

# NATIONAL CIVIL PROTECTION STRATEGY

2024



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# NATIONAL CIVIL PROTECTION STRATEGY

# 2024

The National Civil Protection Strategy has been approved by the National Security Council on October 15, 2024.

Preparation of the Strategy was led by the Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Emergencies, with collaboration from the ministries and other bodies involved.

## FOREWORD BY THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR

As stated in the first National Civil Protection Strategy, of 2019, over recent decades there have been considerable changes in public policy on the issue of what is now known as civil protection.

Approval of that strategy meant that for the first time Spain had a strategic framework with which to address emerging challenges such as the consequences of climate change as a catalyst of hazards, the country's demographic circumstances and trends, land management and use, and the measures required to remedy situations of particular social or individual vulnerability to emergencies and disasters. It also aligned and integrated the civil protection activities of the Central Administration.

In the period covered by the strategy, the true value of civil protection in Spain was made abundantly clear, through decisive and resolute responses to the different adversities that the country has faced, owing to various hazards: natural hazards, such as volcanic eruptions and storms, multiple forest fires and floods; technological hazards, such as accidents involving dangerous goods; health hazards, such as those from the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic; and those affecting the day-to-day lives of Spanish citizens, who we serve.

At the Conference of Presidents of the Autonomous Communities held on 13 March 2022 in La Palma, a clear commitment was made to strengthen the operational capacities of the central National Civil Protection System bodies, and to improve coordination of the different system stakeholders (national, regional and local) in all the phases of the civil protection cycle.

At the international level, guarantees have been made to realize synergies and resilience through the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; the Paris Agreement, as regards combating climate change; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Together, this ensures that disaster risk is managed comprehensively, with an emphasis on prevention rather than response.

In today's world, which is increasingly vulnerable to the repercussions of climate change and natural and technological hazards, the 2024 National Civil Protection Strategy is yet another reflection of our firm commitment to the protection and safety of all citizens.

In view of these challenges, it is crucial that we have a robust framework that enables us to anticipate, prevent and manage hazards effectively. In that respect, Act 17/2015 of 9 July, on the National Civil Protection System (hereinafter the NCP System Act), is the foundation for our emergency response capacity.

The Act has reinforced the regulatory framework to guarantee the coordination, cooperation and joint responsibility of the different public administrations and of civil society. The 2024 Strategy is fully aligned with the guiding principles of the NCP System Act, setting out a comprehensive approach that strengthens prevention, preparedness, response and recovery with respect to any emergency.

In Spain, the National Civil Protection System functions correctly because we believe that civil protection remains an affair of State in which all of us—both public administrations under whose purview it falls, and civil

## FOREWORD BY THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR

society as a whole—collaborate and cooperate with one another to address any risks that may arise and to deal with their consequences. That is why it was so important for the strategic framework to be established at the last plenary meeting of the National Civil Protection Council.

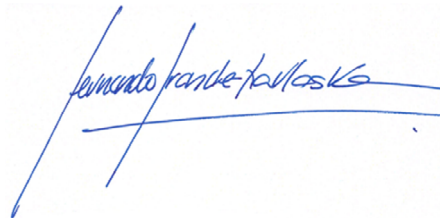
Civil protection is no longer limited solely to disaster response. Today, it is a key tool to build the resilience of our communities, fostering sustainable development that enables us to mitigate risks and adapt to new challenges. In this regard, the 2024 National Civil Protection Strategy not only aims to continuously improve emergency management, but also to apply international best practices and innovative technologies, and to develop a culture of prevention by educating civil society.

That is why active participation by civil society, a key element of the NCP System Act, is fully incorporated into the Strategy, which emphasizes the importance of volunteering and the joint responsibility of citizens. This element is vital for effective protection, with prevention and self-protection playing a central role in the safety and security of people and the environment.

