European Commission

The **Union**
Civil Protection Mechanism

A successful instrument of EU solidarity

Julia Stewart-David

Acting Director for Disaster Prevention and Preparedness

16 September 2022 - EPSA Workshop

DG ECHO

Topics Index

1. What is the UCPM?

2. The UCPM **legal basis**

3. **Three case studies**: **forest fires**, **Covid-19 pandemic**, **war in Ukraine**

4. Future **outlook**

European Commission
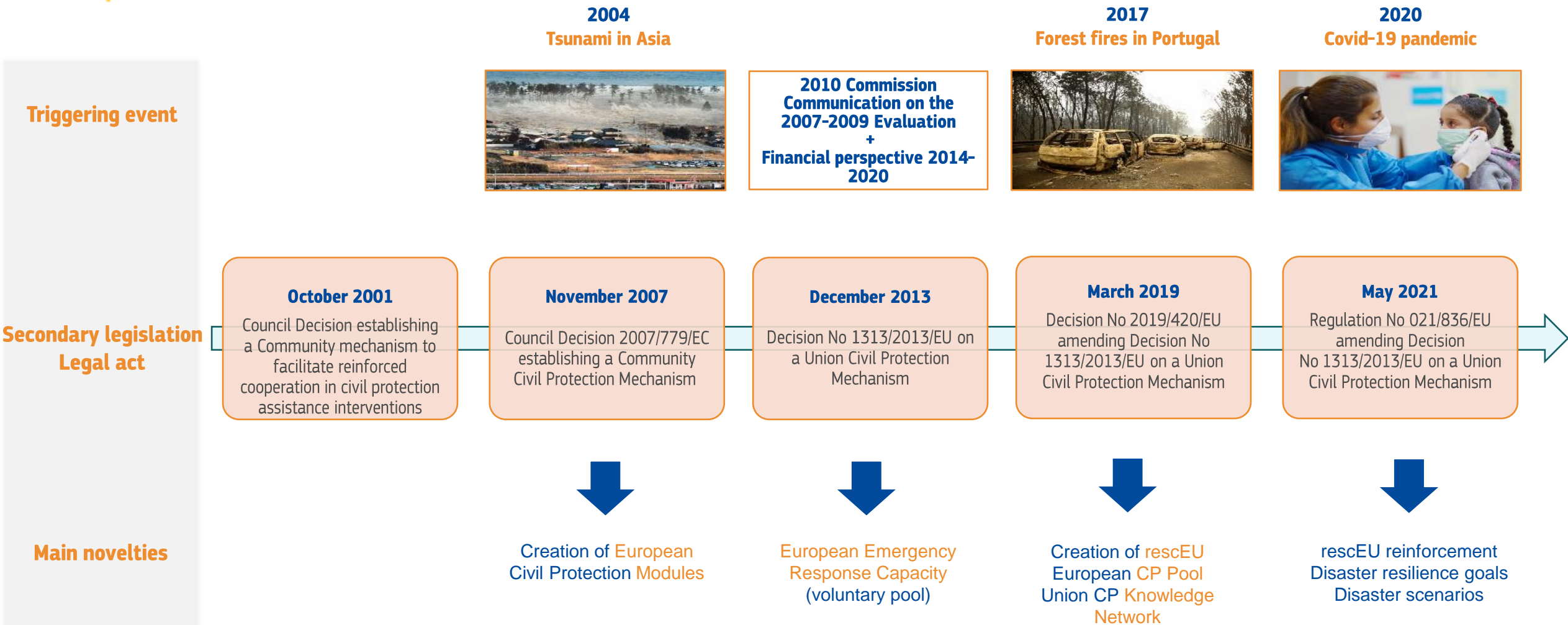
What is the **UCPM**?

The UCPM, established in 2001, aims to **strengthen cooperation**

in the area of **civil protection**

within **the EU + 7 participating States**

to **improve prevention, preparedness, and response** to natural and man-made disasters.

