

European Project LIFE FRANCA Flood Risk ANticipation and Communication in the Alps.

What

LIFE FRANCA, Flood Risk Anticipation and Communication in the Alps, is an EU project.

Its main aims are to develop effective communication strategies about flood risk and to promote the use of anticipatory techniques on flood risk management. Communicating flood risk implicitly acknowledges that complete safety cannot be guaranteed, so it is necessary to prepare the population to deal with a residual flood risk.

LIFE FRANCA is realised thanks to the LIFE programme, the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental, nature conservation, and climate action projects throughout the EU.

The total project budget is 1,058,242 €, about 60% of which is financed by EU.

Who

The project's coordinator is Professor Roberto Poli, holder of the UNESCO chair in Anticipatory system and Director of the master in Social foresight.

The other partners are:

- University of Trento – Department of Sociology and Social Research and Department of Civil, Environmental and Mechanical Engineering
- University of Padova – Department of Land, Environment, Agriculture and Forestry
- Bacini Montani – Service for Torrent Control of the Autonomous Province of Trento
- River Adige Basin Authority
- MUSE – the science Museum of Trento
- Trilogis Srl – an Italian company specialised in geospatial software solutions

When

The project will last for three years. The official start date was the 1st of July 2016 while the expected end date is the 31st of December 2019.

The project's kick-off took place the on 19th of September 2016 in Trento. Among the stakeholders that took part at the kick-off there were delegates of the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea.

Where

LIFE FRANCA's area of intervention is the alpine environment.

Three case studies have been selected within the Province of Trento, according to their representativeness of the main flood hazard characteristics and of the vulnerability features of the territory, while some actions will involve the entire north Adriatic District.

The expected results could be transferred to other climate change-related risks and to other areas of the Italian territory.

Why

Due to its geomorphological, hydrographic and climatic conditions, Italy regularly suffers severe harm caused by hydrogeological events.

The urban sprawl, which in many cases took place without a proper planning, has significantly expanded human settlements in vulnerable territories, exposing population to an increasing risk.

According to the 2015 report of ISPRA (the Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research), 15.8% of the Italian territory is exposed to a significant degree of hydrogeological risk, floods and landslides in particular.

Trentino is a typical alpine region; its geomorphology is characterised by large rivers that runs on valley floors and countless headwaters, streams and torrents that form a network of mountain basins. Due to this structure, all the Trentino municipalities are exposed to some hydrogeological risks and flood events occur frequently (15 episodes in 2015). Despite this situation, public awareness about flood risk is low.

LIFE FRANCA's aim is to develop a culture of flood risk in order to improve the safety of citizens and their territory. The process will engage all the stakeholders involved: citizens, professionals and politicians.

This will be implemented in an anticipatory framework. Anticipation methods include, among other features, the reconstruction of the past, jointly achieved visions of the future and the development of transformative measures to be undertaken in the present. This anticipatory approach is particularly effective in raising public awareness about the risks brought by climate change.

How

In order to support the anticipation and awareness of flood risk, LIFE FRANCA will involve citizens, decision makers and professionals working in the field such as geologists, engineers, architects, journalists and insurance agents. Each project partner will be responsible for one or more different actions to achieve together the expected results.

The first phase of the project includes analysis and reorganisation of existing hazard data and information available for the Province of Trento. Such information will be used to develop a set of strategic scenarios together with different groups of stakeholder. Citizens will be involved in the Three Horizons exercise, a tool to share images of possible future flood events and their consequences.

An important outcome of the project is a geo-portal about Flood Risk. The Flood Risk Portal will provide maps and information about flood events and hazards, and will be accessible by the public as well as experts and institutions. It will also collect reports from citizens such as damages to defensive structures or unusual situations.

Specific training on several aspects of flood-risk communication will be addressed to three groups of professional figures: practitioners, journalists and policy-makers.

Informal learning about flood risk will take place in the form of educational activities for students, training courses for teachers, science cafés and temporary exhibitions for the general public.

More information on the project's website <http://www.lifefranca.eu/>

Project Partners:



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