



# IT 4 Sec Reports

***LATVIA:  
Capabilities, Organisations, Policies, and  
Legislation in crisis management  
and disaster response***

**Philip Spassov  
Vesselin Petkov**

***ЛАТВИЯ:  
Способности, организация, политики и  
законодательство за управление на  
кризи и реагиране при бедствия***

**Филип Спасов  
Веселин Петков**

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## ***LATVIA: Capabilities, Organisations, Policies, and Legislation in crisis management and disaster response***

**Philip Spassov and Vesselin Petkov**

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**IT4SecReports 125 „LATVIA: Capabilities, Organisations, Policies, and Legislation in crisis management and disaster response“** This report offers an analysis of the crisis management system of Latvia. Like in the other two Baltic states, the Latvian CM system is centralised, i.e. it represents a strict top-down structure controlled by the central national civil protection authority. The report further describes the responsibilities of the various actors involved, with a key role for the State Fire and Rescue Service, and looks into the fact that the civil protection framework of Latvia foresees the involvement of military forces in support of civil authorities during peacetime emergencies. It concludes with a description of niche capabilities that might be pursued by Latvia.

**Keywords:** disaster preparedness, disaster response, civil protection, Latvia, centralisation, Ministry of Interior, State Fire and Rescue Service

**IT4Sec Reports 125 „ЛАТВИЯ: Способности, организация, политики и законодательство за управление на кризи и реагиране при бедствия“** Докладът предлага анализ на системата за управление при кризи на Латвия. Както и в другите две балтийски държави, системата е централизирана, т.е. представлява стройна йерархична структура, контролирана от централен орган. Докладът описва отговорностите на различните актьори, като отделя специално внимание на ролята на Националната противопожарна служба и на предвидената възможност за включване на въоръжените сили за справяне с последиците от извънредни ситуации. Докладът завършва с анализ на потенциални области на специализация.

**Ключови думи:** подготовка, отговор при бедствия, гражданска защита, Латвия, централизация, Министерство на вътрешните работи, Национална противопожарна и спасителна служба

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## Overview

Latvia is a Parliamentary republic where the President is the Head of State. The President is elected by the Parliament (Saeima). The Government, or the Cabinet of Ministers, is appointed by the President, approved by the Parliament and led by the Prime Minister. There is no regional government level as territorially Latvia is divided into 109 rural municipalities and 9 cities under state jurisdiction. These two main types of municipalities are led by municipal council.

The National Security Concept is a strategic document based on analysis of national threat stating principles for prevention of threats, priorities and measures, which must be taken into account when executing new political planning documents, legislative enactments and action plans in the area of national security. The priorities determined in the Concept provide the basis for the development of the National Security Plan by the Cabinet of Ministers.

As in the other Baltic Region States the organisational structure is centralised, i.e. coordinated and mostly organised by the central national civil protection authority, as is the case with Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania. Additionally, the use of private rescue services is low in the Baltic Countries.<sup>1</sup>

The Prime Minister has the responsibility for the continuous function of the operation of the crisis management system and for the implementation of the related tasks and obligations. The State Fire and Rescue Service, an organisation directly subordinated to the Ministry of Interior, plans, coordinates, leads and controls the civil protection operations. The State Fire and Rescue Service has significant responsibility for crisis management at national level.



**Figure 1. Logo of the Latvian State Fire and Rescue Service.**

At local level the municipal authorities are responsible for establishing and managing the Civil Protection Commission of the municipalities and cities. The Commission coordinates civil protection measures in crisis situations in their respective administrative territories.

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<sup>1</sup> EUROBAL TIC Survey: Civil Protection Research in the Baltic Sea Region, p.13

The civil protection framework of Latvia foresees the involvement of military forces in support of civil authorities during peacetime emergencies. Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the cooperation with the European Union as it implements and coordinates the state external security policy. Cross-border and international collaboration is also organised through the Monitoring and Information Centre operated by the European Commission.

The systems for training in the field of civil protection are quite different in the Baltic region; however they share some basic features. Education in civil protection and rescue has a legal foundation in all of the Baltic Region countries. Basic and advanced education at the national level is standardised through the use of certificates, as well as the development of educational and training curricula. All of the Baltic region states have specialised schools and colleges which carry out education in civil protection and rescue area.<sup>2</sup>

Potential niche capability that could be filled by Latvia and represent interest to EU crisis management structures is the development of single crisis information systems. The Latvian civil security institutions are looking to improve cooperation in the field of crisis management as they are exploiting new ways for cooperation for the creation of a unified national information system.

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<sup>2</sup> EUROBALTIC Survey: Civil Protection Research in the Baltic Sea Region, p.14

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## List of Abbreviations

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EADRCC	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre
EURDEP	European Radiological Data Exchange Platform
EU NAVFOR	EU Naval Force
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
MIC	Monitoring and Information Centre
HELCOM	Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission - Helsinki Commission
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme



# 1 Policy

In Latvia there is no concrete definition of crisis management. In the Civil Protection Law the term “disaster management” is used as the performance of preventive, readiness, response and emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences in cases of disasters and when there are threats of disaster. Disaster management shall be implemented by the State institutions, local governments, businesses and citizens.<sup>3</sup>

The crisis management structure of Latvia consists of definitions such as “civil security” or “civil protection”. The main tasks of the civil security system are to carry out disaster management, to provide aid to victims of disasters and to reduce the possible damage to property and the environment caused by disasters. The main responsibility for the operation of the civil security system and the implementation of the tasks of the system is held by the prime minister of Latvia.<sup>4</sup>

The Latvian crisis management system has to ensure the anticipation of potential crisis factors, timely decision-making and implementation of measures, as well as management and coordination of state and municipal institutions in preventing crisis situations and mitigating their consequences. The creation of a unified crisis management system in Latvia aims at establishing means for better coordination of the actions of the respective governmental institutions involved and for envisaging the potential factors and risks in a crisis situation.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.1 Risk Assessment

In Latvia the most common crises are natural disasters which include extreme temperatures, storms and floods. The two of the most severe and recent extreme temperatures events occurred in January 2006 and February 2012. Other disasters that have been registered include heavy snowfalls, strong winds, chemical and infrastructure accidents, oil spills and other hazardous materials spills and forest fires.<sup>6</sup>

Risks caused by chemical and infrastructure accidents are associated with the transit of hazardous chemicals and oil products through the territory of the country. Long-distance oil and gas pipelines cross the territory of the country and problems could be caused by abandoned chemical substances or waste.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Civil Protection Law, Section 1 (3)

<sup>4</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.7

<sup>5</sup> National Security Concept 2002, p.10

<sup>6</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.7

<sup>7</sup> National Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia, 2005\_nd\_en p.7

The risk analysis mechanism is based on provisions in the Civil Protection Law where the tasks of the ministries are specified. These tasks include conducting risk assessment of possible threats to the civil security sector, submission of proposals to the Ministry of Interior at the beginning of each year in order to update the national civil protection plan, and preparing notice regarding the measures and operations carried out in civil protection during the previous year. Additionally, the ministries must plan the actions for the provision of the operation of the sector in cases of disaster.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, the National Security Law envisages preparation of risk analysis by the Information Analysis Service, on the basis of information provided by national security institutions. The analysis is examined by the national security institutions council and based on proposal by the Prime Minister is then examined by the National Security Council and the Cabinet.<sup>9</sup>

The National Civil Protection Plan provides definitions for possible types of risk and provides detailed description of potential areas of risk of storms, earthquakes, flooding, forest fires, leakage of dangerous substances, as well as points out hazardous objects within and outside the state that may endanger the national security. The Plan also assesses the threat of radiation accidents, transport emergencies, damage to gas pipelines, water supplies and electrical facilities, dangerous infectious diseases, etc.<sup>10</sup>

There are numerous government regulations defining the development of risk assessments in the specific civil protection areas. For instance, Regulation No. 1354 dated November 2009 prescribes the development of preliminary flood risk assessment, the flood hazard maps, flood risk maps and flood risk management, as well as the provision of additional information in updating documents;<sup>11</sup> Regulation No.532 from 2005 defines the regulations regarding the procedures for industrial accident risk assessment and the risk reduction measures; and so forth.

## 1.2 Policy and Governance

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The Latvian civil protection system could be best described as a mixed model, where single-level coordination is executed by the Prime Minister's Office, while multi-level preparedness and response functions related to hazards of man-made and natural origin fall in the domain of multiple stakeholders. In other words there is no single institution or authority that has the overall responsibility for the operational and strategic levels.<sup>12</sup> The crisis management responsibilities are distributed among the ministries and state agencies depending on the type of crisis or disaster that has occurred and the respective fields of expertise.

For example, in case of a forest fire the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Agriculture will be leading authorities. In emergency cases involving oil or chemical substances spills the involved

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<sup>8</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 8

<sup>9</sup> National Security Law, section 26

<sup>10</sup> National Civil Protection Plan, Chapter II

<sup>11</sup> Regulation 1354, issued in accordance with the Water Management Act, 24 Nov. 2009

<sup>12</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.8

authorities would be Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Environment. The official division of competence of institutions/persons is based on the structure of state, rules of parliamentary democracy and the principles of division of state powers as defined by the Constitution of Latvia.<sup>13</sup>

The Prime Minister has the responsibility for the continuous function of the operation of the crisis management system and for the implementation of the related tasks and obligations. The State Fire and Rescue Service, an organisation directly subordinated to the Ministry of Interior, plans, coordinates, leads and controls the civil protection operations. The State Fire and Rescue Service has significant responsibilities for crisis management at national level.<sup>14</sup>

The Latvian national security is based on the total defence principle, meaning that ensuring the defence of the state is not only a military task but also a national one. The total defence system provides joint use of civil and military personnel, as well as material technical resources. The implementation of the total defence system is based on rendering of mutual support and close co-operation between the military and the civil defence systems.<sup>15</sup> The Crisis Management Council, led by the Prime Minister, is responsible for management of the coordination of operational measures of the State institutions in the event of disasters and for civil-military cooperation.

Civil-military cooperation is based on the active participation of the armed forces by providing support in search and rescue work, in conducting preventive and response activities, as well as undertaking emergency measures for mitigation of the consequences in event of disaster.<sup>16</sup>

At local level the municipal authorities are responsible for establishing and managing the Civil Protection Commission of the municipalities and cities. The Commission coordinates civil protection measures in crisis situations in their respective administrative territories. The civil protection measures are provided for in the National Civil Protection Plan, the Local Government Civil Protection Plans and the Civil Protection Plan of Institutions.<sup>17</sup>

### 1.2.1 Strategy scope and focus

A thorough analysis of the disasters and crises conducted by Latvian experts suggest that there are several main gaps in the strategic approach of the crisis management activities.