European Commission

The UCPM legal base evolution

2004
Tsunami in Asia

2017
Forest fires in Portugal

2020
Covid-19 pandemic

Triggering event

2010 Commission Communication on the 2007-2009 Evaluation + Financial perspective 2014-2020

Secondary legislation
Legal act

October 2001

Council Decision establishing a Community mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions

November 2007

Council Decision 2007/779/EC establishing a Community Civil Protection Mechanism

December 2013

Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism

March 2019

Decision No 2019/420/EU amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism

May 2021

Regulation No 021/836/EU amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism

Main novelties

Creation of European Civil Protection Modules

European Emergency Response Capacity (voluntary pool)

Creation of rescEU European CP Pool Union CP Knowledge Network

rescEU reinforcement Disaster resilience goals Disaster scenarios

European Commission

UCPM response

3 case studies

The issues...

- **Large-scale:** all Member States impacted simultaneously

- **Cross-sectoral impact:** from health sector to internal market

- **Market competition** for procurement of needed items

Covid-19 pandemic
an unprecedented dimension

...the UCPM response

1. Swiftly established the **first EU reserve of medical countermeasures & PPE**
2. Facilitated and funded **+100,000 citizens' repatriations**
3. Facilitated the exchange of **medical teams & equipment** between Member States
4. Offered **+46 million** doses of **vaccines**

However, despite quick operational response, the UCPM response system, in the first weeks and months of the crisis, was:

- **not fast** enough
- **not flexible** enough

'2021 reform'

The issues...

- **Forest fires** trend has been **increasing** at an **alarming rate** in Europe in the past years. Forest fire seasons:

  - **start earlier**

  - **last longer**

  - **hit new Member States**

- **Climate change** is an **accelerator** → fire danger to increase in future

- **Market rigidity**: scarce availability of assets, long time for procurement

Forest fires
An alarming trend

...the UCPM response

This year season broke all (**negative**) **records**!

+250% over the average yearly burnt area (since 2006), 3 times the size of Luxembourg!

The UCPM has been activated 10 times, often simultaneously.

31 firefighting planes, 8 helicopters, 6 ground modules deployed (since June).

However, some requests were only partially answered, or not at all.

Europe reached its limit in relevant firefighting capacity.

European Commission

The challenges...

- **Large-scale,**

- **long-lasting,**

- **Complex** emergency

- Involving **multiple sectors** – some beyond the 'traditional' civil protection competence (i.e. agricultural, energy, cultural heritage) and **several, different actors** at internat., EU, and national level

- First ever **private sector contribution** under the UCPM

- Third countries' interest

The response to Ukraine and neighbouring affected countries
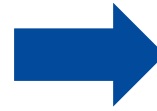The largest UCPM operation ever

...the UCPM response

- **Largest UCPM response operation**

- **93 requests for assistance** since February 2022

- **+ 66,000 tonnes** of **in-kind assistance** (Member States + rescEU)

- **All 27 Member + 3 Participating States** provided assistance

- **Over 1100 medical evacuations** to 19 countries

- Assistance provided also to Moldova, Slovakia, Poland, Czech Republic

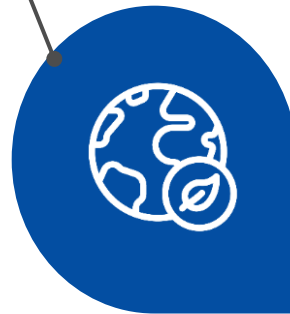- First activation of the **European Humanitarian Response Capacity**

European Commission

Future outlook for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

Adressing a **changing and rapidly evolving European risk landscape** → In a stronger, **strengthened European crisis management system**
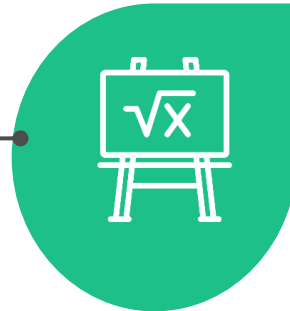
Disaster Resilience Goals

ERCC 2.0

CP Knowledge Network

Disasters scenario building

European Commission

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (europa.eu)

EU Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid EU (@eu_echo) / Twitter

EU Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid | Facebook

Thank you for your attention!

Questions? Suggestions?   ECHO-B1@ec.europa.eu

European Commission