

Tailored training programmes for professional stakeholders and local actors to enhance resilience against extreme weather events

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Within the Interreg Central Europe LOCALIENCE project two training programmes on multi-hazard extreme weather events (MHE) and nature-based solutions (NBS) were developed to enhance the resilience of professional stakeholders and local actors against extreme weather events.

The training programmes were based on jointly prepared training materials, designed to equip local leaders and disaster management professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills required to address extreme weather risks at local level. The training materials were prepared in English and translated into national languages, providing a shared methodological framework for all partner countries, while allowing for national adaptation to local contexts and incorporation of relevant case studies.

The focus of the training programmes were on two thematic areas. The MHE training programme addressed preparedness and response to multiple, often concurrent extreme weather hazards, such as storms, floods and wildfires, to equip disaster management professionals and local decision makers with strategies to enhance resilience and mitigate risks associated with complex disaster scenarios. The NBS training programme focused on nature-based approaches to water retention, sediment management and other effects of extreme weather events within the landscape and urban community. The training were tailored for mayors, municipal officials and engaged citizens and guided them through the use of NBS as sustainable risk-reduction measures. For example, how flooding, heatwaves or erosion damages can be mitigated or managed more effectively through the implementation of water retention in the landscape or urban green spaces.

Each of the two training programmes were implemented through practical training sessions across all five partner countries. As the training programmes were locally adapted, they combined expert presentations with case study analyses, structured group discussions, practical exercises and where relevant field visits demonstrating NBS in practice. Most training sessions were held in-person, however some were also held online or made use of a hybrid training format to increase participant accessibility and outreach. A wide range of stakeholders participated in the training sessions including disaster management professionals, fire brigade personnel, municipal representatives, mayors, public authorities, farmers and interested citizens. Depending on the required expertise to lead the training sessions, trainers

were recruited from partner institutions or from external expert organisations. To ensure continuous improvement and quality assurance, participant feedback was gathered through surveys conducted after each training session. Insights from these evaluations showed that participant satisfaction was generally very high and highlighted a strong demand for further training activities among stakeholders.

Key outcomes of the practical training included increased application of MHE knowledge during real events among disaster management professionals, a growing municipal interest in integrating NBS into planning processes and improved cooperation among stakeholders for increased community resilience. In this way, the training successfully achieved its goals of raising awareness and enhancing stakeholder knowledge on MHE and NBS related to extreme weather events. By bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, the training fostered effective knowledge sharing and encouraged collaboration at local level. The training sessions highlighted the value of proactively engaging stakeholders, integrating practical applications, and involving expert trainers to ensure impactful learning experiences. Moreover, the variations in training formats and thematic focus demonstrated the flexibility of the materials to address specific local needs and the transferability potential of the training programmes. Building on these lessons, future training initiatives can further strengthen stakeholder understanding and preparedness for managing multi-hazard events and applying nature-based solutions in response to extreme weather challenges.

All language versions of the training materials are available for download on the project website: <https://www.interreg-central.eu/news/localience-project-launches-training-materials-to-boost-climate-resilience-in-communities-and-disaster-preparedness/>

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