For example, after analysing the technological accident in the city of Talsi in 1997, which resulted in nine victims and twenty one injured, the researchers suggested several main areas for improvement:

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.9

<sup>14</sup> International CEP Handbook 2009, p.139

<sup>15</sup> National Security Concept (2002)

<sup>16</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.9

<sup>17</sup> International CEP Handbook 2009, p.139

the response coordination between the responsible authorities, alongside the control and technical supervision of the involved equipment.

Furthermore, in the case of the Daugava River major flood in 1998 caused by high water levels, as main shortfalls were underlined the inefficient communication between the decision-making authorities, the need of improvement of relevant legislation and the allocation of the available resources. The evaluation conducted following the flood resulted in a proposition for long-term measures which included State control and maintenance of the barrage systems; cleaning of the Daugava riverbed and conducting research regarding the influence of the Daugava cascade.<sup>18</sup>

In general, several gaps that affect the crisis management system and require improvement are revealed. These gaps mainly include uneven/unstable regulation and institutionalization, resource constraints and deterioration of critical infrastructure.<sup>19</sup>

### 1.2.2 Monitoring and analytical support to policy making; R&D

The State Fire and Rescue Service is a comprehensive, all-hazard type of civil security institution that performs scientific research in these fields. The Fire Safety and Civil Protection College provides education for civil security experts for undertaking positions in the State Fire and Rescue Service or other relevant civil security institution in Latvia. The training processes are supported by social media and electronic mass media as part of innovative educational approaches and solutions. The usage of these new appliances is carried out by the state institutions and local level authorities.

Latvia conducts extensive scientific research in the area of civil security and emergency management not only through the Fire Safety and Civil Protection College but also through numerous private sector actors and consultancies which generate applied research in the field of civil protection. Non-profit organizations are involved in public crisis management structures and major exercises and have a growing role in the field of education, training and applied research.<sup>20</sup>

Latvian universities, enterprises, non-governmental organisations and other civil associations are actively participating in EU funded research programmes in the civil protection domain. These projects mainly consist of applied research, exercises and vocational training.<sup>21</sup>

The Latvian government cooperates with the European Union in the field of civil by supporting participation in various exercises that are carried out in this field, both with neighbouring countries and within regional organizations such as HELCOM (Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission - Helsinki Commission) and the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

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<sup>18</sup> *Crisis Management in a Transitional Society: THE LATVIAN EXPERIENCE*, Eric K. Stern and Dan Hansén (editors), p.327

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.347

<sup>20</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.29-30

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.35-36

The State Fire and Rescue Service participates in the development of regulatory enactments regulating fire safety, fire fighting, rescue and civil protection, as well as in the preparation of opinions regarding the drafts of regulatory enactments developed by other authorities.

The Ministry of Interior has underlined the need for conducting studies of possible threats of storms, natural hazards and to increase applied research as key for hazard prevention and mitigation, as well as the need of improving the work in hazard identification and forecasting within the Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Agency.<sup>22</sup>

### 1.2.3 Policy for Prevention

Latvia's authorities have distinguished the importance of improving the overall crisis management capacity of the country in order the country to efficiently deal with the full spectrum of all potential natural and man-made disasters and crises. Measures have been undertaken for the creation of a set of decision-making and response mechanisms and a national crisis management system. This system is gradually created and it should integrate the existing crisis management capabilities of the public agencies. The system will ensure the ability to coordinate the actions of relevant governmental authorities in order to foresee, prevent crises and mitigate the consequences, as well as to maximise overall efficiency. The principles of total defence will be exploited in the development of the crisis management system.<sup>23</sup>

For achieving adequate level of preparedness, functioning and development of the crisis management system it is required to regularly conduct exercises and training within the inter-institutional framework. The system should be developed in such way that it is compatible to similar structures as of the Latvia's partners in NATO, the EU and the Baltic States.<sup>24</sup>

The National Civil Protection Plan of Latvia defines the measures and objectives for prevention, readiness and response intended for states of emergency, as well as for the mitigation of consequences in crisis situations. The Plan is drawn by the Ministry of Interior in cooperation with other ministries and is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.<sup>25</sup>

According to the National Civil Protection Plan, the State Fire and Rescue Service in cooperation with local governments develops emergency plans for the provision of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in emergency measures, taking into account the potential types of disasters, the scale and high-risk subjects in the administrative area.<sup>26</sup>

The functions of the State Fire and Rescue Service include implementing state policy in the field of fire safety, fire-fighting, civil protection and operation of the single emergency phone number 112. Additionally, the organisation has to perform the fire-fighting and rescue works, coordinate fire-

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p.19-21

<sup>23</sup> National Security Concept 2002

<sup>24</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.19-21

<sup>25</sup> National Security Law, Section 36

<sup>26</sup> National Civil Protection Plan, Part III

fighting and rescue services and volunteer fire-fighter organisations established by local institutions, organisations or companies.

The tasks of the State Fire and Rescue Service for the performing these functions include identifying the state of fire safety and potential hazards, and provide the state institutions and local governments with recommendations regarding improvements. Further, the institution organises and performs prevention measures in the field of state fire safety and civil protection and participates in the evaluation of measures taken for assessment and reduction of the risk of industrial accidents.<sup>27</sup>

Threats to cyber environment in Latvia exist, although the level is considered as average and has not directly influenced the Latvian national security, it is anticipated that electronic attack will occur and have increasing impact in the future. As part of the national security policies, ensuring the safety of information technologies as well as enhancing existing mechanisms and reducing risks caused in the area of information technologies is foreseen in the National Security Concept.

The Crisis Management Council coordinates the operational management of suppression in a crisis situation, as well as the development of plans for prevention.

As priorities of Latvia for prevention of threats in the electronic information environment two essential points are highlighted. First, it is necessary to enhance legal regulation, thus establishing framework of IT critical infrastructure protection, forming and effective institutions for prevention of IT incidents. Second priority is the enhancement of inter-institutional and international collaboration.<sup>28</sup> It is necessary to continue cooperation of responsible public authorities both at the strategic and operational level, i.e. in prevention of electronic attacks and elimination of their consequences.<sup>29</sup>

#### 1.2.4 Policy for Preparedness

The National Security Law defines that the national security system emergency preparedness level has to be determined depending on the type of danger, the intensity and the nature, as well as on the size of the endangered territory by the threat. A national security system emergency preparedness shall be determined for a time period, which is necessary in order to prevent the possible danger to the State or to overcome the danger to the State and to perform the emergency measures to eliminate the consequences thereof.<sup>30</sup>

The National Civil Protection Law describes the status of the system readiness control. The State institutions and local governments control the development of the civil protection plans of the relevant subordinated institutions, as well as the fulfilment of the measures provided in the plans.

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<sup>27</sup> [http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about\\_vugd/about\\_vugd](http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about_vugd/about_vugd), last accessed 16.10.2014

<sup>28</sup> National Security Concept 2011, p.12

<sup>29</sup> National Security Concept 2011, p.12

<sup>30</sup> National Security Law, Section 22

The State institutions and local governments shall organise civil protection instruction for ensuring the system readiness as the types of civil protection instructions and organisational procedures will be determined by the Cabinet.<sup>31</sup> The Crisis Management Council prepares for submission to the Cabinet proposals regarding the specification of national security system emergency preparedness.

Educational activities are important part in ensuring preparedness and are mainly organized by the Ministry of Interior and the Fire Safety and Rescue Service. The education and training courses involve key civil security actors such as heads of state institutions, local governments and commercial companies. The courses also aim at involving citizens as volunteers and they include exercises and simulations of possible crisis incidents. In addition to these activities, the state-accredited specialised institutions of higher education provide professional training in this field. This includes mandatory courses in civil security to students and organizations involved in crisis management structures.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, the Radiation Safety Centre of State Environmental Service is the national regulatory authority in the field of radiation and nuclear safety. The Centre together with representatives from other institutions and professional associations deals with certification of radiation and nuclear safety officers.<sup>33</sup> In a 2011 report by the Environmental Board, Radiation Safety Department evaluated the Latvian emergency preparedness and response arrangements in the radiation safety domain. In the report it was noticed that despite that there is limited radiation risk in the country the implementation of preparedness and response arrangements was needed.

The main recommendations provided by experts include the performing of exercises, incorporated verification of preparedness and response arrangements for radiological emergencies; and that the level of training and availability of necessary equipment at State Fire and Rescue Service, State Police, State Emergency Medical Service should ensure the sufficient protection of the personnel intervening during such type of emergency.<sup>34</sup>

The National Armed Forces Law states that State Border Guard and Bank of Latvia Security Department shall perform duties under command of the National Armed Forces to mitigate threats to national security. To ensure readiness of the state institutions in time of crisis, the National Armed Forces, the Bank of Latvia Security Department and the State Border Guard coordinate mechanisms for cooperation in crisis situations and ensure interoperability regarding armament, equipment and communications and training.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 23

<sup>32</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.29-30

<sup>33</sup> Latvia CNS report 2012, p.5

<sup>34</sup> Latvia CNS report 2012, p.6

<sup>35</sup> State Defence Concept, Executive Summary, p.11

### 1.2.5 Policy for Response

Depending on the type of disaster the responsibility for managing the emergency measures for the response and elimination of the consequences is held by the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service or the State institution indicated in the National Civil Protection Plan or the local government civil protection plan. The State Fire and Rescue Service performs and manages fire-fighting and rescue operations and activities, responds, performs and manages rescue operations in road accidents and fires, as well as performs rescue works in water accidents.

In cooperation with other authorities the organisation performs measures for urgent emergency response and elimination of consequences of emergency, it receives and processes signals of the single emergency number 112 and provides assistance to individuals in the event of fire or emergency.<sup>36</sup>

The Latvian National Security Concept underlines the readiness of competent agencies for immediate response to crisis situations and disasters as an essential task and priority. The Information Analysis Service, an organisation supervised by the Cabinet of Ministers, has to develop and apply most modern methods and technologies for analytical work. The Concept also foresees the creation of unitary Crisis Control Centre in order to establish compatible communication channels between institutions involved in the crisis management.<sup>37</sup>

The National Armed Forces participate in preventive and response actions, in the performance of emergency measures for the elimination of consequences, and provide support in search and rescue activities. Other state institutions, including local governments and merchants, must cooperate with the Armed Forces in the management of disasters in accordance with the civil protection plans and agreements.<sup>38</sup>

To improve readiness for crisis and disaster control, Latvia develops crisis control and civil defence elements within the scope of the unitary national security system. This requires making conceptual assessment of legal framework in respect of legal regimes of crisis situations, attraction of additional resources to the civil defence system in such events, as well as of principles for establishing of the national material reserve system. The readiness of responsible authorities for immediate response to crisis situations and disasters must be developed with emphasis on preventive activities, crisis forecasting and elimination scenarios. To enhance the readiness in crisis situations and disaster management effective cooperation and coordination between competent institutions and services is underlined as national security priority.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> [http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about\\_vugd/about\\_vugd](http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about_vugd/about_vugd), last accessed 16.10.2014

<sup>37</sup> National Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia (2005), p.8

<sup>38</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 12

<sup>39</sup> National Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia (2005), p.7



### 1.2.6 Policy for Relief and Recovery

As the fundamental strategic principle of the national defence is to minimise the potential for threats to national security,<sup>40</sup> the National Civil Protection Plan includes measures for the implementation of the State civil protection system as well as measures for the liquidation of the consequences of emergency situations. The State Fire and Rescue Service manages the response and emergency measures for recovery and elimination of the consequences.