This document, approved by the National Security Council, also constitutes an important new element in the strategic development of National Security policies. In keeping with this, it is published with the clear intention of promoting transparent and open public management, thus facilitating the necessary participation of all our citizens in collective efforts to address emergencies and disasters.

Therefore, it also constitutes a call to all of society, to women and men, to join this combined effort. Only through close collaboration among administrations, the private sector, civil society and all citizens can we ensure an effective and timely response to the hazards we face.

My most sincere thanks to the staff, volunteers and citizens whose steadfast dedication makes our country ever safer and more resilient. This 2024 National Civil Protection Strategy is a decisive step towards a future of prevention and protection.



Fernando Grande-Marlaska Gómez

Minister for the Interior

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# Introduction



## Introduction

Today's world is being affected by overpopulation of some urban areas, depopulation of rural areas, deficient urban planning, increasing inequalities, loss of biodiversity, degradation of ecosystems and civil and military conflicts. In addition, new threats are emerging and existing threats are following different patterns because of the aforementioned factors. All of these have combined with the impact of climate change, which leads to more frequent and severe extreme weather events. These changes are occurring in an increasingly global and interconnected world, with more interdependence among territories, sectors and individuals, meaning that hazards are becoming very complex processes with repercussions that extend beyond borders. Given this landscape, it is clear that the scope of civil protection is not merely domestic, with a growing international presence not only in response to disasters outside Spain, but also through participation in activities to promote and strengthen risk preparedness and prevention. At the same time, we find ourselves in a period in which technological advances play a crucial role in the field of civil protection. Technological developments have opened up new possibilities and the opportunity to act before disasters occur, minimizing their impact on society.

Given all of the above, this document—provided for by Article 4 of Act 17/2015, of 9 July, on the National Civil Protection System (hereinafter the NCP System Act), and conceived as an operational planning instrument—is even more important, as it provides a framework for action to prepare for, prevent and respond effectively to situations of risk.

The National Civil Protection Strategy (hereinafter, NCP Strategy) describes the activities that the Central Administration must undertake in the area of public safety and security and analyses the key threats and hazards of a natural, human or technological nature that may lead to emergencies or disasters in Spain. The Strategy also sets out the strategic lines of action to follow, to integrate, prioritize and coordinate efforts to make the best possible use of the resources available to the Administration and manage them.

Over recent decades, civil protection has been in constant evolution, changing considerably. This situation has not been without difficulties in terms of coordinating a complex, open and flexible system with multiple stakeholders.

At the national level, although Spain already has a coordinated and effective National Civil Protection System, this vision of civil protection calls for continuous strengthening of that system, combining the contributions of all administrations, private sector bodies and citizens.

Since civil protection and emergency management are shared responsibilities of all public administrations, cooperation and coordination among those administrations is key to the functioning of the system. This should not only be insisted on in the case of emergency management, at the different existing levels and drawing on the capacities of other administrations, especially following the roll-out of the National Response Mechanism, but also in all the other cycle phases: in prevention (through joint work and distributed responsibilities), planning (in the context of the National Civil Protection Council) and recovery (according to the competency frameworks of the different administrations). It is therefore vital to have a permanent, multilateral, efficient framework for fluid cooperation among all participants in the National Civil Protection System, but also for there to be bilateral cooperation at all levels to manage the system as well as possible.

Training is a cornerstone of this cooperation framework: training of staff within the National Civil Protection System; training of volunteers; and nurturing a culture of prevention and self-protection among citizens, for them as individuals and for their families. As part of this integration and of the culture of National Security, awareness must be raised among citizens on the main threats and hazards posed by disasters. To do so, it is vital to promote conducts of self-protection and resilience in Spanish society.

Therefore, the Central Administration must focus not only on training public sector workers but also on cooperating with regional and local authorities through shared courses and platforms to establish and disseminate a shared approach to emergency management and relevant cutting-edge management methods and technologies; the same should be pursued between regional authorities and local authorities.

