

2015



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

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CONTENTS

The current newsletter covers the EVANDE project updates of the period from May to October 2015.

1. EVANDE Project updates ... p.2

1.1. Management meetings ... p.2

1.2. Data Acquisition-Elaboration on the topic of natural disasters and civil protection ... p.3

1.3. Development of the e-learning tools and trainings ... p.4

1.3.1. Presentation of the MOLE e-learning platform ... p.4

1.4. Dissemination actions ... p.5

2. Forthcoming activities ... p.10

3. Contact information ... p.12

1. EVANDE PROJECT UPDATES

The EVANDE project (www.evande.eu) is already at the second half of first year of action. Several activities have been undertaken focused mainly on the collection of data, best practices and case studies that have been elaborated and assessed to be further used in other products. In addition, several other activities have been undertaken and others are scheduled. The present newsletter presents the project updates concerning the development the project actions and deliverables that are the management meetings; the task of the data acquisition-elaboration on the topic of natural disasters and civil protection; the development of the e-learning tools and trainings and the dissemination actions. Each project action and deliverable is presented shortly as follows:

1.1. Management meetings

The 2nd management meeting of the EVANDE project took place from 23rd to 25th September 2015 at the headquarters of the project partner “Consorti De La Ribera” in Alzira, Spain. The participants were from all partners as well as staff and collaborators of “Consorti De La Ribera”, that are engaged in the project implementation. All participants evaluated the project’s progress concerning the collection, filtering and elaboration of the material needed for the production of the educational deliverables and the creation of

the web-platform for the e-learning courses. Moreover, they developed a detailed plan for the future project actions. In addition, the participants were guided in the local area to get to know indicative initiatives for the promotion of the sustainable development and the mitigation of natural risks, which are undertaken by the local authorities.



The hosting organization “Consorti De La Ribera” conducted an intensive information campaign to guarantee the project scope in media. Press releases and different posts and tweets were performed to inform about the specific activities of the meeting and the current status of the project progress. Communications had good impact, and materialized in the publication of news and reviews in print media with the broader scope in La Ribera’s county, including “Levante”, the most popular journal of the region.

The outreach strategy benefited from the support of Algemesi’s NGO “Intervention Aid & Emergency” (IAE), which is an organization that provides technical counselling to “Consorti De La Ribera” regarding the

EVANDE project. This non-profit organization develops international rescue actions and has a high popularity in Valencia’s province; as well as its web site and social networks, with hundreds of followers.

The next project meeting is planned to be organized in April 2016, in Sofia, Bulgaria. The aim of this meeting will be the planning of the use of the e-learning tools and the concrete training activities to be organized by partners in 2016.



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

This action is aiming to produce thematic booklets on the earthquake, flooding and wild fire risk, as well as on best practices and the European Civil Protection procedures, to be used for the various educational activities. At the moment, the partners are finalizing the collection and the validation of knowledge and best practices on the nature, consequences and response to natural disasters, as well as the analysis of the intra-governmental and E.U. policies and strategies to mitigate risks.

Following the conclusion of this process, the partners will be engaged to the development of the project publications and the educational material that will be uploaded to the project’s e-learning platform MOLE (<http://evande.moleportal.eu/>). More specifically, the booklets on earthquakes, floods, wild fires and European civil protection policies and the report on best practices in civil protection sector will be published by the end of November 2015.

1.3. Development of e-learning tools and trainings

Partners are working on the development of the e-learning tools and the preparations of the training activities to be done in 2016. In specific, a draft version of the e-learning platform has been created and it is accessible from: <http://evande.moleportal.eu/>. This web-based learning infrastructure will host the EVANDE e-learning courses and will support the learning process of the project's target groups (volunteers and the local authorities' staff). Moreover, the partners are establishing contacts and organizing preparatory meetings with civil protection volunteers and local authorities' staff. The scope of these meetings is the efficient planning of the EVANDE training, dissemination and educational activities in 2016.

- 1.3.1. Presentation of the MOLE e-learning platform



The MOLE (Multimedia Open Learning Environment) is a multilingual multimedia management system for managing courses and supporting learning processes and learning communities through the Web. It was developed by the Laboratory of Distributed Multimedia Information Systems and Applications of the Technical University

of Crete (TUC/MUSIC), <http://www.music.tuc.gr>. The platform offers a complete set of services (synchronous and asynchronous) and tools supporting “blended learning” for:

- the organization and management of digital educational content (lectures; notes; exercises; technical lab material; literature; FAQs, etc);
- informing learners (through announcements; mails; calendars; personal rating, etc.);
- communication and collaboration (through mailing lists; live chat rooms; forums; personal messaging; instant messaging; annotation tools; video conference, etc.);
- supporting educational activities (through course registration; lab teams; uploaded exercises; deadline management; assessment tests; multimedia presentations, etc.);
- monitoring (through course usage statistics and class performance indicators).