In the case of danger to the State, the Cabinet is entitled to authorise the involvement of the National Armed Forces in the maintenance of public order and liquidation of the consequences in a crisis situation.<sup>41</sup>

## 1.3 Financing

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### 1.3.1 Investing in preparedness

According to the Civil Protection Law, national institutions shall finance the fulfilment of the civil protection tasks from the allocated State budget resources, while the local governments and merchants from their own resources.<sup>42</sup>

The State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia and the Estonian Rescue Board have signed an agreement seeking to improve first responders' efficiency and effectiveness regarding response time to an emergency and additionally, for the development of capability to work in rough environment such as areas with a difficult or limited access and remote areas with a shortage of water resources. The main risks in such territories in the border area are wildfires. The project is part of the Estonian – Latvian Programme, which is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund. The budget for this project is over 3 million euros.<sup>43</sup>

State Fire and Rescue Service resources include 92 fire station buildings, of which approximately 33% were built before 1940, 65% - in the period from 1940 to 1992, 2% - built or renovated in the period after 1990. Fire fighting depot buildings and facilities are physically and morally outdated and are in a very poor state and do not comply with European or National requirements set out by the relevant legislation.<sup>44</sup> This example reveals the need for investing and improving current rescue facilities in order Latvia to establish better crisis management capabilities.

In addition, Latvian government has signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Swiss Federal Council regarding financial support covering various areas such as security, stability and support for

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<sup>40</sup> State Defence Concept, Executive Summary, p.11

<sup>41</sup> National Security Law, section 23 (5)

<sup>42</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 18

<sup>43</sup> Estonia - Latvia Programme available at: <http://www.estlat.eu/supported-projects/?project=65>, last accessed 10.10.2014

<sup>44</sup> Strategy of the Ministry of Interior 2014 – 2016 (unofficial translation), p.18-20

reforms, environment and infrastructure, promotion of the private sector, human and social development and support to non-governmental organisations.

One of the most important projects implemented and financed in accordance with the agreement is the “Support for fire safety measures in local government general education institutions”. This project aims at improving children safety in case of fire incidents in general education institutions in peripheral and disadvantaged regions of Latvia. The project involves partners from 61 local governments in peripheral and disadvantaged regions of Latvia.<sup>45</sup>

The United States European Command in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Latvia have invested in projects for the complete refurbishment of 8 fire brigade stations across Latvia worth over 2.3 million US dollars. The project improves existing station building’s structure, therefore improving the work conditions of fire brigades. In Strenči, Gulbene, Aizkraukle and Ventspils, additional garage docks have been built for storing newly acquired, modern rescue equipment.

Furthermore, within this cooperation with the U.S. European Command Several new projects have been undertaken, such as the planning to locate an emergency medical service dispatcher centre in the currently abandoned Kuldīga city hospital building with estimated costs of 880.000 USD.<sup>46</sup>

### 1.3.2 Investing in consequence management

Following an analysis by the department of Strategy at the Ministry of Interior, several suggestions for improving the Latvian civil security system as a result of recent crisis experiences has been made. These suggestions involve allocating funding for improving the coordination between state institutions and local municipalities, as well as reserve funding that would be available in the case of storms, flooding and similar hazards. The allocation of these resources is intended for institutions directly responsible for emergency situations.<sup>47</sup>

Moreover, the Long-Term Stabilisation Fund was created in 2008 and aims at ensuring the availability of resources in emergency situations.<sup>48</sup>

During the past decade the following incidents can be summarized: Chemical accident in Riga (2009), Oil spill in the Daugava River (2007), Extreme temperatures causing 40 deaths (2006), Strong storm (Erwin), causing damage at estimated USD 325 m in 2005, Floods in the Daugava River caused by melting snow (2003), Extreme temperature in Riga with 15 casualties (2003), Extreme temperature in

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<sup>45</sup> Annual Report on the Implementation of the Swiss–Latvian Cooperation Programme in Latvia April 2013 – March 2014

<sup>46</sup> U.S. funds fire station depot reconstruction in Latvian regions, <http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/news/6014-us-funds-fire-station-depot-reconstruction-in-latvian-regions>, last accessed 15.10.2014

<sup>47</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.21

<sup>48</sup> *Budgeting in Latvia*, OECD Journal on Budgeting, Volume 2009/3

the Riga region, 21 casualties 2001), Epidemic diphtheria in Riga, where 102 persons affected (2000), and Storm (Anatol), six casualties and estimated damages of USD 0.5 m (1999).<sup>49</sup>

These significant emergencies and crises that have struck Latvia have changed or played role for improving the Latvian civil security system. For instance, following the accident in Talsi (1997) the government assigned a commission with the task of coordinating the subsequent funding for victims and their families.<sup>50</sup>

All the measures taken by the authorities have signified the need for allocating additional funding for the affected areas and population. The costs for recovery in a crisis situation are not formally specified and usually include private responsibilities for disaster management.

## 1.4 Policy review, Evaluation & Organisational Learning

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### 1.4.1 Post-Disaster Assessment

The National Civil Protection Plan specifies that the crisis system performance evaluation is carried out for each specific disaster as well as for variety of threats to disasters (national and regional). The evaluation is carried out by the responsible Ministry or institution. The assessment measures include criteria such as timeframe, efficiency and safety for evaluating the performance of the responsible institution. The Plan also sets out the specific timelines for measuring the actual time spent to respond to a crisis event. Further, the measures that have been taken are evaluated as “sufficient” or “insufficient”, depending on the involvement of available resources, national reserve resources of the National Armed Forces, or request for international assistance has been made. The assessment report is submitted to the Ministry of Interior.<sup>51</sup>

### 1.4.2 Centralised (national) Lessons Learned system

The National Security Law specifies the functions of the Information Analysis Service, which is state administration institution supervised by the Cabinet of Ministers. The agency has to assess and analyse the information received from the national security institutions and provide it to the members of the National Security Council. Further, the organisation develops proposals and recommendations for the National Security Committee, the President and the Prime Minister regarding subsequent activities. It is important to mention that the Information Analysis Service also analyses and forecasts the potential danger to the State.

According to the Latvian legislation the Information Analysis Service has to be approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. The National Security Council may request from the Information Analysis

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<sup>49</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.7

<sup>50</sup> *Crisis Management in a Transitional Society: THE LATVIAN EXPERIENCE*, Eric K. Stern and Dan Hansén (editors), p.145

<sup>51</sup> National Civil Protection Plan, Chapter IV

Service and State security institutions all the existing information at their disposal, when it concerns national security interests.<sup>52</sup>

The analysis of threats to the State has to be prepared by the Information Analysis Service, on the basis of information provided by State security institutions. This analysis represents a comprehensive assessment as a result of which the existing and potential specific danger or risk factors to the national security are identified.<sup>53</sup>

The head of the Information Analysis Service may be invited to participate in the meetings of the National Security Council but with adviser rights.<sup>54</sup>

#### 1.4.3 International exchange for Lessons Learned

Latvia participates in the “Baltic every day accident, disaster prevention and resilience” project through Jelgava City Municipality. The project aims at enhancing learning and sharing of lessons learned and will strive to achieve a common understanding of evaluation methods, sharing experiences and knowledge and best practices in the Baltic Sea Region.

The project will make use of the UNEP Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level procedures, together with the safe community and safety performance indicators concepts and existing methodology for assessing the vulnerability of local communities to disasters. It will contribute to implementing the Priority Area Secure of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Action Plan and the EU Host Nation Support.<sup>55</sup>

#### 1.4.4 Regular policy reviews

The National Civil Protection Plan specifies that the crisis system performance evaluation is carried out for each specific disaster as well as for variety of threats to disasters (national and regional). The evaluation is carried out by the responsible ministry or institution. The assessment report is submitted to the Ministry of Interior.<sup>56</sup> The Department of Strategy at the Ministry conducts analyses regarding various topics including crisis management issues.

The Latvian State Fire and Rescue Service implements the state policy with regard to fire fighting, rescue and civil protection, as well as the monitoring of the statutory fire and civil defence requirements.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> National Security Law, section 15

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., section 26

<sup>54</sup> National Security Law, section 26

<sup>55</sup> *Civil protection financial instrument 2013* available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/civil-protection-financial-instrument-2013>, last accessed 14.10.2014

<sup>56</sup> National Civil Protection Plan, Chapter IV

<sup>57</sup> SFRS Sectoral Policy, available at: [http://www.vugd.gov.lv/lat/par\\_vugd/nozares\\_politika](http://www.vugd.gov.lv/lat/par_vugd/nozares_politika), last accessed 14.10.2014

The Latvian National Security Concept emphasises the importance for conducting conceptual assessment of the legal framework with regard to crisis situations, as well as on the attraction of additional resources for the civil protection system in event of threat to the national security.<sup>58</sup>

## 1.5 Resilience

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The term Resilience is not highlighted in policy or legislative documents related to civil protection or crisis management. Within the framework of this country study resilience term has been identified in few research papers related to different topics. However, these topics do not cover civil protection or crisis management. For example, *The concept of the system resilience within a multi-hazard scenario: application to a Latvian case study* emphasizes primarily on infrastructure issues for withstanding severe weather conditions.<sup>59</sup>

## 1.6 Information sharing and data protection

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In Latvia the main legislative act regarding data protection is the Personal Data Protection Law which is in force since 2000 and implements Directive 95/46/EC into the national legislation. This law, along with the latest amendments made, defines that the provisions of the Personal Data Protection Law are applicable to the processing of personal data in the field of criminal law and national security.

In addition, the Latvian Data State Inspectorate was established under Regulation No. 408 dated November 2000. The duties of the Inspectorate include ensuring compliance of personal data processing in the State with the requirements of the Personal Data Protection law; taking decisions and reviewing complaints regarding the protection of personal data; registering personal data processing systems; proposing and carrying out activities aimed at raising the efficiency of personal data protection and submission of reports on compliance of personal data processing systems created by government and local government institutions. Furthermore, the act states that the Latvian Data State Inspectorate together with the Office of the Director General of the State Archives of Latvia may decide on the transfer of personal data processing systems to the State archives for preservation.<sup>60</sup>

According to the Law on the Security of Information Technologies the critical infrastructure of information technologies has to be protected in order to ensure the essential functionality of the State and society. The status of the critical infrastructure of information technologies is approved by the Cabinet and in accordance with the National Security Law.

