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NEWSLETTER

WP2: Roadmap to Resilience: Setting the Ground for Impact

This newsletter presents the main outcomes of **Work Package 2 (WP2)** of the DRU project, highlighting key findings from surveys and focus groups. It offers insights into university disaster preparedness across partner countries and outlines concrete steps toward building more resilient higher education institutions.

About the project

The Disaster Resilient Universities (DRU) project,

co-funded by the Erasmus+ KA220-HED programme, unites universities from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Italy, and Romania to strengthen higher education institutions' ability to prevent, prepare for, and respond to natural disasters.

🎯 Objectives:

- **O1:** Strengthen **collaborative resilience** among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
- **O2: Empower Disaster Action Strategies** through shared best practices and innovative tools.
- **O3: Promote Information Literacy** and critical thinking to counter misinformation.
- **O4: Build Digital Resilience** by enhancing digital skills and cybersecurity awareness.

🤝 Partners

University of Ioannina (GR) – **Coordinator**
Ovidius University of Constanța (RO)
Mediterranean University of Albania (AL)
Scuola Superiore Carolina Albasio (IT)
University of Zenica (BIH)

🧩 Work Packages

Work package n°1 - Project Management

Work package n°2 - DRU Roadmap to resilience: setting the ground for impact

Work package n°3 - Disaster prevention through information and AI

Work package n°4 - Disaster resilience through fact-checking education

Work package n°5 - Sustaining resilience through community

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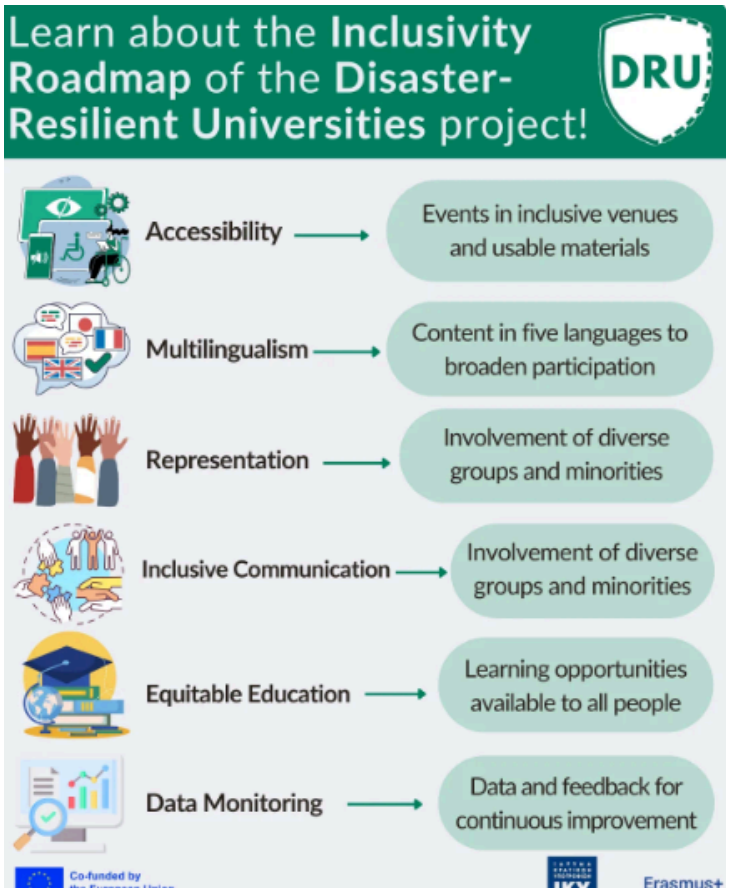
ROADMAP TO RESILIENCE: SETTING THE GROUND FOR IMPACT | WORK PACKAGE 2

WP2 led by Ovidius University of Constanța (Romania) and supported by the University of Zenica (Bosnia and Herzegovina), assessed disaster preparedness across partner institutions.