Furthermore, training in emergencies must be linked to the academic sector and to universities, especially in terms of boosting research, development and innovation (RDI) and vocational training in the field, both within the educational system and in the context of vocational training, thus regulating civil protection training.

In line with the above, at the session of the Conference of Presidents of the Autonomous Communities held on 13 March 2022 in La Palma, chaired by the President of the Government, the participants undertook to strengthen the operational capacities of the central National Civil Protection System bodies in terms of management, planning and coordination, and to improve coordination of the different system stakeholders (national, regional and local) in all the phases of the civil protection cycle.

At the international level, this approach requires alignment, seeking synergies and complementarities with international agreements and agendas concerning resilience (Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals). It calls for a shift from comprehensive management of emergencies to comprehensive risk management, attempting to boost prevention with respect to response, bearing in mind that the best possible means of managing emergencies is by successfully preventing them.



# Chapter 1

A comprehensive approach to  
civil protection:  
background and current  
situation

## A comprehensive approach to civil protection: background and current situation

The Spanish Constitution does not explicitly mention civil protection or emergencies, but it does establish an obligation of public powers to safeguard the right to life and physical integrity as the primary fundamental right (Article 15) as part of a political system based on unity and solidarity among territories (Article 2), whereby the different public administrations must be effective and act in accordance with the principle of coordination (Article 103). The Constitution also provides for the possibility of establishing duties for citizens in situations of severe risk (Article 30.4). All of these areas come together in the public safety competencies set out in Article 149.1.29.

The national dimension of civil protection is covered by the current National Security Strategy, approved by the National Security Council in 2021.

The Strategy states that emergencies and disasters are key hazards and threats in terms of National Security, owing to their impact on the safety and security of

people and assets. In that respect, it names some factors that heighten the risk of emergencies and disasters including rural depopulation and overpopulation of certain cities; the degradation of ecosystems, aggravated by the effects of climate change; and the rise in the magnitude and frequency of certain adverse weather events. In this context, the main hazards it identifies are floods; forest fires; earthquakes; tsunamis; volcanic hazards; adverse weather events; accidents in installations or during processes using or storing dangerous substances; the road or rail transport of dangerous goods; catastrophic passenger transport accidents; and nuclear, radiological and biological hazards.

That is why the first strategic pillar of the National Security Strategy is “A Spain that protects people’s lives, rights, and freedoms, and the constitutional order”. Strengthening the capabilities of the fundamental components of national security—national defence, external action, and public safety and security, supported by the State intelligence and information services—and bolstering public health, civil protection, and the protection of critical infrastructure are key to addressing threats to Spain’s interests and values, in addition to contributing to its territorial cohesion.

Specifically, responses to crisis situations include the National Civil Protection System, the consolidation of functional structures and coordination networks, together with the allocation of the necessary resources, which will facilitate improved management of emergencies and disasters, pursuant to the General State Plan for Civil Protection Emergencies. Moreover, the Strategy highlights the importance of ensuring the continuous, real-time exchange of information between the National Civil Protection System and the National Security System in the event of a disaster.

Therefore, the National Civil Protection System is fully integrated into the National Security System. Moreover, the National Security Council is responsible for approving NCP Strategy, as proposed by the Ministry of the Interior.

The NCP System Act establishes that the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for management of emergencies of national significance, which calls for organization and coordination of activities and management of all national and international resources.

In keeping with all of the above, the current legal framework for civil protection in Spain and the operational framework for disaster risk management have been developed through approval and entry into force in 2020 of the General State Plan for Civil Protection Emergencies, which has an approach based on integration and multiple hazards; in 2021 of the State Plan for Civil Protection against the Risk of Tsunamis, a cutting-edge plan that closes the circle of human safety addressed by public safety; and the new Basic Regulations on Civil Protection, approved through Royal Decree 524/2023, of 20 June, as the second piece of legislation on the System, which is aligned with the operating contexts of the General State Plan for Civil Protection Emergencies to ensure that serious situations are properly escalated, along with the different plans that may be affected.

