p><b>US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)</b></p> <p>Within the US military, there exists a separate branch known as the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), which predominately operates to provide civil assistance, particularly through the implementation and maintenance of public works project.</p> <p><b>United States Air Force</b></p> <p>The United States Air Force (USAF) has proven essential in providing immediate assistance during humanitarian crises by delivering lifesaving supplies to those in dire need through precision airdrops. In times of crisis, the USAF deploys a Critical Care Air Transport Team to provide medical attention and care to patients in critical condition.</p> <p><b>National Guard of the United States</b></p> <p>The National Guard of the United States is a branch of the military with both federal and state-level responsibilities that commonly responds to natural disasters. In general, the National Guard is well-equipped to operate during natural disasters with ample transportation, aviation, communication, and on-the-ground support. The National Guard routinely collaborates with interstate and multi-agency units by hosting exercises to simulate natural disasters or other catastrophes.</p>
<p><i>Cases of use / Good practices</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flood prevention and coastal disaster management</b></li> </ul> <p>The USACE is most well-known for its flood prevention and coastal disaster management, leading repair and rehabilitation projects for vulnerable and damaged ecosystems or infrastructure throughout the United States.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Natural disaster emergency response</b></li> </ul> <p>During the 2005 Hurricane Katrina, thousands of active-duty soldiers were deployed to assist with medical treatment, search and rescue, evacuation, etc. under the order of former US President George W. Bush. In addition, over fifty thousand members of the National Guard were deployed to assist in the emergency response, marking one of the first large-scale deployments of National Guard Units across state lines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Covid-19 mitigation</b></li> </ul> <p>During the Covid-19 pandemic, the USACE played a critical role in helping to build medical facilities and screening zones in hard-hit communities across the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fire-fighting operations</b></li> </ul> <p>The Air National Guard and Air Force Reserves have trained personnel to combat out-of-control wildfires with a specially equipped Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS) in C-130 military aircraft.</p>

<p><i>Follow-up questions / concerns</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways does the authority of the federal government and the state government impact the effectiveness of the US civil-military relationship?</li> <li>• Is there any concern about bringing the military into civilian activities? How is this viewed by the legislative branch and the judicial branch of the US government, and what are the reactions of the public?</li> <li>• If there is cross border cooperation with other countries' military and civilian authorities, to what extent, if any, could this be used as an instrument of military diplomacy?</li> <li>• What about cross border cooperation with other countries' military and civilian authorities for civil protection operations?</li> <li>• What about engagement in coordination via NATO, the UN or other mechanism, e.g. the EU?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Indicative Bibliography</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "U.S. Air Force - Humanitarian Missions." <a href="https://www.airforce.com/mission/american-airmen/humanitarian-efforts">https://www.airforce.com/mission/american-airmen/humanitarian-efforts</a></li> <li>• "U.S. Army Corps of Engineers." <i>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</i>. <a href="https://www.usace.army.mil/">https://www.usace.army.mil/</a></li> <li>• Stuhltrager, James. 2006. "Send in the Guard: The National Guard Response to Natural Disasters." <i>Natural Resources &amp; Environment</i> 20(4): 21–77</li> </ul>	