Learners will require a password and will be able to use all features of platform, evaluating both their knowledge and the platform operation too. Moreover, it will be also able to assess their training progress and receive a certification thereafter.

The planning of the training and educational activities will be announced in the forthcoming newsletter, in April 2016.

1.4. Dissemination actions

The dissemination actions concluded under the current period (May-October 2015) include the constant update of the project website www.evande.eu, the management of a facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/evandeproject> and the publication of the current newsletter. Additionally, the partners have been running regular dissemination activities, according to the project's Dissemination Plan. Moreover, all of them organized on 13/10/2015 special dissemination events to contribute to the awareness-raising purposes of the International Day for Disaster Reduction 2015, an international day designated by the United Nations (<http://www.un.org/en/events/disasterreductionday/>).

The dissemination events per project country are described as follows:

- NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF CRETE, GREECE (www.nhmc.uoc.gr):

The Natural History Museum of Crete has integrated the EVANDE dissemination activities in its wider dissemination strategy. The EVANDE project and its updates have been advertised through the official Museum's website and its social media as well as the local press.

During the International Day for Disaster Reduction 2015, a seminar was organized in collaboration with the Region of Crete. In the seminar, the EVANDE project coordinator Dr. Charalambos Fassoulas along with the President of the Earthquake Planning & Protection Organization in Greece, Professor Euthimios Lekkas and other local and regional civil protection officers informed the public

about the importance of prevention and adequate response to natural disasters as well as the existing legal gaps. The event closed with an interactive discussion among the speakers and the public concerning the improvement of civil protection policies at local and national levels.



Furthermore, the EVANDE project was also presented at other local and international events, including the 5th European Civil Protection Forum that was held in Brussels in May 2015 and the international workshop "SafeChania 2015" that took place in Crete in June 2015.



Additionally, during the 13th European Geoparks International Conference that took place in Finland in September 2015 the EVANDE project coordinator Dr. Charalambos Fassoulas along with Mr. Burlando Maurizio, president of the Beigua Park-European and Global Geopark in Italy, presented the EVANDE project to the international participants and submitted a related abstract for publication.

- “CONSORCI DE LA RIBERA”, SPAIN
(<http://manra.org/en/consortium/institution>):

“Consorti de la Ribera” and the NGO “Intervention, Aid and Emergency” (IAE) organized an earthquake’s open practice of rescue with trained dogs, in the frame of EVANDE project and the International Day for Disaster Reduction 2015. The training had a great impact and attracted half a dozen media (mainly press and television) resulting to several interviews of the dog trainers and to a wide advertisement of the EVANDE project in the mainstream print and TV media of the area.

Of special interest were the references published in “Levante” (the most popular newspaper of the region) and the news-reports issued by the “Ribera Mediterranean TV” and the “MediterráneoTV”, with regional and provincial scope respectively.



The outreach strategy also benefited from the support of the various communication platforms of the “Consorti de la Ribera”, the “Mancomunitat de la Ribera Alta” and the NGO “Intervention, Aid and Emergency” (IAE) of Algemesí, in Spain.



- BEIGUA PARK-EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL GEOPARK, ITALY,
(www.parcobeigua.it):

During May and June 2015, Geopark’s staff carried out several educational activities for local schools using field-trips and lessons to raise pupils’ awareness about natural risks. Those proposals have been developed with a great support of local Municipalities’ volunteering teams in the framework of a long-term collaboration on the civil protection issues. Moreover, widespread dissemination and communication activities were done through the Geopark’s official website and its social networks’ profiles (mainly Facebook and Twitter).

In addition, on the International Day for Disaster Reduction 2015, Beigua Geopark, in collaboration with the Municipality of Arenzano, the Local Civil Protection and Local Volunteer Team for the Prevention of Forest Fires, organized the event “Don’t risk ... get informed!”, a demonstration event addressed to the classes of the primary school of Arenzano, Italy.



The Civil Protection Volunteers, supported by the operators of the Beigua Geopark illustrated to children and teachers the facilities, equipment and vehicles of volunteers intervention during fire emergency operations. The activity involved about 260 pupils that learned the dynamics of natural disasters, the vulnerability of the territory, the self-protection rules during an emergency and the importance of the work done by the Civil Protection. At the end of those activities the children were invited to reflect on the fragility of the territory and how to prevent natural risks.