OUTPUTS

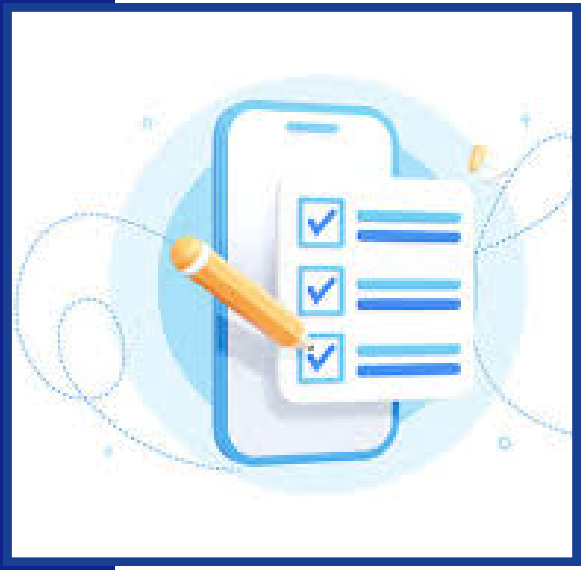
- Assessment Report
- Best Practice Guide
- Roadmap to Resilience



Survey Overview

- The survey gathered responses from **161 university members** across the **five partner countries**. Participants included both **students** and faculty members, ensuring a diverse range of views.

- The questions covered: **personal experience** with natural disasters, **awareness** of emergency procedures, availability of **safety infrastructure** and **training** or **information** received on disaster preparedness.



Key findings from the survey

🌍 Widespread Disaster Experience

86% of respondents reported direct experience with earthquakes, while 45% experienced floods or fires.

⚠️ High Basic Awareness, but Preparedness Varies

Most respondents showed strong awareness of basic emergency procedures, but preparedness levels differ across universities.

📋 Emergency Plans Exist, but Communication Gaps Persist

75% confirmed emergency plans exist. Only 45% of staff and 34% of students reported being fully informed.

🏢 Limited Training and Visibility of Safety Offices

Only 41% were aware of a dedicated emergency office. Nearly half did not know if such a unit existed.

📊 Need for Standardized Approaches

Preparedness levels vary widely across countries. Some universities conduct regular drills; others offer minimal guidance. This inconsistency highlights the need for:

- Standardized practices
- Mandatory emergency education
- Common protocols and reliable infrastructure
- Regular training programs

Focus Group Highlights

Focus group discussions were held across all partner countries to better understand disaster preparedness in universities.
These sessions gathered students, faculty, and staff, to openly discuss safety, communication, and resilience.
Despite national differences, several shared patterns emerged.

🌋 Real Concerns Across Campuses:

- Strong worries about earthquakes, especially at the University of Zenica.
- Floods identified as major risks in Albania and Bosnia & Herzegovina.
- Fires seen as secondary but relevant in Italy.
- Participants reported anxiety and stress, showing that 🧠 psychological readiness is as vital as physical safety.

📢 Communication and Drills Need Strengthening:

- Emergency communication systems are outdated.
- Suggested use of multi-channel alerts: SMS, mobile apps, 📢 loudspeakers.
- Regular drills should be scheduled and integrated into the academic calendar.

🩺 Building on Existing Strengths:

- Universities already have solid foundations – first aid programs, medical faculties, Red Cross clubs.
- Students proposed peer-led workshops and creating volunteer emergency brigades.
- Some campuses have started improvements like clearer signage and upgraded lab safety tools.

🌍 **Country Snapshots –** Key Findings

🇦🇱 **Albania:**
High earthquake awareness and strong student engagement potential, but few drills and limited safety office visibility. Needs stronger protocols and mobile alert pilots.

🇧🇦 **Bosnia & Herzegovina:**
Emergency infrastructure exists, yet disaster culture is weak. Requires more training, communication, and public awareness initiatives.

🇬🇷 **Greece:**
High exposure to earthquakes and floods; systems are outdated. Modern alert tools and routine drills are urgently needed.

🇮🇹 **Italy:**
Fire prevention prioritized, but general disaster awareness among students remains low. Multi-hazard training and engagement should be expanded.

🇷🇴 **Romania:**
Solid legal framework on disaster management, but uneven implementation at the campus level. Needs consistent drills and stronger institutional coordination.

✓ Develop training modules based on WP2 findings
✓ Pilot alert systems and safety drills in partner campuses
✓ Share model practices with regional HEIs
✓ Promote a culture of resilience across all institutions

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DRU | Disaster-Resilient Universities

We welcome inquiries from institutions, researchers, and stakeholders committed to disaster preparedness in higher education across Europe.

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