

Currently risk governance research and practice is fragmented by subject and according to the budget-holding organizations involved. The last decades have shown - in examples from Chernobyl to Asian Tsunami and the Bird Flu storm - that risks to our social fabric violate boundaries between nation states, business, government and communities rich and poor. The complex interdependence of risks requires a systemic approach to risk governance in order to ensure the resilience and sustainability of our economic fabric in Europe and beyond. Therefore the main objective of MIDIR is to develop, on the basis of existing research, a re-usable and scalable resilience and risk governance concept and to test it in real decision-making settings of existing risk management systems and cultures (Germany and Italy), by the example of two emerging risks with a high degree of ambiguity and uncertainty (forensic patients, defined as those people who are condemned by court and who are under a special hospital treatment order due to their mental illness, under a hospital treatment order and risks related to health due to e-commerce). The process will be managed, monitored and evaluated by an accompanying electronic tool. Concept and results of the test cases will be disseminated to decision-makers of various levels and scientific experts due to focused networking, communication and dissemination activities. This way, the applicability of the concept within other risk cultures will be tested.

Building a bridge between different approaches in dealing with risks, developed by risk communities with a tendency to insularity (rarely interchanging with other approaches), has to be seen as special challenge for the MIDIR project. Up to now risk governance is rarely used in disaster management strategies and risk resilience is not well integrated in approaches dealing with more man-made hazards.

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The material goal “resiliency” (another similar used term, e.g. in climate change research, is adaptive capacity) can be seen as a widely accepted strategy within the natural disaster community. On the contrary, the more procedural approach “risk governance” has been created and adapted first in the area of new emerging, mostly man-made risks. The usage of both terms in the same context has to be seen as an innovative approach to combining an appropriate path (risk governance – including identification, assessment, management and communication of risk) towards the material goal of creating resilient communities, able to deal with the whole range of risks, nature-made as well as man-made ones.

The specific goals of the project are:

1. To develop an overall framework for risk governance and resilience measurement and monitoring based on a review of current standards and state of the art;
2. To make measurable and tangible the culture of collaboration required by public sector organisations to collaborate in preparing for and meeting cross-sectoral risks;
3. To pilot an e-management resilience tool that can be used for resilience planning, monitoring and management across stakeholder organisations from European, national to local levels;
4. Based on results of 1. to 4. to provide worked examples based on two case studies, resulting in quantitative risk measures and Capability Maturity Models to capture know-how in the domain, supported by a linked database of knowledge and case study experience;
5. Based on results of 1. to 4. to provide worked examples based on real risk management

settings;

6. To provide a framework of questions whereby the completeness of risk awareness in a situation can be ensured or at least improved;
7. To disseminate the overall framework among decision-makers and science all over Europe by networking, events and the implementation of a communication and dissemination strategy.