In addition, in fulfilment of the mandate from the Conference of Presidents on 13 March 2022 in La Palma, the Horizon 2035 National Disaster Risk Reduction Plan was approved. Horizon 2035 aims to promote and develop a mature system to guarantee a highly effective response to emergencies and disasters, ensuring protection of the entire national territory on equal terms.

At this stage of its development, the key innovation is the agreement reached by the Conference of Presidents, whereby the system is furnished with a conceptual framework that is aligned with the current distribution of functions among the different authorities of Spain. It offers an advanced governance model in which the assigned duties at each level of competencies are performed within a comprehensive planning process.

At the international level, an international legal framework has been shaped that includes norms and institutions to ensure that there is international cooperation on civil protection, knowledge-sharing and mutual assistance to address global disaster risk management challenges. In this context, the international action of the Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Emergencies (DGCPE)—as the department of the Ministry of the Interior that is responsible for international relations in the field of civil protection—must reflect the growing internationalization of State activity as a result of Spain's membership of the European Union (EU), its participation in multilateral forums and its bilateral relations with other countries.

The priority areas for international activities of the Central Administration in the field of civil protection are: 1) The EU, and particularly the EU Civil Protection Mechanism; 2) The United Nations system and its disaster risk management instruments; 3) The Union for the Mediterranean; 4) Bilateral cooperation with the traditional partners of Spain's foreign action, particularly with Ibero-America and neighbouring countries—France and Portugal—but also the countries of the western Mediterranean.

In recent years, numerous disasters have tested the response and prevention capacities of Spain, such as the recurrent flooding caused by cut-off lows, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic that began in 2020, accelerating climate change with intense forest fire seasons, Storm Filomena and the volcanic eruption on the island of La Palma. That is why, although the comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach of the 2019 NCP Strategy meant that a plethora of different events were properly addressed, and despite positive reactions to its capacity to respond to the different emergency situations that have arisen, a new strategy is needed that is even more robust and effective.

This Strategy therefore builds on the preceding version, which as a planning instrument proved to be effective in addressing the different events that can endanger Spain's citizens and territories.

To establish the Strategy's Goals, its content has been aligned with the four strategic pillars of the Horizon 2035 plan:

- Strengthening the operational, management, planning and coordination capacities of the bodies within the National Civil Protection System.
- Organizing resources in a transparent, harmonized way that guarantees they are interoperable and ensuring assistance among different public administrations.
- Guaranteeing the capacities of the different public administrations to address threats corresponding to their levels of planning and response.



- Increasing society's resilience by promoting a culture of prevention, including as many relevant stakeholders as possible to ensure an optimal level of security and safety in disaster situations.

Based on these Goals, the Strategy sets out 58 lines of action, which are in turn aligned with or connected to European or international measures, reflecting the global nature of most National Security threats.

Lastly, the integration of the National Civil Protection System into the National Security System enables the Government of Spain to take a comprehensive approach to management of threats and hazards.



## Chapter 2

# Hazards in the field of civil protection

# Hazards in the field of civil protection

## 2.1. Introduction

Civil protection as a field is concerned with preventing, mitigating and responding to emergencies and disasters that may jeopardize the security, safety and welfare of the population. It plays a vital role in protecting lives, property and the environment against such events.

However, when performing civil protection functions, a number of hazards must be faced. It is crucial to understand and address those hazards to strengthen society's response and protection capacities, in order to meticulously plan and thus ensure efficient and effective responses.

Hazards in the field of civil protection can be divided into those that are natural and those that are human-made.

Firstly, natural hazards represent a significant danger: Phenomena such as earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, storms, forest fires and extreme weather events can lead to serious

emergencies. Management of these risks entails not only anticipating occurrences, but also preparing to mitigate their impact and building capacity to respond in a swift and coordinated manner during and after events.

