



Newsletter 1

June 2010

Mitigation Spatial Relevant Risks in European Regions and Towns (MiSRaR)

MiSRaR has finally started. This is the first newsletter of this European project in which experiences and knowledge will be exchanged in the field spatial relevant risk mitigation. Are you working in the field of mitigating spatial relevant risks and are you interested to share knowledge and experience in this field, than MiSRaR might be of great interest to you.

Objectives of the MiSRaR project

MiSRaR aims to improve risk management policies throughout the European Union. The project works on this objective by improving every step of the risk mitigation process. The risk mitigation process steps are being exemplified using four separate theme's: forest fires, flooding, landslides and industrial dangers. Within the framework of these four theme's, knowledge and experiences on spatial relevant risk mitigation will be shared among the partners.

Spatial planning is the central theme in this process and it is of great influence on every theme and every step of the risk management process. Most disasters are directly linked to choices made in spatial planning and therefore decisions in spatial planning can also strengthen the mitigation of disasters in these areas.

The MiSRaR Partners

MiSRaR is an European project funded by the Interreg IVC programme. It is implemented by seven partners. The safety region South Holland South is lead partner in the project. Other partners are the municipality of Tallinn (Estonia), the prefecture of Thesprotia (Greece), the province of Forli (Italy), de municipalities of Aveiro and Mirandela (Portugal) and the Euro Perspective Foundation (Bulgaria)

MiSRaR relevance in Europe

MiSRaR works with professionals in the field of risk mitigation in spatial planning, enabling them to exchange experiences and knowledge in this field with partners throughout Europe. MiSRaR is active on two levels: project managers and expert exchange knowledge with the partners in the project throughout the EU. On a second level, these experience are disseminated by the partners in their own national network ensuring a dissemination of results that goes further than the project partners alone.

How MiSRaR is going to operate

As mentioned earlier, the project aims at the exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of spatial relevant risks. This exchange will be facilitated through the organization of 14 thematic seminars during which the partners will present their experience and discuss to what extend these practices can be used elsewhere. Each seminar deals with one step of the whole disaster mitigation process. Besides the seminars, a European handbook on disaster mitigation will be developed and a number of brochures on the specific mitigation steps. These brochures will be disseminated throughout Europe. At the end of the project, specific focus will be given to the further development of the MiSRaR network and the project will be closed by a large scale dissemination conference.



Starting the MiSRaR project

The project started officially on the 1st of January and will end at the 31st of December 2012. The first half year has primarily focused on the setting of the project itself and the exchange of experiences in the first steps of the mitigation process.

On the 8th of March 2010, a kick off was organized in Dordrecht for all the project managers, during which the partners discussed the project setting and mutual obligations and expectations as project partners. Also the planning of the activities was discussed and further specified. All partners have organized a local start seminar introducing the project to their own local network, strengthening the participation and ownership of the project on a local level and ensuring the participation of all mitigation partners in their regions/ municipalities. These seminars specifically focus on the involvement of local networks.

On the 26th of May 2010, all partners signed the partnership agreement during the steering committee meeting, closing the inception phase of the MiSRaR project formally. Also the [website](#) of the project was launched. In the afternoon programme, the steering committee visited the fire department of Zwijndrecht en the shunt yard Kijfhoek, the largest in Europe.



The first seminar : Hazard Identification

On the 27th and 28th of May the first thematic seminar on hazard identification was organized in South Holland South. Ruud Houdijk, project manager of the Dutch project on regional risk profiling, started the seminar with an extensive presentation on the Dutch mitigation methods. Also all partners presented practices in the field of hazard identification, with specific attention to risk mapping, related to flooding and forest fires in Portugal, Italy and Greece. Also more political oriented practices were introduced, such as the Regional Crisis Committee in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, which plays a central role in the hazard identification process. Tallinn introduced their hazard identification process in a Natura 2000 area in their municipality. All best practices can be found on the [MiSRaR website](#).



As part of the seminar a field visit was organized to the Maeslantkering, protecting South Holland from flooding from the sea. Presentations were given on the challenges the Netherlands faces in the mitigation process, particularly in the field of flooding.



The second seminar: Risk Analysis

The second seminar was organized in Aveiro, Portugal on the 21st and 22nd of June. The seminar was focused around the risk analysis phase. The seminar was organized along the lines agreed with all partners and had a good mix of presentation, exchanging ideas and interest and visiting policy in practice through field visits.

The first day started with a presentation by the university of Aveiro on the flooding risks of the Aveiro area. Specific attention was given to the spatial relevance of the Ria Aveiro laguna en problems concerning coastal erosion. The university introduced its risk maps and how these are used to analyze the risks in the area. The university has developed this practice facilitating the political decision procedures in the area. Aveiro cooperates with 9 other municipalities in the area on this matter.



Following this introduction, project partners introduced their practices in this field. The EPF introduced a hail analysis instrument, preventing damage on crops. Mirandela introduced the use of historical data and how they are capable of predicting floods, but also providing information on the analysis of these risks. Thesprotia introduced their multi level governance approach in their risk analysis process.

In the afternoon the port of Aveiro was visited, enabling the participants to get a clear understanding of the potential industrial risk, linked to coastal erosion and its possible dangers and how these dangers are mitigated in the area.



The last part of the seminar was used for presentation of ZHZ, Tallinn and Forli. ZHZ presented the Dutch system of the provincial risk map, used in the South Holland South area. Risk maps were presented, and special attention was given to the difference maps used to communicate with the population en the maps used for professionals and decision makers.

Forli presented also a provincial risk map used for the analysis of landslides in the region. This map shows landslides from the past, and the

likelihood of reoccurring accidents. This information is combined with information on vulnerable objects enabling clear analysis of the risks in the area and what type of measure have to be taken to prevent damage. Finally Tallinn shared its experience with risk mapping in Tallinn North and how these are used to mitigate risks to their Natura 2000 area.



One of the main results of the project was the common understanding that choices in organization of public administration determine to a great extent the way risk mitigation can be dealt with and how experiences differ but are valuable for strengthening own policies. Also the partners indicated that the chosen set up for the seminars is very efficient and effective and is very instrumental to the exchange of experience among the partners. It is very clear to the partners now that all countries are dealing with the same kind of questions and problem regarding the mitigation process and that the exchange leads to access to improved processes and products for all.

The seminar in Aveiro was the closing of the first half year of the project. A very busy, but also very successful half year! In the upcoming six months, the project will focus on risk evaluation and setting mitigation plans. Three seminars are planned for this second semester: in Tallinn (8-9 September), Forli (28-29 October) and Thesprotia (1st week of December)