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<sup>58</sup> National Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia, 2005\_nd\_en p.8

<sup>59</sup> Tatjana Kuznecova, Francesco Romagnoli, Claudio Rochas, *The Concept Of The System Resilience Within A Multi-Hazard*, p.1

SCENARIO: APPLICATION TO A LATVIAN CASE

<sup>60</sup> Latvia - Data Protection, available at: <http://www.privireal.org/content/dp/latvia.php>, last accessed 14.10.2014

The Security Incidents Response Institution is responsible for promoting security of information technologies in Latvia. The operational tasks and rights of the Security Incidents Response Institution are delegated to the University of Latvia's Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science. The tasks of this institution include providing support for the prevention of an information technologies security incident or coordinate the prevention of such; and providing of recommendations regarding the prevention of the current risks of information technologies, drawn up in accordance with the current threats.<sup>61</sup>

Processing of personal data is allowed in order to provide protection from malicious software. The Security Incidents Response Institution is allowed to transfer processed personal data to the institutions or units specified in the Law on the Security of Information Technologies in cases of recognised threat by malicious software to the national security.<sup>62</sup>

The Crisis Communication Action Plan - 2011 to 2013 foresees the creation of educational materials, social campaigns and targeted training programs for different interest groups - schoolchildren, tourists and people with special needs, etc. Further, the creation of a single website is intended in the Plan, where all the information regarding crisis situations and subsequent actions to be taken could be found. The 112 emergency phone number sites will act as a central electronic source of information on various types of crisis situations for the public. Additionally, 112 emergency phone number accounts on social websites will be created, along with the development of guidelines for crisis communication in social media. Recommendations for local regarding suggested actions in case of crises and how to organize thematic information campaigns for actions in various crisis situations will also be developed.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Law On the Security of Information Technologies, section 4

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., section 7

<sup>63</sup> Crisis Communication Action Plan - 2011 to 2013, chapter IV

## 2 Legislation

The overall civil protection legislative framework in Latvia is based on two main acts - the National Security Law enacted in 2000 and the Civil Protection Law, which was adopted in 2006. These laws define the roles and responsibilities for civil protection for local governments and institutions.<sup>64</sup>

The National Security Law defines the national security system and its tasks, the competence of responsible authorities and institutions for the national security system, including crisis management. In addition, the Act provides the principles and procedures of coordination, for implementation and control of their activities.<sup>65</sup>

The National Security Law also defines the provisions for the National Civil Protection Plan, which has to include measures for the implementation of the State civil protection system, as well as for preventive, readiness and response measures that are intended for states of emergency. In addition, the Plan sets out measures for the liquidation of the consequences in emergency situations, and determines the actions of the civil protection system in state of war.

The Civil Protection Law creates a system of civil protection for disaster management, ensuring the legal and organisational grounds for the protection of persons, property and the environment in cases of disasters and when there are threats of disaster.<sup>66</sup>

Apart from these two Laws there are multiple other acts and regulations that address and civil protection and the civil security system.

### 2.1 Crisis (emergency, disaster) management concept

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The National Security Concept is a strategic document based on analysis of national threat stating principles for prevention of threats, priorities and measures, which must be taken into account when executing new political planning documents, legislative enactments and action plans in the area of national security. The document is prepared by the Latvian Cabinet, examined by the National Security Council and approved by the Parliament, at least once on each convening (by 1 October) from its first year of operation.<sup>67</sup>

The Concept sets out that disasters listed in the National Civil Security Plan, such as storms, extreme temperatures, earthquakes, floods, fires, leakage of dangerous substances, industrial accidents,

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<sup>64</sup> International CEP Handbook 2009, p.139

<sup>65</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.15

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p.16

<sup>67</sup> National Security Law, section 26

dangerous infectious diseases, etc., must be resolved within the framework of the civil security system. The priorities determined in the Concept provide the basis for the development of the National Security Plan by the Cabinet of Ministers. The Plan includes specific state threat neutralisation and prevention measures and means.<sup>68</sup>

In order to ensure the forecast of potential crisis, timely decision-making and implementation of measures for management and coordination of state and municipal institutions in preventing crisis situations and mitigating the consequences national crisis management system is being developed and enhanced.<sup>69</sup>

The Strategy of the Ministry of Interior 2014 – 2016 sets out the strategic objectives for the Ministry and its subordinate agencies, including the State Fire and Rescue Service. They include promoting public safety and effective prevention of hazards and developing of closer cooperation national institutions and organizations for crime prevention.<sup>70</sup>

## 2.2 General crisis (emergency, disaster) management law

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The National Security Law determines the national security system and tasks of such, the competence of the persons or institutions responsible for the national security system and the principles and procedures of co-ordination, implementation and control of their activities.

According to it the Crisis Management Council in case of a danger to the State coordinates civil-military co-operation and the operational measures of national administration institutions in suppression of the danger to the State. The By-law of the Crisis Management Council shall be approved by the Cabinet. The Crisis management Council is chaired by the Prime Minister and it is composed by the Ministers for the Interior, for Defence, for Foreign Affairs, for Economics, for Finance, for Justice and for Health. The Council may include the heads of State security institutions as well as other State officials but with advisory rights.

The competence of the Crisis Management Council includes coordination of the operational management for suppression of the emergency; to coordinate the development of plans for the prevention of danger to the State; and to prepare for submission to the Cabinet proposals regarding the specification of national security system emergency preparedness. Additionally, in the case of a danger to the State, the Council coordinates the unified and timely implementation of political decisions in national administration institutions, prepares and submits to the Cabinet proposals regarding the status of critically important infrastructure for the national security, alongside the security measures that need to be performed.

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<sup>68</sup> National Security Concept (2002)

<sup>69</sup> National Security Concept (2002)

<sup>70</sup> Strategy of the Ministry of Interior 2014 – 2016 (unofficial translation), p.20



The Crisis Management Council is supported by Crisis Management Secretariat which guarantees the operation of the Council and ensures the purposeful and continuous provision of cooperation and support of the responsible institutions to the Crisis Management Council.<sup>71</sup>

The National Security Law also defines the provisions for the State Civil Protection Plan, which has to be drawn up by the Ministry of the Interior in co-operation with other ministries and approved by the Cabinet. The State Civil Protection Plan incorporates the measures for the implementation of the State civil protection system, as well as measures for preventive, readiness and response actions intended in states of emergency, as well as the measures for liquidation of consequences of such events.<sup>72</sup>

The Civil Protection Law is the other main legislative document in Latvia which provides the Structure and Organisation of the civil protection system. The purpose of the act is to create a system of civil protection for disaster management, ensuring the legal and organisational grounds for the protection of persons, property and the environment in cases of disasters and when there are threats of disaster.<sup>73</sup>

It defines that the structure of the civil protection system has to be formed by the national institutions, local governments and merchants. The main tasks of the system are to carry out disaster management; to provide aid to victims of disasters; to reduce the possible damage to property and the environment caused by disasters; and in emergency situation caused by military invasion or war to support the National Armed Forces with resources.

The Civil Protection Law also defines the management procedures of the civil protection system. The Prime Minister has the responsibility for the operation of the system and the implementation of the tasks thereof and, within the framework of the system, to manage the measures at national or regional level for the prevention and overcoming the emergency situation.

The State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service shall manage, co-ordinate and control the operation of the system, however depending on the type of disaster the emergency measures for the response and elimination of the consequences may be taken by another competent national institution indicated in the State civil protection plan or the local government civil protection plans.<sup>74</sup>

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## 2.3 Emergency rule

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According to the National Security Law the Cabinet has the responsibility to announce a state of emergency, exceptional state and mobilisation in cases determined by law, as well as to decide upon

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<sup>71</sup> National Security Law, section 23-24

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., section 36

<sup>73</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 2

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., section 1-8

the necessity for support by the armed forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and European Union Member States during a state of emergency or exceptional state. In addition, the Cabinet has the responsibility for strengthening the national defence capacity in peace time.<sup>75</sup>

Depending on the type of danger to the State, the nature and intensity, as well as on the size of the endangered territory, a state of emergency or an exceptional state may be declared in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the law.

State of emergency is declared in cases of natural disasters or accidents, epidemics, epizooties, epiphytes, public disorder, terrorism and armed conflicts, if the safety of society, environment and economic activity is significantly endangered.

An exceptional state has to be declared in the cases in which the state is endangered by an external enemy or within the country internal disturbances have occurred, or if there is a threat that such may arise, in this way endangering the nation. In cases of a state of emergency and exceptional state, mobilisation may be announced in order to carry out tasks related to national security and national defence, as well as to liquidate consequences.<sup>76</sup>

## 2.4 Specific, department/agency-level legal arrangements and regulations on emergency and disaster management

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The Civil Protection Law defines the tasks of the state institutions and ministries in civil protection which include exploring possible threats in the sector and submitting proposals to the Ministry of Interior up to 20 January each year regarding the clarification of the national civil protection plan, as well as notifying regarding the measures and operations carried out in civil protection during the previous year. In addition, ministries need to plan action for the provision of the operation of the sector in cases of disaster, to coordinate the operation of the subordinated authorities in cases of disasters and coordinate and control the formation of the State material reserves in the sector.

Further, the ministries have to ensure the fulfilment of the measures specified in the State civil protection plan in case of a military invasion; to ensure the training of employees of the institution in civil protection matters.