Technological hazards are related to human activities and technologies that can give rise to emergencies, such as industrial accidents, chemical leaks and structural collapses or events that can result in radioactive contamination, with potentially devastating consequences. The complexity of these risks calls for specific preparation and a response capacity that is adapted to technology-related situations. Civil protection must be adapted to the specific nature of such events, with special protocols and strategies to address emerging technological challenges.

In social terms, vulnerability of the population is a key consideration. Contributing factors include population density, poverty, lack of access to basic services, average population age and the extent of training in prevention measures. These circumstances can amplify disasters and hamper civil protection activities. It is vital to include a socially aware approach in civil protection strategies, to address disparities and ensure equitable responses.

Environmental degradation and climate change are perhaps the most significant challenges of the twenty-first century, and they have only been addressed at the international level since the 1970s. The solutions to these problems are not straightforward, because environmental degradation is largely connected to a lifestyle based on consumption and growth. Meanwhile, climate change caused by burning of fossil fuels and deforestation will lead to an acceleration of desertification in Spain, as well as a decline in water resources and a loss of biodiversity, among other effects.

The trends of recent years can be drawn from experience acquired preventing, managing, monitoring and recovering from different emergency events. The period has been characterized by highly unstable weather patterns and season creep, hindering forecasting and resulting in uncharacteristic periods of sharp contrasts. On one hand, there have been episodes of severe meteorological and hydrological drought and extreme temperatures in unusual areas. On the other hand, torrential rains in the summer and autumn have caused flooding and there have been heavy snowstorms. These events represent the natural phenomenon that causes the most material damage in Spain and in all of Europe.

The significance of forest fires in Spain is linked to most of the country having a Mediterranean climate. Public policies in this area and gradually rising awareness among the public of the issue, including rejection of certain high-risk activities, have led to a decline in the number of fires and in the burnt area, although the risk remains high in Spain and will increase in the future as a result of climate change.

In terms of seismic activity, although Spain is not particularly exposed to such phenomena, there is frequent seismic movement in some areas. While a catastrophic event of this type is unlikely, if an event were to occur similar to the one in Lorca, Murcia, in 2011, the impact on the affected population, their property and infrastructure would be high. The eruption of the Tajogaite Volcano on the island of La Palma in 2021 has made monitoring and surveillance of volcanic activity essential in Spain.

Lastly, events relating to technological hazards have been moderately frequent over recent years.

Considering these factors when planning and applying civil protection measures is key to improving communities' resilience. Precisely identifying and assessing risks, providing appropriate training for staff and raising public awareness are all vital components of a comprehensive and effective approach to civil protection. Only by fully understanding risks and properly preparing for them can an effective response be guaranteed, mitigating the harmful effects of emergencies and disasters.

## 2. 2. Risks: Identifying and assessing risks

Civil protection plans are the preparatory instruments for the organizational and functional framework and for mechanisms that enable mobilization of human and material resources to protect people, animals, property, the environment and historical, artistic and cultural heritage. Such plans also provide a system for coordination among the different public administrations involved.

Furthermore, as a reflection of how well-established the civil protection mechanisms of the different public administrations are, and of the highly complex nature of modern emergency management systems, the NCP System Act stipulates that the Basic Regulations on Civil Protection approved through Royal Decree 524/2023 shall determine which risks must be subject to civil protection planning, as well as the basis for improved coordination and efficiency in emergency services' response and assistance activities.

The Basic Regulations contain a list of hazards that must be subject to civil protection planning and that must be defined either in separate regulations or in the Basic Regulations themselves, including the corresponding list. Hazards are added to the list in the annex to the Basic Regulations through royal decrees, following a proposal from the Ministry of the Interior and a report from the National Civil Protection Council.

