

TIEMS Italian Chapter – national emergency management experience and future challenges

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ABSTRACT

Geologically speaking Italy is a quite young Country. The particular geomorphology dynamic of the Country makes Italy prone to a number of high risk natural calamities, from earthquakes to volcanic eruptions. Italy is also one of the countries in the Mediterranean with the highest seismic risk, due to its particular geographic position at the convergence of the African and Eurasian plates.

Furthermore, Italy is also a heavily industrialized; more than Seveso 1.100 industries are located in high densely populated regions.

Despite the fact Italy during its history experienced a long series of catastrophic events (e.g. from Pompei 79 d.c., to Seveso disaster in 1976, Aquila Earthquake in 2009 and Mirandola Earthquake in 2012), a structured and regulated approach to the risk prevention and emergency management is quite recent.

In 1981 for the first time a new regulation introduced the ordinary and extraordinary Civil Protection bodies and regulated their respective competencies. Civil Protection was defined as the State's primary task. That regulation stated that both the Prefects and government Commissioners have an important role in managing the emergencies.

Nowadays the Italian Civil Protection structure, due to the evolution of its competencies and the related regulations, is thoroughly organized as system based on the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. a coordinated system of competences provided by the administrations of the State, the Regions, the Provinces, the Municipalities and the other local authorities, the public bodies, the scientific community, volunteers, rolls and professional boards and any other institutions even private ones.

The first response to the emergency, whatever the nature and the extent of the event, must be guaranteed on a local level, starting from the municipal

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structure, as the nearest institution that have to stand for guaranteeing the orderly societal life. When an event cannot be coped with using the means provided by the municipality, the higher levels are mobilized by means of integrated action: the Province, the Prefecture, the Region and the Government.

Even if the Italian expertise in the field of risk and emergency management is quite advanced, due to the aforementioned experiences, which pushed the development of a very broad catalogue of risks, we are quite convinced that there is still a gap to fulfill in order to face the challenge posed by unaddressed or unperceived risks which implies the improvement of many operational and organizational aspects, such as, for example, the exploitation of the advanced communication technologies, the implementation of strategies dedicated to increase the resilience of communities and the development of management model based not only on command and control approaches but also on effective public private partnership.

For these reasons we decided to set up a TIEMS Italian Chapter in order share and compare the experience of risk management gained at national level with the TIEMS international community.

The conference contribution will illustrate the Italian emergency management structure and will highlight the main aspects that still need to be improved. Moreover the presentation will illustrate how the TIEMS IC aims at developing a detail program of activities at national and international level in order to contribute to the international vision of the emergency management.