The tasks of the other responsible national institutions performing civil protection consist of providing information regarding the resources at the disposal of the institution for the management of disasters upon request from the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service; ensuring the fulfilment of the measures specified in the National civil protection plan; and ensuring the training of employees of the institutions in civil protection matters.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> National Security Law, section 10

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., section 21- 22

<sup>77</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 8

Additionally, there are multiple other specific legal arrangements and regulations on emergency and disaster management. For example, the Fire Safety and Fire-fighting Law determines the system of fire safety, fire-fighting and rescue services and organisations, tasks and competence of natural persons and legal persons in the field of fire safety and fire-fighting, as well as the structure, functions of the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service, course of service, obligations, rights, legal protection and social guarantees of State specialised civil servants serving in the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service.<sup>78</sup>

According to this legislative act the Cabinet defines the procedures by which institutions, organisations and commercial companies have to establish fire safety, fire-fighting and rescue services; and subsequent functions and rights.<sup>79</sup>

Each civil security institution in Latvia has their specific crisis management proceeding.<sup>80</sup>

## 2.5 Specific to the regional and local authorities legal arrangements and regulations on emergency and disaster management

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At local level the Civil Protection Law describes the tasks and rights of local governments in civil protection. The emphasis is on the role of the chairperson of the local government city or county council, who holds the responsibility for the implementation of the tasks for civil protection in the relevant administrative territory. The main tasks of the local governments include establishing and managing the district civil protection commission; participating in preventive measures in the relevant administrative territory; providing support for to operation and emergency services and if necessary, to evacuate the inhabitants from the territories endangered or affected by a disaster. The civil protection commission of the local government operates pursuant to the regulations developed in accordance with the model regulations approved by the Cabinet.<sup>81</sup>

Further, the tasks of the local governments include providing proposals regarding formation, maintenance and storage of the national material reserves and organising instruction for the members of the local civil protection commission. The rights of the local governments in civil protection are also defined and incorporate receiving of information from the institutions and merchants located in the relevant administrative territory for the performance of civil protection tasks, as well as developing additional tasks of civil protection for merchants present in the relevant administrative territory.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Fire Safety and Fire Fighting Law, section 1

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., section 4-5

<sup>80</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.27

<sup>81</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 9

<sup>82</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 9

## 2.6 Legal regulations on the involvement of volunteers and specialised NGOs

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The Latvian civil security system does not involve non-government relief organisations to a great extent, due to the fact that the sector has not yet developed after the independence of Latvia in 1991. Their role is more visible in the field of preparedness than in responsive matters.

There are volunteer fire-fighting units in some municipalities. The main non-government organisation in Latvia is the Latvian Red Cross with the spectrum of its operations cover the whole territory of Latvia. The Latvian Red Cross Committees are located all around Latvia and cover each district.<sup>83</sup>

Section 19 of the Civil Protection Law specifies the involvement of legal and natural persons in response measures. According to this act legal and natural persons may be involved in response measures and their property may be used in cases of disasters and if human life is endangered. However, they are entitled to receive compensation for expenses and loss caused during response measures. The procedures for compensation and the amount of compensation are determined by the Cabinet. The head of rescue operations shall involve legal and natural persons in response by entering into an agreement in writing.

In the Fire Safety and Fire-fighting Law is stated that local government and volunteer fire-fighting organisations as part of the overall fire-fighting and rescue services teams in Latvia. Volunteer fire-fighter organisations operate in accordance with the Law on Public Organisations and the Associations thereof.<sup>84</sup>

The Civil Protection Law defines the tasks and Rights of Merchants and their tasks in civil protection include informing the fire safety, fire-fighting and rescue services and local governments regarding the disaster that occurred in the territory of the merchant's object; to ensure the training of employees concerning civil protection; and to organise the fulfilment of civil protection measures at the merchant's object.

In addition merchants has to organise and carry out preventive, response measures and measures for the elimination of the consequences in cases of emergency on the territory of the merchant's object, to establish an alarm and notification system in the objects of industrial accident risk and in other explosive, fire hazard and critically important objects. The overall responsibility is held by the head of the commercial company. Merchants have the right to establish units of civil protection for response in case of disaster and for the performance of emergency measures for the mitigation of the consequences.

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<sup>83</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study: Latvia, p.29-30

<sup>84</sup> Fire Fighting Law, section 1

## 2.7 Legal regulations for international engagements of first responders and crisis managers

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According to the Latvian legislation, humanitarian assistance, as well as assistance for the performance of emergency response measures and the elimination of consequences, may be provided to states that have been struck by a disaster. In such scenarios, the State Fire-fighting and Rescue Service and the Centre of Emergency and Disaster Medicine has to establish rapid response unit and medical support unit respectively, for the affected states and thus provide assistance in performing response and emergency measures for the elimination of the consequences.

The Latvian Cabinet determines the procedures for the establishment, maintenance, training and financing of the referred to units, as well as the procedures by which the involvement in the international assistance provision shall be performed. The Latvian Cabinet also sets out the procedures for the receipt and provision of humanitarian assistance, as well as takes a decision regarding the provision of assistance.<sup>85</sup>

With regard to the participation in NATO and EU international operations aiming to prevent crises the participation of the Latvian National Armed Forces allows the improvement of their response capabilities and interoperability.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Civil Protection Law, section 25

<sup>86</sup> National Security Concept 2011, p.4

## 3 Organisation

### 3.1 Organisational chart

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The overall responsibility for crisis management and for the continuous function of the operation of the civil protection system lies with the Prime Minister of Latvia. Civil protection operations are planned, coordinated, and led by the State Fire and Rescue Service - organisation subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior, while the heads of institutions and companies are responsible for civil protection in their own institutions and companies.

The Prime Minister leads the Crisis Management Council which is the main managing body in the emergency events. The Crisis Management Council coordinates the operational measures of the involved national institutions in events of disasters and in cases of civil-military cooperation. The Crisis Management Council Secretariat supports the activities and guarantees the successful functioning of the Council.

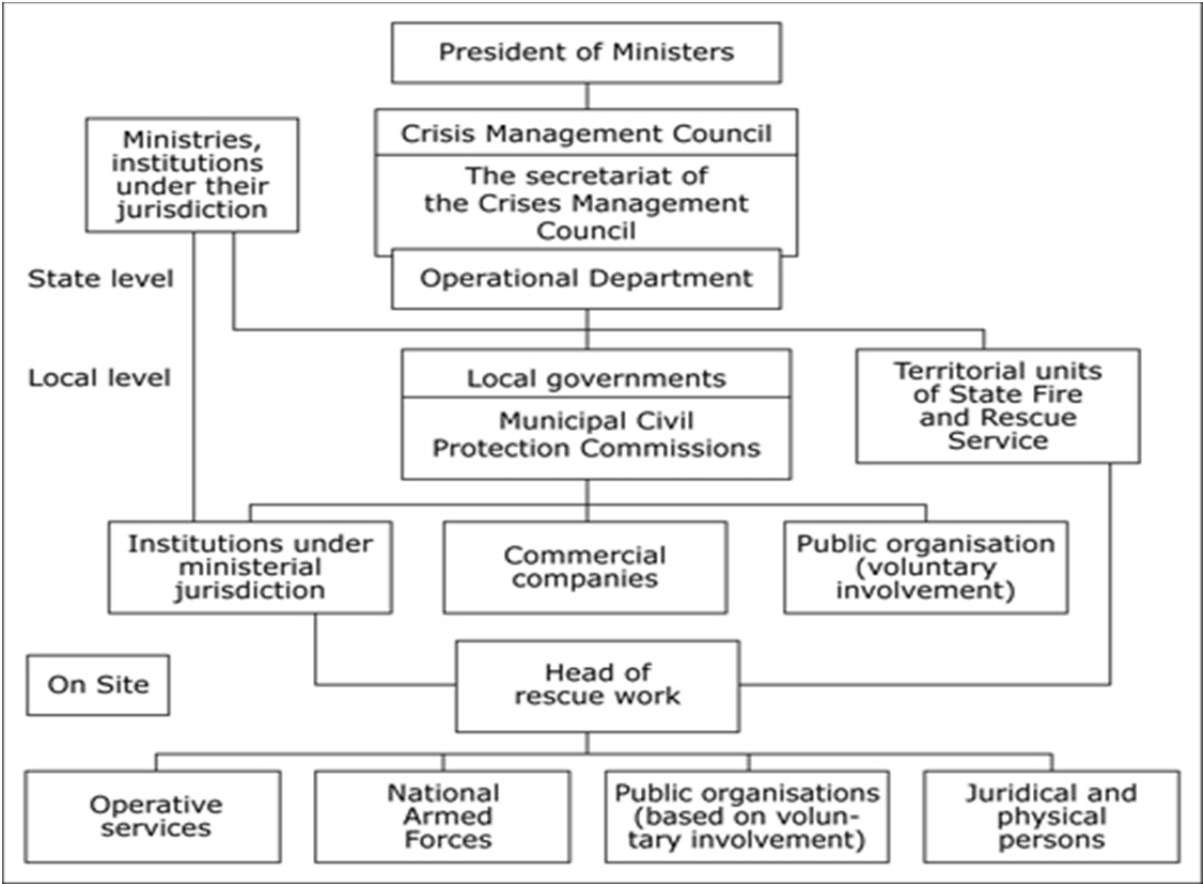
The State Fire and Rescue Service performs and manages fire-fighting and rescue operations and activities, responds, performs and manages rescue operations in road accidents and fires, as well as performs rescue works in water accidents. The functions of the State Fire and Rescue Service include implementing state policy in the field of fire safety, fire-fighting, civil protection and operation of the single emergency phone number 112. The State Fire and Rescue Service in cooperation with local governments develops emergency plans for the provision of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in emergency measures, taking into account the potential types of disasters, the scale and high-risk subjects in the administrative area.<sup>87</sup>

At local level the municipal authorities are responsible for establishing and managing the Civil Protection Commission of the municipalities and cities under state jurisdiction. The Commission coordinates civil protection measures in disaster events in the relevant local administrative territories.

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<sup>87</sup> National Civil Protection Plan, Part III

Figure 1. Structure of the Latvian Civil Protection System (Source: EC ECHO)



The civil protection framework of Latvia foresees the involvement of military forces to civil authorities during peacetime emergencies. The structure of the National Armed Forces consists of the Defence Forces, the Home Guard and the Reserve Forces. Among the duties of the Armed Forces defined in the Armed Forces Law is the participation during peacetime emergency operations. Their main tasks include support civilian services with manpower, vehicles, communication and life-support equipment, participating in rescue work and in maintaining public order, as well as to fulfil other specific tasks that require their capabilities, such as blowing up ice on rivers, clearing mines, decontamination, etc.

The Home Guard is organisation created on territorial principle in order to have a battalion ready within the territory of a district or city municipality. The Home Guard battalions have agreements concerning mutual assistance and cooperation with respective local and municipal fire brigades and police departments.<sup>88</sup> The largest emergency assistance operations carried out so far by the National Armed Forces have been the involvement in the forest fires of 1992 and the spring floods of 1996 and 1998.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88</sup> International CEP Handbook 2009, p.138-139

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p.138-139



Figure 2. Structure of the State Fire and Rescue Service<sup>90</sup>

Volunteer fire fighting units are created in some municipalities however their contribution to crisis management activities is somewhat limited.<sup>91</sup>

The main NGO in the crisis management domain in Latvia is the Latvian Red Cross. It represents a non-profit volunteer-based humanitarian organisation with its operations cover the whole territory of Latvia. The Latvian Red Cross Committees are located in each district having their branches in cities, municipalities and organisations all around Latvia.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Source: State Fire and Rescue Service website, available at <http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/structure>

<sup>91</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.29-30

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p.30



One of the main activities of The Latvian Red Cross is the participation in disaster relief operations. Therefore the organisation has to maintain preparedness in order to participate in the training of society for action during emergencies, as well as to provide support to government bodies responsible for emergency assistance to victims involving local resources and international assistance.

