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EU Support to Flood Prevention
and Forest Fires Risk Management
in the Western Balkans and Turkey



European Civil Protection

PRESS RELEASE

IPA Floods and Fires Program Launch event in Turkey 25 May 2021

On 25 May, the sixth national launch event of the European Union funded program IPA Floods and Fires (IPA FF) took place, this time in Turkey, following events in other five of the Partner Countries. IPA FF is a new 3-year initiative for floods and forest fires risk management in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

The launch event gathered representatives from the national authorities in charge of civil protection, representatives from the European Commission Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), the EU Delegation to Turkey and the IPA FF Consortium partners.

The IPA FF program follows up on previous EU-funded initiatives aimed at strengthening capacities for disaster risk prevention and preparedness in the region of Western Balkans and Turkey. *“As Turkey's AFAD we feel appreciation to be a part of this precious programme. Floods are second most damaging disasters after earthquakes in Turkey but we also keep an eye on forest fires, as climate change, which extends the length of the summer period and the number of hotter days. AFAD believes that the programme will be successful in terms of achieving its aims and will be another solid bridge for Turkey and EU relations”*, said, Hamza Taşdelen, AFAD Vice-President.

The program represents another step towards regional cooperation, the sharing of best practices, and further alignment of partner countries' systems with the EU legislation in civil protection.

Angel Gutierrez Hidalgo, Head of Economic and Social Development Section at the EU Delegation to Turkey, said *“the EU and Turkey have always cooperated in Disaster Risk Management, showing mutual solidarity whenever one needed the other. This cooperation has increasingly become more and more structured thanks to the participation of Turkey in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism from May 2016. We look forward to widening and further deepening this cooperation with all Turkish partners. Among other disasters, Forest Fires and Floods are clearly the ones that need a regional response rather than administrative and national divisions. The EU Delegation is very happy to see that through this enhanced cooperation between Turkey and the EU, progress is being made to better tackle these type of disasters”*.

The IPA FF Consortium is established by the Italian Civil Protection Department as coordinator jointly with the civil protection agencies of Sweden, Slovenia, Romania, the Fire and Rescue Brigade of the Moravian-Silesian Region of the Czech Republic, the Romanian National Centre for Disaster Management Foundation and the Italian CIMA Foundation.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this event, as well as the first phase of the program, was organised in a virtual mode turning emergency into opportunity and guaranteeing the implementation of activities for a better risk prevention and response in the region.



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Annex: IPA-FF fact sheet

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