



Next Generation Tools and Technologies for Crisis Management: the RESPOND-A project holds its final conference in Cyprus

The rapid evolution of technology is bringing huge and beneficial changes in all areas and the rescue sector could not be an exception to that. Academic institutions and other bodies in the European Union are working relentlessly to develop technologies in this field and to link them optimally with new practices for rescuers so that they too can be secured more effectively and efficiently in the performance of their important but very dangerous task.

RESPOND-A is a pioneering project which like all others of its kind in the European Union is funded by the European Commission - here the Horizon 2020 funding framework for research and innovation. It brings together thirty-three organisations, academic institutions and other bodies from thirteen European countries. Cyprus is in fact the coordinator of the whole project, as this role was assumed by CERIDES - Centre of Excellence in Risk & Decision Sciences of the European University Cyprus from the very beginning and continued during the three years of RESPOND-A.

The final conference of the project was held on the 25th of April 2023 in Nicosia at CERIDES - European University Cyprus. Apart from the overview and the results of all pilot projects carried out in several countries, it offered the possibility both on-site and online to any interested party to join and see the important technology that was produced, tested and implemented in the framework of this project: sensors and smart wearables, critical communication systems and other rescuer connectivity technologies, data fusion tools the coordination of rescuers' data as well as other technologies for the development of RESPOND-A.

The participation and support of the Republic of Cyprus was significant throughout the project, something that was documented both by the participation of the relevant services in the pilot activities which took place in Cyprus as well as by the presence in the final conference of the leaderships of the Police, Fire Service and Civil Defence officials.

The conference was attended by representatives of the Sovereign Base Area Police and Fire Service.

The enormous amount of work done during the three years of the project and the results produced were presented extensively at the conference in the presence of a representative of the European Commission. It is important to emphasise that within these three years thousands of pages of deliverables were written while, countless meetings between partners, open webinars for the public, five rescuers / first responders trainings and three exercises in Greece, Cyprus and Spain took place.

There were two keynote speakers from Greece at the conference in Nicosia namely Dr. Ioannis M. Dokas, Associate Professor at the Democritus University of Thrace and Dr. Theodore Giannaros Associate Researcher at the Institute for Environmental Research



& Sustainable Development of the National Observatory of Athens. Several partners came to Cyprus for the event while others attended the final conference online,

In addition to the final conference, CERIDES will be organising the final General Assembly of the project at the European University Cyprus. The aim is to plan the final procedural steps for the successful final evaluation of the project.