The tasks of the Latvian Red Cross for reducing the impact of emergencies on the affected population include:

- operating within the framework of the Civil Protection Law and cooperating with local governments;
- participation in the districts' planning process for preparedness for emergencies in cooperation with the relevant national bodies;
- engaging disaster preparedness units in relief operations when necessary;
- storing resources to be used in emergency situations and making regular inventory of these resources;
- facilitating the cooperation of the Baltic region Red Cross disaster preparedness units and other actors to be prepared for emergency situations.

Furthermore, the organisation provides educational activities to the society on related actions in emergency situations, for reducing vulnerability, as well as for raising the communities' disaster preparedness by developing and implementing community educational activities. The organisation intends to implement a program for psychological support in crisis situations that will enhance the awareness of the population.<sup>93</sup>

## 3.2 Organisational cooperation

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Operational crisis management responsibility normally rests with the counties and municipalities which, after declaring a state of emergency, form task forces led by the highest local political actor. The overall coordinating responsibility for civil security in Latvia lies with the Ministry of Interior. It provides assistance at local level along with other responsible for crisis management agencies.<sup>94</sup>

To be more specific, operational cooperation in crisis management operations in Latvia could be divided into two main levels of responsibility – the national level and the institutional level (where ministries and their subordinate agencies are the main operational actors).

The national level is the highest level in the Latvian civil security system and is coordinated by the Crisis Management Council. The council has a coordination function as it coordinates operational crisis management between institutions and civil-military cooperation in events of disaster and other threats to the state. The Crisis Management Council is convened only in cases of major emergency, if

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<sup>93</sup> Latvian Red Cross Strategy 2010 – 2012, p.2-3

<sup>94</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.20

the crisis is multi-sectoral and requires coordination.<sup>95</sup> The Council is chaired by the Prime Minister and is composed of other Ministers, as it coordinates the implementation of political decisions in emergency situations concerning the national security. In addition it also coordinates the development of preventive plans.<sup>96</sup>

The main operational crisis management is the second level of institutional responsibilities which is covered by the Ministries and agencies. The most important tasks of the ministries within the civil security system include the forecasting and prevention of possible threats in their sector, coordination and control of the operational response, to implement the State Civil Protection Plan and to maintain and further enhance the capacities for response and mitigation. Ministries also have to prepare action plans and coordinate the role of their subordinated bodies in emergency scenarios.

As one of subordinated organisations to the Ministry of Interior, the State Fire and Rescue Service is the main operational manager and coordinator for civil emergencies such as floods, fires, accidents, etc. Each ministry has several subordinated agencies directly or indirectly engaged in civil security issues.<sup>97</sup>

Further, the Ministry of Interior coordinates several other agencies that include the State Emergency Medical Service, as the provider of health services in case of general public health emergencies; the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, as the main responsible body in case of threats caused by diseases; the Security Police, as the main actor in events such as terrorist attacks; and the Coast Guard Service, which is the main actor in case of marine pollution and for search and rescue works at the sea.<sup>98</sup>

Cross-border and international collaboration is also organised through the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC), which is operated by the European Commission within the Framework of Community Mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions and the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC/NATO).

An example for the procedures by which Latvia contributes to the international humanitarian and disaster relief operations could be the participation of the State Fire and Rescue Service and the Centre of Emergency and Disaster Medicine in such operations. These two organisations establish rapid response unit and medical support unit, respectively, for states affected by a disaster. Their aim is focused at responding to and providing emergency measures in the elimination of the consequences. The Latvian cabinet determines the procedures for establishing, maintaining, training and financing the relevant units, as well as the procedures the relevant international assistance has to be provided.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p.22

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p.22

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p.23

<sup>98</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.23

<sup>99</sup> Vademecum - Latvia

Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the cooperation with the European Union as it implements and coordinates the state external security policy. The Ministry also has the leading role in organizing humanitarian assistance and in developing the legal framework with regard to the civil security system.<sup>100</sup>

Latvia is actively involved in cross-border exercises in the Baltic Sea Region by either hosting or participating. The most recent international exercises include 2006 EU Joint Assistance exercise in Ukraine; the 2008 consequence management field exercise Uusimaa that took place in Finland and was organised by the EADRCC; the field exercises in 2009 performing chemical pollution scenario in the Daugava River; the 2009 field exercises in the case of a chemical spill in Grodno Azot and the annual Latvian-Estonian exercise under the bilateral Rescue Services Agreement.<sup>101</sup>

In addition, Latvia has signed several cross-border agreements within the EU framework. Such projects include the “Building Cross-border Capacity to Perform Joint Activities in Tough Environment” aiming at improving first responders’ efficiency and effectiveness to an emergency; INTERREG Baltic Sea Region Latvian - Lithuanian - Belarusian cross-border cooperation programme supported by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument; and the cross-border cooperation programme between Latvia and Lithuania in protection of population and environment.

Latvia engages in a broader discussion within the European Council on the strategic perspective of the further development of the Common Security and Defence Policy, the forms of military cooperation among member states and the enhancement of the EU's civilian and military capabilities.

BaltFloodCombat is a cross-border cooperation project between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The three Baltic States are represented respectively by the Estonian Rescue Board, Latvian State Fire and Rescue Service and Lithuanian Fire and Rescue Department under the Ministry of the Interior. The project is within the framework of the Preparatory Action of the Civil Protection Mechanism and is funded by the European Commission. The European Commission finances 80% of the project while the remaining funding comes from the national budgets. The aim of the project is to create reliable and efficient national flood response capacity, and also to establish and register in CECIS a multinational High Capacity Pumping (HCP) module, consisting of commonly trained personnel and up-to-date equipment. Main objectives of the project include enhancing national flood response capability; strengthening European rapid response capacity, and also to discover, through innovative approach, possibilities and ways of multilateral civil protection capacity building.<sup>102</sup>

The Operational Management Department of the State Fire and Rescue Service is the national contact point for disaster management and response and, if necessary, ensures regular communication and exchange of information with the European Commission's Emergency Response

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<sup>100</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.24

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p.29

<sup>102</sup> BaltFloodCombat, available at: [http://www.baltfloodcombat.eu/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=22:whats-new-in-15&catid=29:the-cms](http://www.baltfloodcombat.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22:whats-new-in-15&catid=29:the-cms), last accessed 10.10.2014

Coordination Centre (ERCC) and the NATO Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC).<sup>103</sup>

Latvia takes part in the EU-MIC and NATO-EADRCC systems and the OSCE Observer Mission to Georgia. In 2013 national experts participated in the EU civilian operations in Georgia and in Afghanistan, as well as in EU naval operation EUNAVFOR Atalanta. Experts from the State Fire and Rescue Service participate in various working groups and committees within the framework of EU and NATO, such as the Civil Protection Working Group of the Council of Europe.

Latvia has not officially requested cross-border or international disaster assistance through regional and international arrangements. Latvia has signed mutual civil security and civil protection agreements to receive and provide assistance in the emergency and crisis situations with Estonia (2001), Lithuania (2001), Sweden (2002), Belarus (2002), Hungary (2003), Ukraine (2006), Uzbekistan (2008), Russia (2010) and Azerbaijan (2011). In addition, Latvia actively participates in regional intergovernmental forums such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM).<sup>104</sup>

Moreover, Latvia has signed bilateral agreements for early warning and assistance in case of radiological or nuclear accidents with Lithuania, Estonia and Ukraine and also agreements for cooperation in case of natural and man-made accidents with Belarus, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania and Sweden.

The Latvian Radiation Safety Centre of State Environmental Service also participates in EURDEP (European Radiological Data Exchange Platform), which represents both a standard data format and a network for the exchange of environmental radiation monitoring data between European countries in real-time.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> European Union Civil Protection Mechanism, available at: [http://www.vugd.gov.lv/lat/starptautiska\\_sadarbiba/eiropas\\_kopienas\\_civilas\\_aizsardzibas\\_mehanisms](http://www.vugd.gov.lv/lat/starptautiska_sadarbiba/eiropas_kopienas_civilas_aizsardzibas_mehanisms), last accessed 10.10.2014

<sup>104</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.23

<sup>105</sup> Latvia CNS report 2012, p.7

## 4 Procedures

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### 4.1 Operations planning

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The National Civil Protection Plan provides the provisions for civil protection entities undertaking preventive, preparedness, response and recovery emergency measures in occurrence of national and regional disasters, as well as a military invasion or in case of war. The Plan defines the implementation of the Civil Protection Law requirements and identifies the civil defence planning and operational objectives. Additionally, the document sets out the courses of action, tasks and the objectives in planning and carrying out civil protection measures in disaster events.<sup>106</sup>

At local level Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 423 dated 26 June 2007 establishes the civil protection plans of local governments, merchants and institutions as well as the procedures for developing and approving these plans. In addition, there are several other Cabinet Regulations that provide for risk reduction measures such as No. 532 "Regulations regarding the procedures for industrial accident risk assessment and risk reduction measures" (19 July 2005) and No. 626 "Regulations regarding criteria for the specification of objects of increased danger and the duties of the owners (possessors, managers) of such objects for ensuring measures for reduction of risk" (18 September 2007).<sup>107</sup>

Local governments develop the respective civil protection plans at local government level in cooperation with the State Fire and Rescue Service. Each civil security institution in Latvia has their specific crisis management proceeding.<sup>108</sup>

### 4.2 Logistics support in crises

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The Ministry of Interior coordinates the emergency logistics. The Latvian armed forces provide assistance in civilian emergencies in terms of manpower and logistics when required.<sup>109</sup>

### 4.3 Crisis communication to general public; Alert system; Public Information and Warnings

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According to the Civil Protection Law the civil alarm and notification system has to ensure the warning and informing of the population regarding disasters or threats, as well as the announcement

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<sup>106</sup> National Civil Protection Plan, section 1-3

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., section 5

<sup>108</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.27

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p.22, p.36

of an emergency situation, the state of emergency or mobilisation. The relevant procedures for the use, establishment and financing of the civil alarm and notification system are determined by the Latvian government. Mass media has to provide information received by the State Fire and Rescue Service regarding the threat and guidance for further actions of the population free of charge in such event.<sup>110</sup>

The Crisis Communication Action Plan 2011 – 2013 is designed to provide a planned, coherent and coordinated communications in crisis situations and to facilitate competence of the officials involved in communication as well as to raise awareness and educate population for actions in the event of a crisis. The Plan also foresees the development of planned, integrated and coordinated public administration procedures for circulation of information in crises situations. In addition, crisis communications expert group is to be established within the Crisis Management Council. The plan anticipates the development of recommendations for crisis communication intended for government communications professionals and other officials involved in crisis communications. Moreover, the development of procedures for managing crisis events information, as well as the rights and obligations of communications officers in crisis situations are stated in the Plan.

