

BiH Dayton Project



The EU strengthens BiH civil protection capabilities for greater disaster resilience

📅 August 22, 2024

The EU Delegation to BiH issued a [press release](#) today about the coordinated field exercise “Disaster Coordination and Response 2024.” The full text of the release is below.

22.08.2024

Ambassador Johann Sattler, Head of the Delegation of the EU in BiH and EU Special Representative joined today the coordinated field exercise „Disaster Coordination and Response 2024“ organised by the Federal Administration of Civil Protection today in Nišići, near Olovo. The field exercise served as an example of the coordinated efforts required by the local services to effectively take part in the European Civil Protection Mechanism, a key tool for coordinating disaster preparedness and response across Europe.

„I am delighted to be here today for this unique field exercise. This is an incredibly important area, and I am proud of the significant progress we have made during my term over the past few years. The devastating floods in 2014 made us realize how crucial it is for BiH to be part of a larger community – the EU family. It's easier to face challenges when you have friends who stand by you in times of need. BiH has become a full member of the European Civil Protection Mechanism, which means that in the event of natural disasters, it can receive full support and also provide assistance to others, with compensation for the help rendered. The EU is here, and we will remain BiH's most steadfast partner. The next critical step we are working towards is BiH joining the 112-emergency number system, used by most countries across the continent. I am optimistic that we will make progress on this in the near future and successfully implement it,” said Ambassador Sattler.

The field exercise was coordinated by the Federal Administration of Civil Protection in cooperation with BiH Armed Forces, BiH Ministry of Security, Firefighting brigade, specialised civil protection administrations from different government levels, Canton Sarajevo Ministry of Internal Affairs and FBiH Red Cross. They demonstrated a coordinated action, which is essential to ensure timely and effective response to natural and other disasters and protect lives. It also showed the country's progress in disaster response and demonstrated the strong partnership between the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

“The EU provided gyrocopters in 2019 through the civil protection mechanization support programme and they were used during the pandemic as well as recently when our specialized unit was conducting fire reconnaissance in open space before the engagement of the Armed Forces, which significantly helped in preparation and response. We are grateful for the help to our specialized units because they primarily carry out trainings in accordance with the standards and guidelines of the EU and can equally participate in all missions in the countries of the EU,” said Aldin Brašnjić, director of the Federal Administration of Civil Protection.

Since the devastating floods in 2014, the European Union has allocated over 8 million BAM to strengthen BiH civil protection services which consists of specialized equipment, including two gyrocopters, rescue tools and transport and

monitoring systems. The procured equipment combined with training programs and the development of risk assessments have greatly improved the country's resilience to emergencies.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a member of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism since 2022, which has significantly improved the country's disaster preparedness and response capabilities. This membership has provided access to vital resources and funding, strengthened cross-border cooperation and ultimately improved the protection of its citizens during emergencies.

Membership of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism also represents a step toward greater EU integration for Bosnia and Herzegovina. It signals the country's commitment to aligning with EU standards and cooperating on critical issues, potentially strengthening its candidacy for full EU membership.

The European Union will continue to support Bosnia and Herzegovina in this sector with additional funds secured to improve BiH responsiveness to emergencies. The funds will also help the introduction of the Single European Emergency Number 112 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is used across the continent.

The EU remains committed to supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina ensuring that citizens are better protected in times of crisis and strengthening the country's preparedness for any challenge that may arise.

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