### 3. INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

<i>International Coordination Mechanism's Overview</i>	
<b>United Nations (UN)</b>	
<i>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</i>	<p><b>Oslo Guidelines: Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief (1994, revised in 2007)</b></p> <p><b>Civil-Military Guidelines &amp; Reference for Complex Emergencies (2008)</b></p> <p>The Oslo Guidelines constitute the universal framework for the cross-border use of military and civil defence assets in disaster relief. The Guidelines emphasize that military forces should be brought in only when civilian resources are fully depleted, in the face of a disaster or crisis, and should be “complementary” to preexisting humanitarian relief mechanisms by playing a supporting rather than a leading role.</p> <p>In the same spirit, the Civil-Military Guidelines define the guiding principles for the civil-military relationship, ensuring that militaries are not heavily relied upon by humanitarian agencies, follow a commitment to do-no-harm, and are used as a mechanism of last resort.</p>
<i>Key civilian authority/ies</i>	<p><b>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)</b></p> <p><b>Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)</b></p> <p>OCHA, its central team and its country and regional offices, work with the global humanitarian community to ensure that there is principled and effective response to humanitarian emergencies around the world, providing in particular coordination, advocacy, policy development, information management and humanitarian financing tools and services. Humanitarian civil-military coordination is one of the themes covered by OCHA, with its Civil-Military Coordination Section (CMCS) designated as the UN system focal point for humanitarian civil-military coordination. IASC brings together the executive heads of several UN and non-UN organizations with the aim to ensure coherence of preparedness and response efforts, formulate policy, and agree on priorities for strengthened humanitarian action. It is the highest-level humanitarian coordination forum of the UN system.</p>
<i>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</i>	<p><b>Not applicable, as the United Nations does not have its own troops</b></p> <p>However, UN Peacekeeping Forces and UN Police are brought into disaster management in their areas of deployment as necessary.</p>
<i>Cases of use / Good practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Guidance for military forces and civil-military cooperation for emergency response</b> See <i>inter alia</i> the Guide for the Military 2.0 published by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in 2017, which recognizes the valuable contributions military assets can make to civic action, so long as there is close coordination between armed forces and civilian actors.</li> <li>• <b>Training</b> OCHA’s Civil-Military Coordination Section (CMCS) runs a UN Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord) training programme that aims to equip humanitarian and military actors with the skills and knowledge necessary interact with each other effectively in addressing humanitarian emergencies.</li> </ul>
<i>Follow-up questions / concerns</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At what stage and by whom should the troops be called in for cross-border civil protection tasks?</li> <li>• Is there a hierarchy among international disaster response coordination mechanisms – UN, NATO, EU, other? – in terms of overall framework / rule and standard setting, convening power, operational authority?</li> <li>• To what extent are the Oslo and other Guidelines respected in cases of international disaster response, and who monitors that?</li> <li>• Any concern about bringing foreign military assets into civilian civil defence in other countries?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is in charge once international military assets have been deployed in a certain country?</li> <li>• In case of a divergence between international guidelines and national rules in the country of deployment and/or in the country of origin of the troops to be deployed, who prevails?</li> <li>• What are the intricacies of training among militaries of various countries and between the militaries and civilian authorities from various countries, and how can they be handled in the best possible way?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Indicative Bibliography</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goniewicz, Krzysztof, Mariusz Goniewicz, and Frederick Burkle. 2019. "The Territorial Defence Force in Disaster Response in Poland: Civil-Military Collaboration during a State of Emergency." <i>Sustainability</i> 11: 487</li> <li>• "OSLO Guidelines Rev 1.1 - Nov 07.Pdf." <a href="https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/OSLO%20Guidelines%20Rev%201.1%20-%20Nov%2007.pdf">https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/OSLO%20Guidelines%20Rev%201.1%20-%20Nov%2007.pdf</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://unocha.org">https://unocha.org</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/">https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/</a></li> </ul>	

International Coordination Mechanism's Overview

## North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

<p>Legislative framework for armed forces' use for civil protection</p>	<p><b>Code of conduct for coordination of assistance between member countries in case of disasters (1958, reviewed in 1995)</b></p> <p>NATO recognises that primary responsibility for the coordination of international disaster relief operations is held by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (see above). Thus, close cooperation and coordination between those two bodies are constantly necessary.</p>
<p>Key civilian authority/ies</p>	<p><b>Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC)</b></p> <p>Crisis management is one of NATO's core tasks and can involve political, military or humanitarian crises, as well as crises that arise from a natural disaster or technological disruptions. EADRCC was established in 1998 to coordinate offers of support and requests for assistance between NATO member and partner countries for the alleviation of diverse natural disasters and extreme weather events.</p>
<p>Armed forces branch(es) primarily involved</p>	<p><b>Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE)</b></p> <p>SHAPE is the strategic military headquarters of NATO. It can be mobilised to coordinate crisis management operations, including for major humanitarian emergencies. Most often, though, assistance in case of humanitarian emergencies is provided by national militaries, with the coordination of requests and offers performed by EADRCC, as mentioned above.</p>
<p>Cases of use / Good practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p>• <b>Covid-19 Task Force and Pandemic Response Trust Fund</b></p> <p>The appearance of Covid-19 by the end of 2019 posed a new kind of threat to NATO, hitting all of its member countries at once. Following the activation of the Crisis Management Mechanism by the organization's Secretary General, NATO foreign ministers authorized SHAPE to create a Covid-19 Task Force. The Task Force was heavily dependent on EADRCC, which acted as a proofing and coordinating entity, giving clearance to applications of pandemic related assistance. Additionally, NATO established a Pandemic Response Trust Fund to provide immediate support in the form of medical supplies such as pulmonary ventilators, disinfectant and face masks. The NATO Trust Fund coordinated closely with the UN Trust Fund for Human Security during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure coherent and effective action in the fight against the pandemic through their complementary roles.</p> </li> <li> <p>• <b>Dealing with natural disasters</b></p> <p>Over the years, the EADRCC has coordinated assistance to flood-devastated countries such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Ukraine; earthquake-stricken countries like Turkey and Pakistan; and countries facing huge wildfires, such as Portugal and North Macedonia.</p> </li> <li> <p>• <b>Training and exercises</b></p> <p>The EADRCC also conducts field exercises on an annual basis, bringing together civil and military first response teams to practise interoperability. A civil defence exercise coordinated by NATO during 20-24 September 2021 is an example of strengthening military support for disaster relief efforts, building on the lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic. The 'North Macedonia 2021' field exercise brought together NATO Allied and Partner nations, NATO Military Authorities, NATO Commands, the Crisis Management and Disaster Response Centre of Excellence (CMDR COE), the Balkan Medical Task Force (BMTF), the Multinational Peace Force South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG), Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE), and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), amongst others.</p> <p>The EADRCC also conducts regular capacity-building and training events in member and partner countries to help improve national disaster preparedness.</p> </li> </ul>