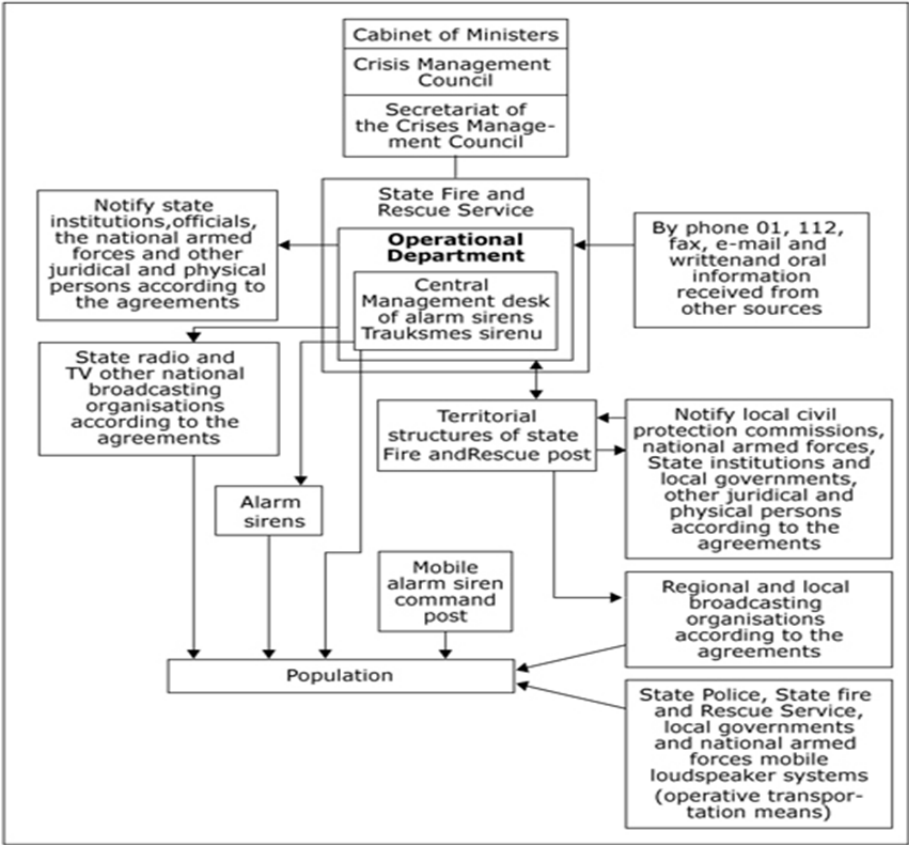


Figure 3. Civil alarm and notification system (Source: EC ECHO)

The Crisis Communication Action Plan highlights the importance of educational activities and actions in case of crisis situation. Existing training programs in secondary and vocational education institutions are to be updated and supplemented in order to increase the crisis communication knowledge of the state and local officials responsible in crises situations. Training of state and local

<sup>110</sup> Civil Protection Law – Section 15

government officials is also listed as one of the main tasks in the Plan for the developing efficient crisis communication. The Ministry of Interior is the coordinating authority for the executing the plan.<sup>111</sup>

Municipalities and local governments are main actors responsible for maintaining the emergency communication system. Emergency services in Latvia have their own risk mapping services including risk registration systems.

The “112” single emergency number has been implemented in Latvia and National Geographical Information Systems (GIS) is being gradually enhanced. The GIS system aims at describing the coordination of GIS services, collection of data and creation of state GIS portal. The aim of the GIS Pilot Project is to create a digital map of Riga with the information regarding emergency events that fall under the competence of the State Police and State Fire and Rescue Service. The overall responsibility and coordination for the development of GIS services has the Information Centre of the Ministry of Interior and the State Fire and Rescue Service. Additionally, Electronic Communications Office has been established with its operational goal is to manage the resources of radio-frequency range in the field of electronic communications.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Approval of the "Crisis communication plan 2011 – 2013, available at: [http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about\\_vugd/815-approval-of-the-crisis-communication-plan-2011-2013](http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about_vugd/815-approval-of-the-crisis-communication-plan-2011-2013), Last accessed 11.10.2014

<sup>112</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.27

## 5 Capabilities

### 5.1 Human resources

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The National Armed Forces provides support to the Security Police, State Police, State Border Guard, State Fire and Rescue Service, and other institutions when resources at the disposal of these institutions are not sufficient for the implementation of emergency measures necessary for crisis and consequence management and special resources (such as mine clearance and explosive devices, ships, aircraft and off-road land equipment or specific geo-spatial information) are only available by the National Armed Forces and are deemed necessary.<sup>113</sup>

It is prohibited to form, train and arm military public organisations of volunteers or associations of such organisations.<sup>114</sup> Volunteer fire fighting units are created in some municipalities however their contribution to crisis management activities is somewhat limited.<sup>115</sup>

Regarding cyber defence the Latvian State Defence Concept foresees the development of capabilities of the Armed Forces and the Cyber Defence Unit to react in a crisis situation and to manage the consequences of major incidents. It is planned that the Armed Forces will establish an electronic communication network for emergency situations, as well as an information technology and communication systems to ensure the support of National Armed Forces management capabilities in crisis situations will be developed.<sup>116</sup>

### 5.2 Materiel (non-financial) resources

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In the National Security Concept the importance of making a conceptual assessment of legal framework in respect of legal regimes of national threat and crisis situations, attraction of additional resources to the civil defence system in the event of national threat, as well as of principles for establishing of the national material reserve system is highlighted.<sup>117</sup>

In Latvia, the involvement of resources in disaster management involves the operational and emergency services, civil protection formations that are mobilisable – the Operational Control Centre of the State Fire and Rescue Service, the State material reserve resources, local government resources; and the resources available at the disposal of a commercial company.

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<sup>113</sup> State Defence Concept 2012, p.9-10

<sup>114</sup> National Security Law – Section 18

<sup>115</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.29-30

<sup>116</sup> Cyber Security Strategy of Latvia 2014–2018 p.12

<sup>117</sup> National Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia, 2005\_nd\_en p.8



The State Material Reserves Law defines the creation and storage of state material reserves for the civil defence system the usage in cases of national risk. The material reserves are to be used for disaster management by the institutions involved, in cases of shortage in the available response measures. Reserves planning of the civil protection measures are defined in the plans provided by the Ministry of Interior, involving their subordinated institutions, as well as by local authorities and businesses. Material Reserves are to be used in cases such as disaster response activities for the elimination of consequences of an emergency; for the response actions of the involved personnel for ensuring the protection of the population; for public safety and order; for the civil protection and disaster management training of involved personnel.<sup>118</sup>

State Fire and Rescue Service resources include 92 fire station buildings, of which approximately 33% were built before 1940, 65% - from 1940 to 1992, 2% - built or renovated in the period after 1990. Fire fighting depot buildings and facilities are physically and morally outdated and are in a very poor state and do not comply with European or national requirements set out by the relevant documentation.

In addition, another issue concerning the capabilities of the State Fire and Rescue Service is the location of these fire station buildings. They are mostly situated in limited area that prevents the perspective for establishing modern fire fighting and rescue equipment, special and technical equipment, nor safety conditions for the effective performance of the functions specified.

According to statistics by the National Fire and Rescue Service over period of five years the number of rescue operations increases every year to reach 6173 for 2013, compared to 2640 in 2009, 2010 - 3431, 2011 - 4517, 2012 – 4835. The number of fires has increased by 9.16% compared to 2012, to reach 9821.<sup>119</sup>

According to Regulation No. 61 dated 3 February 2004 by the Cabinet of Ministers, the State Fire and Rescue Service has to ensure the arrival on scene of the response teams in cities within 5 minutes, to the rest of the urban and rural areas with a population density of 10 or more persons per square kilometre - within 15 minutes and in rural areas with a population density of less than 10 people on the square kilometres – within 25 minutes after receiving the emergency signal.<sup>120</sup>

Currently, only about 80% of the emergency cases, State Fire and Rescue Service unit can be sent to the scene to perform fire extinction and rescue work.

In several regions the distance from the State Fire and Rescue Service fire station building to the point of the emergency event is as much as 30 to 40 km, meaning that in about 20% of the cases it is not possible to ensure the required action and as a result of the population does not receive timely and quality assistance.

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<sup>118</sup> State Material Reserves Law, art. 1-2 and 10.

<sup>119</sup> Strategy of the Ministry of Interior 2014 – 2016 (unofficial translation), p.18-20

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p.21

In order to provide the public with timely, high-quality assistance it is needed to improve the State Fire and Rescue Service territorial unit network.<sup>121</sup>

The Air Force carries out Latvian airspace surveillance, control and defence, provides air defence support to the Land Forces units and participates in search and rescue operations over the Baltic Sea, the Bay of Riga and dry land. In the beginning of the new century two new Mi-8 Hip helicopters were bought. Both helicopters are fitted with search and rescue equipment, but could also be used for transportation of troops, evacuation and support of the Special Forces.<sup>122</sup>

The State Border Guard has one helicopter Augusta Bell 206 and two Augusta Bell 109 capable of performing search and rescue missions both on the water and on land, and can also provide simultaneous transport of multiple victims (up to 30 people). Operational capability at sea is limited, because the helicopters' permanent site is one-hour flight from the Baltic Sea coast. The "Concept for Search and Rescue Capability Development and Improvement Using Helicopters" envisages possible solutions for the main capabilities shortfalls when using helicopters in rescue operations.<sup>123</sup>

The existing radio system by the Ministry of Interior currently covers approximately 93-94% of the country by providing operational radio services in emergency situations such as natural disasters, or technological accidents, and regardless of public communications operators.<sup>124</sup>

In Latvia there are 164 alarm sirens in Riga and other cities for population warning of potential hazards.

### 5.3 Training

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Training and education activities are mainly organized by the Ministry of Interior and its subordinate the State Fire and Rescue Service. The training courses conducted include exercises and simulations of possible crisis incidents. The target group involves heads of state institutions, local governments and commercial companies, as well as citizens as volunteers. Volunteers have been increasingly integrated into civil protection activities, despite still having limited influence in crisis management operations.<sup>125</sup>

Alongside the training activities performed by the above mentioned institutions, the national accredited higher education institutions provide training in this field. The requirements for the civil

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<sup>121</sup> Strategy of the Ministry of Interior 2014 – 2016 (unofficial translation), p.21

<sup>122</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latvian\\_Air\\_Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latvian_Air_Force)

<sup>123</sup> Government Regulation No.198 "Concept For Search And Rescue Capability Development And Improvement Using Helicopters"

<sup>124</sup> Strategy of the Ministry of Interior 2014 – 2016 (unofficial translation), p.18-20

<sup>125</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.36-37

security training are set by the government, however, local authorities and municipalities can conduct complementary courses.<sup>126</sup>

In addition, the Civil Protection Law states that educating to the population in civil protection matters through the mass media and for distributing informative materials, has to be performed by the State institutions and local governments, as well as by merchants in the relevant cases of affected persons within the merchants' objects.