Because of the importance of the initiative and the topic, the institutional communication channel of the Metropolitan City of Genoa produced a video that was broadcasted through the local TV network (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMTaSxwv14E>).

- EARTHQUAKE PLANNING & PROTECTION ORGANIZATION, GREECE, (www.oasp.gr):

In the framework of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, on 13/10/2015, the Earthquake Planning & Protection Organization organized the training course: "Earthquake Planning of School" in the High School of Metamorfosis, Athens, in collaboration with the Secondary Directorate of B' Athens of the Ministry of Education in Greece. The training was addressed to the Directors of school units of the above-mentioned region. In addition, informative lectures to students on earthquake protection issues and earthquake drill took place in the host school. Among the other activities included in the program, the EVANDE project was presented.



Furthermore, working towards raising seismic awareness of the population and volunteering community in Greece, Earthquake Planning & Protection Organization has implemented the following public activities, where a clear reference to the EVANDE project was made:

- The workshop for the Greek Rescue Team entitled "Earthquakes: Get Ready" related to the educational framework on earthquake protection issues. The workshop took place in Thessaloniki, Greece on 22/5/2015.



- The training course of volunteers in the framework of the National Project "Protect Myself and Others": The EVANDE project was presented to volunteers in Acharnes region in Attica (1-4-2015) and in Samos island (16/3/2015) in Greece.
- In the framework of the National Project "Emergency Planning at School in case of an Earthquake", almost 300 teachers have been informed on the actions of the EVANDE project at several regions of Greece including the Peristeri region in Attica (21/4/2015), the Piraeus (3/9/2015 and 22/10/2015) and the Kozani region (20/10/2015).

- During the International Congress "SafeChania 2015: The Knowledge Triangle in the Civil Protection Service" that held at Chania - Crete on 10-12/6/2015, a short reference to the EVANDE project was made.
- The National Conference "2nd Conference of Thessalia concerning issues of Environment": In the framework of the aforementioned conference held at Skiathos island on 26-28/9/2015, the EVANDE project was presented.
- CENTRO STUDI VILLA MONTESCA, ITALY, (www.montesca.eu):

EVANDE has a specific reserved space among the projects promoted by "Centro Studi Villa Montesca" on its new institutional website, guaranteeing a wide diffusion to all the potentially interested stakeholders, and specifically the ones of the civil protection sector. "Centro Studi Villa Montesca" in fact attracts many interested persons working in this field having a past and continuous experience in the development of civil protection projects at local but also at EU levels.

The dissemination activated by the "Centro Studi Villa Montesca" lies also on the institutional level with the realization of meetings with representatives of the local public authorities in Città di Castello, Italy where the organization is based. The purpose of these meetings was to present the EVANDE project and the activities to be implemented

in its framework. The staff of the “Centro Studi Villa Montesca” met the Mayor of Città di Castello, the Councilor and the Chief Executive Officer of the Civil Protection sector of the Municipality. During these meetings, “Centro Studi Villa Montesca” confirmed the availability of collaboration with the interested stakeholders of the Municipality.



Currently the Municipality is launching the public announcement for the constitution of a Municipal Group of Civil Protection Volunteers of Città di Castello. The EVANDE project is put in connection with this interesting and relevant initiative for the development of both activities in a synergic way.

Furthermore, the project was presented to the Regional councilor and managers in charge for civil protection in Umbria and to the regional representatives of the TAC2 project (that specifically address the promotion of initiatives in the regional territory). Finally, “Centro Studi Villa Montesca” promoted EVANDE also on the occasion of a meeting with the Municipalities of the Umbria Region, held by the Regional Centre of Civil Protection in Foligno, Italy. The

purpose was to present the current initiatives activated by the organization, and, as a result, a space was also reserved to explain the EVANDE objectives and the main initiatives planned.



- CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES, BULGARIA (www.cei-bg.org):

The Center for Educational Initiatives has continued its regular work on media coverage to promote the EVANDE project, while on the International Day for Disaster Reduction 2015 the expert Mr. Yassen Tsvetkov gave an extensive interview on Bulgarian National Radio referring to the EVANDE project (http://cei-bg.org/sites/default/files/Dissimination_interview_BNR_Tsvetkov_2.mp3).

Moreover, the Centre for Educational Activities organized the following two additional types of dissemination activities:

The first type was focused on establishing contacts with the structures of the local government. In this direction, the Centre for Educational Initiatives organized meetings with local authorities in the Municipality of Sofia and some district town halls (e.g. Novi Iskar). The result of these meeting was that

the Centre for Educational Initiatives received the official support to engage the volunteering municipality structure related to the reactions in case of disaster in the EVANDE project activities.