<p><i>Follow-up questions / concerns</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At what stage and by whom should the troops be called in for cross-border civil protection tasks?</li> <li>• Is there a hierarchy among international disaster response coordination mechanisms – UN, NATO, EU, other? – in terms of overall framework / rule and standard setting, convening power, operational authority?</li> <li>• To what extent are the Oslo and other Guidelines respected in cases of international disaster response, and who monitors that?</li> <li>• Any concern about bringing foreign military assets into civilian civil defence in other countries?</li> <li>• Who is in charge once international military assets have been deployed in a certain country?</li> <li>• In case of a divergence between international guidelines and national rules in the country of deployment and/or in the country of origin of the troops to be deployed, who prevails?</li> <li>• What are the intricacies of training among militaries of various countries and between the militaries and civilian authorities from various countries, and how can they be handled in the best possible way?</li> </ul>
<p><i>Indicative Bibliography</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NATO - News: Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). <a href="https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_117757.htm">https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_117757.htm</a></li> <li>• NATO - Topic: Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre. <a href="https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52057.htm?">https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52057.htm?</a></li> <li>• NATO. (2020). Crisis management. <a href="https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49192.htm">https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49192.htm</a></li> </ul>	

## 4. CONCLUSION

This initial review of selected countries and organizations is trying to shed light on the current practice of deploying military assets for non-military purposes in natural disasters and other calamities, such as industrial accidents. It tries to gain an initial understanding of the types of use, as well as of the legislative and policy constraints within which such deployment takes place.

As demonstrated in the previous case studies, militaries are already involved in civil defence, responding to immediate human security threats and disasters within their own state borders in accordance with their national laws, and assisting in addressing trans-national catastrophes in collaboration with other countries. The Covid-19 pandemic has only strengthened civil-military relations and further underscored the importance of international coordination in that regard.

From this brief initial snapshot, a trend seems to emerge that even governments traditionally more constrained by law and policies (and history) are starting to use military assets more frequently within their territories. This is the apparent result of traditional civilian resources proving unable to respond effectively to the fast-rising number and magnitude of disasters, thus the need to call for military reinforcements.

If the trend of extreme weather events - as scientists tell us - persists, governments will need to urgently review their policy frameworks for disaster management and explore alternative sources of response capacity. In this context, military assets for one have already been tried and tested. Basic legal and policy foundations exist for their deployment. However, in many instances, the military's role is curtailed to that of a last resort. Other practical issues also need to be clarified, such as who has ultimate control of a response operation and who can and will pay for deploying the military. With this, the following major questions arise:

- Can the use of military assets be more normalized and streamlined into disaster management?
- Can policies be developed or modified to address the current constraints and concerns?

As a next step, a deeper look needs to be taken at the existing policy provisions, established practices and specific lessons learnt. With its continuing research into this, related expert interviews and public discussions, FOGGS hopes to encourage a review and modernization of national and international disaster management systems for the use of military assets to address natural and human-made disasters not related to armed conflict. Importantly, international organizations with a mandate to assist and with access to military assets are likely to play an increasingly pivotal role in this effort. Thus, considering a deepening of international cooperation frameworks for the use of military assets to respond to the challenges ahead is now becoming urgent.





Military personnel and equipment can play and have already been playing an important role in responding to natural or human-made disasters ranging from pandemics, like the current COVID-19 one, to floods, forest fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, industrial accidents and oil spills. The M4CE Project aims to highlight this role for policy makers and the public and contribute to further improving it on the basis of best practices that need to be collected and shared broadly. See project presentation in Katoikos.world editorial

The project encompasses three main strands:

- (a) Desktop research and background paper preparation,
- (b) interviews with key stakeholders, and
- (c) an online discussion event to take place in November 2021.

<https://www.foggs.org/the-m4ce-project/>



Established in Brussels in 2013, the Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability (FOGGS) is a global think-and-do tank, acting simultaneously as a research and ideas-generation centre, discussion forum and advocacy mechanism. Located at the heart of Europe, in Brussels, Belgium, FOGGS is a non-profit public benefit foundation, which aims to have a catalytic role in addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity and the planet.

Our mission is:

- To develop and promote a Grand Narrative of hope, for a people-centred, planet-friendly, inclusive and sustainable globalisation in a digital world.
- To help address major global challenges through a reformed global governance system, developing engaged, responsible and informed global citizens.
- To ensure that the rapid and transformative technological and digital advances contribute to a more just and equitable world, resulting in a better life for all people.

At FOGGS we are committed to changing the narrative of globalisation towards building hope and delivering well-being for all people, resilience for our societies and sustainability for our world. To succeed in our efforts, we need your support.

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