The Regulations of the Cabinet for provisions of methods and procedures for organizing civil protection training, issued in accordance with the Civil Protection Law, defines the rules of civil defence training and the procedures of their organization, as well as the types of training and procedures for civil defence training. The document divides training into four main categories:

- Local training, which testing the readiness for cases of local disaster;
- Regional-level training, which testing regional disaster preparedness;
- State-level training, which testing the readiness of national-wide disaster;
- International training, which is established to examine the coordinated actions between a number of the competent national authorities and international organizations.<sup>127</sup>

Local level training is organised at least once every three years and is conducted by the chairman of the local government council, head of institution. Training of employees in civil protection matters shall be organised by the employer.<sup>128</sup>

National and regional training is conducted by the responsible training manager, who is appointed by the Prime Minister. At national level, training has to be organised at least once in every four years.

International Training is organised according to the relevant international organization procedures and the participation of Latvian institutions is based on the basis of invitations.<sup>129</sup>

The Fire Safety and Civil Protection College is an educational establishment subordinate to State Fire and Rescue Service. The College provides professional educational programmes in the preparation of civil protection specialists for the State Fire and Rescue Service, and for other civil protection services and units such as fire-fighters, rescue and protection services, etc.<sup>130</sup>

Furthermore, national exercises are performed as part of the Latvian - Lithuanian cross-border cooperation programmes and the Baltic Sea Regional INTEREG IIIB Neighbourhood Programme between Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus. Another exercise carried out was the exercise conducted in

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid., p.29

<sup>127</sup> Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 772, Riga, September 22, 2008

<sup>128</sup> Civil Protection Law – Section 19-21

<sup>129</sup> Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 772, Riga, September 22, 2008

<sup>130</sup> Fire Safety and Civil Protection College, available at: <http://ucak.vugd.gov.lv/>, last accessed 09.10.2014

2005 and its main scenario was rupture of dam and subsequent floods. Latvia participates in various international exercises which include EU Joint Assistance in 2006, Ukraine, consequence management field exercise Usimma in 2008 organised by the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) in cooperation with Finland; the Field exercises in 2009 with the cases of chemical pollution of the river Daugava and chemical spill in Grodno Azot, as well as the Annual Latvian-Estonian exercise under the bilateral Rescue Services Agreement.<sup>131</sup>

Latvian cooperation in the field of training with other NATO member states in the territory of Latvia and other Baltic States is essential for the improvement and enhancement not only of the disaster response preparedness and response, but also is important for the Latvian national armed forces. Responsible institutions have to ensure the maintenance of the host nation support system and must carry out regular mutual coordination and training in order to ensure the possibility to rapidly deploy allied forces. The host nation support system is of vital importance in prevention of the consequences of natural and human-caused catastrophes and international training.<sup>132</sup>

In the cyber security domain, the 2014–2018 Cyber Security Strategy of Latvia lists the required actions for improving the capabilities for crisis preparedness and capacity to act in crisis situations.

These actions include organising regular theoretical and practical training at national level with the involvement of high-level officials and the private sector in order to develop mutual understanding and to coordinate the management of crisis situations. Moreover, the strategic document outlines the need of developing regional and international cooperation, to ensure regular training for providing and receiving support in a crisis situation and to organise crisis training and security breach tests at a national, regional and international level.

In addition, planning and implementation of security measures for critical infrastructure is regulated by the Cabinet of Ministers. In order to exchange knowledge and experience, as well as for improvement of procedures, representatives of critical infrastructures are regularly involved in training organised by Information Technology Security Incident Response Institution of Latvia.<sup>133</sup>

## 5.4 Procurement

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### 5.4.1 Procurement regulation

The national legislation of Latvia for public procurement is regulated by two main laws – the Public Procurement Law and the Law on Procurement for the Needs of Public Service Providers. The Ministry of Finance is in charge of the overall public procurement policy.

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<sup>131</sup> EC Vademecum – Country profile: Latvia, prevention and preparedness

<sup>132</sup> National Security Concept 2011, p.4

<sup>133</sup> Cyber Security Strategy Of Latvia 2014–2018

Latvia has adopted several EU Directives into its legislation such as Directive 2004/18/EC and Directive 2007/66/EC, both implemented by the Public Procurement Law which is in effect since 1 May 2006.

Directive 2009/81/EC is implemented by a separate law – the Defence and Security Procurement Law with amendments under the Directive 2009/81/EC; Directives 2004/17/EC; Directive 2004/18/EC.

The central purchasing bodies in Latvia in the security and defence sectors are the Providing Agency of the Ministry of Interior and the State Agency for Defence Properties of the Ministry of Defence. In addition, other ministries, agencies and local governments have their own purchasing structures that act as purchasing bodies.<sup>134</sup>

## 5.5 Niche capabilities

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Potential niche capability that could be filled by Latvia and represent interest to the EU crisis management structures is the development of single crisis information systems.

The Latvian civil security institutions are looking to improve cooperation in the field of crisis management as they are exploiting new ways for cooperation for the creation of a unified national information system. The system will contain data on registered events and provide this data for the development of analytical, planning, statistical and other activities and strengthen the collaboration among the services.<sup>135</sup>

The Ministry of Interior, the State Fire and Rescue Service and the State Police are the key actors involved in leading the initiative for developing electronic data exchange among the emergency services. Such initiative will allow having simultaneous visualization of information regarding events registered by the State Police, as well as regarding predefined types of events registered by the State Fire and Rescue Service.

Furthermore, the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence established in Latvia provides comprehensive analyses, timely advice and practical support to the Alliance in the strategic communications area of expertise. The centre conducts analyses, develops doctrines, conducts research and experimentation activities, and enhances training and interoperability through common understanding of NATO Strategic Communications policy and procedures.<sup>136</sup>

The centre's activities could serve as an example of a potential niche capability of interest to the EU. Strategic communications is a broad topic that encompasses all information disciplines within the STRATCOM community - Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs, Military Public Affairs, Information

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<sup>134</sup> Comparative Survey On The National Public Procurement Systems Across The PPN, Rome 2010

<sup>135</sup> ANVIL Project Country Study Latvia, p.28

<sup>136</sup> <http://www.stratcomcoe.org/Organisation/FocusAreas.aspx>, last accessed 30.11.2014

Operations and Psychological Operations. In crisis management context strategic communication play an important role as it focuses on objectives at strategic and tactical levels, and especially important for the decision making process.

Latvia could develop similar capabilities, within the European Union, in the field of strategic communications, communication during crises or other related subject to the benefit of the Member States.

# Resources

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## Legislative acts

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Civil Protection Law, into force 1 January 2007, adopted 5 October 2006;

Fire Safety and Fire Fighting Law, into force 1 January 2003, adopted 24 October 2002;

Law on the Security of Information Technologies, into force 1 February 2011, adopted 10 November 2010;

National Security Law into force 1 January 2002, adopted 14 December 2000;

Personal Data Protection Law, in force since 2000

State Material Reserves Law into force 1 January 2008, adopted 21 June 2007;

## Other normative acts

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Cabinet of Ministers Regulation 1354, adopted 24 November 2009

Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No.198

Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 772, adopted 22 September 2008

Crisis Communication Action Plan - 2011 to 2013, available at [http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about\\_vugd/815-approval-of-the-crisis-communication-plan-2011-2013](http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about_vugd/815-approval-of-the-crisis-communication-plan-2011-2013), last accessed 16.10.2014

National Civil Protection Plan into force 1 January 2007, adopted 5 October 2006

## Official documents (white papers, strategies, etc.)

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Annual Report on the Implementation of the Swiss–Latvian Cooperation Programme in Latvia April 2013 – March 2014

Cyber Security Strategy of Latvia 2014–2018

Latvian Red Cross Strategy 2010 – 2012

National Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia (2002)

National Security Concept of the Republic of Latvia, (2005)

State Defence Concept, 10 May 2012

Strategy of the Ministry of Interior 2014 – 2016 (unofficial translation)

## Online resources (e.g. websites of key CM organizations)

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<http://www.mk.gov.lv/en> – Government of the Republic of Latvia

<http://www.iem.gov.lv/eng/> - Ministry of Interior of Latvia

<http://www.mod.gov.lv/en.aspx> - Ministry of Defence of Latvia  
[http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about\\_vugd/about\\_vugd](http://www.vugd.gov.lv/eng/about_vugd/about_vugd) - State Fire and Rescue Service  
<http://ucak.vugd.gov.lv/> - Fire Safety and Civil Protection College  
<http://www.rs.gov.lv/?setlang=1> – State Border Guard  
[http://www.baltfloodcombat.eu/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=22:whats-new-in-15&catid=29:the-cms](http://www.baltfloodcombat.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22:whats-new-in-15&catid=29:the-cms) – BaltFloodCombat  
[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/civil\\_protection/vademecum/lv/2-lv.html](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/civil_protection/vademecum/lv/2-lv.html) – Vademecum: Country profiles - Latvia  
<http://www.estlat.eu/supported-projects/?project=65> – Estonia – Latvia Programme

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ANVIL Project Country Study: Latvia, Timo Hellenberg and Pekka Visuri, June 2013  
*Budgeting in Latvia*, OECD Journal on Budgeting, Volume 2009/3  
Christer Pursiainen, Sigrid Hedin And Timo Hellenberg, *Civil Protection Systems in the Baltic Sea Region - Towards Integration in Civil Protection Training*, Aleksanteri Institute, Helsinki, 2005  
Christopher, S. Chivvis, *EU Civilian Crisis Management- The Record So Far*, RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2010  
Eric K. Stern and Dan Hansén (editors), *Crisis Management in a Transitional Society: the Latvian Experience*, Eric K. Stern and Dan Hansén (editors), Elanders Gotab AB, Vällingby 2004  
*Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*, United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
*International CEP Handbook 2009 - Civil Emergency Planning in the NATO/EAPC Countries*, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), 2009  
*Second Investigation Department under the Ministry of National Defence Assessment of Threats to National Security, 2014*  
Stephanie Buus, Lindy M. Newlove, and Eric K. Stern (editors), *Value Complexity in Crisis Management: The Lithuanian Transition*  
Terhi Elomaa & Anna Halonen, *EUROBALTIC Survey: Civil Protection Research in the Baltic Sea Region*, November 2007  
Tiziana Bianchi, Valentina Guidi, *Comparative Survey on the National Public Procurement Systems across the PPN*, Rome, December 2010  
Terhi Elomaa & Anna Halonen, *EUROBALTIC Survey: Civil Protection Research in the Baltic Sea Region*, University of Helsinki (2007)