The second type of events was focused on establishing contacts with the central authority structures of the Ministry of Interior Affairs and its General Directorate for Fire Control, Planning and Preventive Action. The meeting with the Head of the Department for Prevention and Training of Population, Mr. Stefan Stoyanov, gave fruitful results. Moreover, on 13/11/2015 a second meeting with the civil protection structure of the Ministry of Interior Affairs is scheduled. The aim of the meeting is to reach an agreement on the joint activities to be done in collaboration with volunteers, local and the central governments.



2. FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

The EVANDE forthcoming period is actually the preparatory phase for the training activities that will be undertaken in 2016. Various meetings with local volunteer groups and local authorities will be organized to exchange ideas on the web platform context as well as the organization of training activities.

- NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF CRETE, GREECE (www.nhmc.uoc.gr):

The Natural History Museum of Crete has already made several meetings with local authorities and volunteers' group involved in the civil protection sector in order to ensure their support and commitment into the project. As a result, three volunteering groups have already confirmed their availability to participate in the training activities and disseminate the project publications to their members. Regular meetings with those groups, as well as others that will be engaged in the future, are planned. New dissemination events supported by the local authorities are also planned to be organized within the next months.

- “CONSORCI DE LA RIBERA”, SPAIN
(<http://manra.org/en/consortium/institution>):

In the framework of collaboration with civil protection professionals from the city of Valencia, the University researchers specialized in earthquakes and forest fires (University of Castellon city) and the Head of Firefighters of Xàtiva city, “Consorti de la Ribera” will organize a national workshop in January/February 2016, in Spain. The aim of this workshop will be the presentation of the research outcomes on best practices for civil protection issues and natural disasters as well as the dissemination of the EVANDE reports and booklets. The methodologies of preparedness, response and risk assessment of selected case studies in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria and Spain will be also presented so that the training needs of civil protection volunteers, professionals and local authorities’ staff will be met.

- BEIGUA PARK-EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL GEOPARK, ITALY,
(www.parcobeigua.it):

In 2016, the staff of Beigua Park-European and Global Geopark will continue to develop informational activities at a local level. Several meetings for local communities have been planned to explain the new regional system of “weather alerts” which has been in force by the Liguria Regional Administration in Italy, since October 2015. Moreover, information material will be spread through social networks and web-site communication to raise public awareness about self-protection rules to be applied during floods and hydrogeological hazards. These activities will be conducted in close collaboration with the

Municipalities of the Beigua Park and in line with the Local Civil Protection Action Plans. Furthermore, the Educational Centre of Beigua Park is going to carry on educational programmes for local schools on natural risks, according to the new catalogue downloadable by the Park’s official website. Finally, special events will be also organized involving local civil protection volunteering teams to disseminate the first results of the project and to promote the training activities of the EVANDE e-learning platform.

- EARTHQUAKE PLANNING & PROTECTION ORGANIZATION, GREECE, (www.oasp.gr):

In the following months, Earthquake Planning & Protection Organization will present the EVANDE project to the civil protection volunteers who will attend training courses in the framework of the Hellenic National Project “Protect Myself and Others”. This project is running since 2001 and aims, through national seminars, to train citizens as local volunteers to develop skills for risk and crisis management and emergency response. Additionally, EPPO will implement a lot of seminars and workshops addressed to teachers, staff of public agencies and enterprises, citizens etc. in different regions of Greece, and will also disseminate the EVANDE project results.

- CENTRO STUDI VILLA MONTESCA, ITALY, (www.montesca.eu):

In the following months, the “Centro Studi Villa Montesca” will officially present the EVANDE project to the groups of volunteers of civil protection and to the relevant sectors of the Umbria Region in Italy. The EVANDE project will be also disseminated to the mailing list of all the Volunteers Groups of the Umbria Region. In parallel, the project will be continuously promoted in connection with another E.U. project on Civil Protection that “Centro Studi Villa Montesca” is coordinating at the moment, with the main objective to create positive synergies between actions implemented in the two parallel projects.

- CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES, BULGARIA (www.cei-bg.org):

The next activities planned by the Centre for Educational Initiatives in Bulgaria are focused on the preparation of the training of local teams of volunteers according to the above-mentioned model of collaboration between volunteers, local and central government that has been established. The trainings are scheduled to be implemented on the national polygon in town of Montana, where were trained all professionals involved in Civil Protection in Bulgaria.

3. CONTACT INFORMATION

Please visit the EVANDE website www.evande.eu and the facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/evandeproject> to be informed about further project updates.

Contact information: evande@nhmc.uoc.gr