The most significant risks for the purposes of this NCP Strategy, of those listed in the NCP System Act and the Basic Regulations on Civil Protection, are:

- Floods
- Forest fires
- Earthquakes and tsunamis
- Volcanic activity
- Adverse weather events

- Accidents at facilities or in processes that use or store chemical, biological, nuclear or radioactive substances
  - Chemical hazards deriving from accidents at installations where chemical substances are used or stored
  - Biological hazards deriving from accidents at installations where biological substances are used or stored
  - Nuclear hazards deriving from accidents at installations where combustible substances employed at nuclear power plants are used or stored
  - Radiological hazards deriving from accidents at installations where radioactive substances are used or stored
- Accidents in the road or rail transport of dangerous goods
- Civil aviation accidents
- Risk of War

The following section defines and analyses the main hazards with regard to civil protection.

## 2.2.1. Floods

HAZARD	FLOODS
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>Although average rainfall in Spain is not very heavy, episodes of concentrated extreme rainfall lasting a few hours are becoming more frequent. These events lead to flows of water that are so strong that they can result in flooding of different types, overflowing into land and affecting people and property, causing loss of human life—around 300 people over the past 30 years—and extensive material damage, estimated to cost around 500 million euros a year.</p> <p>The huge differences between the normal and abnormal stream flows of some rivers—often with sudden changes—and the lack of organization of building alongside riverbanks both make the problem of flooding particularly serious in Spain.</p> <p>Moreover, heavy weather and storms lasting several days and affecting large water basins produce a form of flooding that advances more slowly, primarily causing financial damage and less frequently harming people.</p> <p>Although floods are natural phenomena that are essentially physical and hydrological in origin, when they occur in areas of human activity they become a land use management problem with substantial social and economic repercussions.</p>



## 2.2.2. Forest fires

HAZARD	FOREST FIRES
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>Forest fires occur periodically in Spain, and happen every year. The absolute number of such fires is very high compared to those in other EU countries, although Spain does have the second largest total area of forest in Europe and the fourth largest area of woodland.</p> <p>In addition to there being many fires and a large mass of woodland, the fires that break out are intense. Large fires, covering more than 500 hectares, such as those in Sierra de la Culebra (Zamora) in 2022, are becoming more extreme and unpredictable, making them difficult to put out and affecting people and property more severely.</p> <p>What is more, the growing urban development near forested areas (urban-forest interaction) means that the forest fires in such areas represent a particularly serious risk, given the specificities and complexity of putting them out.</p> <p>Forest fires contribute to degradation of forest ecosystems, causing severe environmental and economic damage and even leading to loss of human life. Therefore, they call for priority attention, to manage them and reduce their frequency, impact and repercussions.</p>

## 2.2.3. Earthquakes and tsunamis

HAZARD	EARTHQUAKES AND TSUNAMIS
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>The Iberian Peninsula is located on the south-western boundary of the Eurasian Plate where it collides with the African Plate. Our country is not subject to major earthquakes, although it does have considerable seismic activity, with moderate earthquakes capable of causing very serious damage.</p> <p>Approximately 6,000 earthquakes are recorded each year in the Iberian Peninsula. The majority of these earthquakes are low-magnitude events and primarily concentrated in the area to the south of the Cádiz-Alicante line and in the Pyrenees.</p> <p>Albeit infrequently, over the course of its history Spain has suffered a considerable number of disastrous earthquakes that have caused hundreds of fatalities. Such events include the earthquake of 1804 in Dalías (Almería), that of 1829 in Torrevieja (Alicante) and that of 1884 in Arenas del Rey (Granada). More recently, fatalities were also recorded following the earthquakes of 1956 in Albolote (Granada), in 1969 in Cape Saint Vincent (Portugal), and 2011 in Lorca (Murcia). This latter event resulted in 9 deaths and left 324 people injured, in addition to causing structural damage to more than a thousand buildings and to property significant to the cultural heritage of the city.</p>

## HAZARD

## EARTHQUAKES AND TSUNAMIS

### DESCRIPTION

There is currently no method capable of accurately predicting the time, place and magnitude of an earthquake, even if the most dangerous areas can be delineated, based on historical records and geological factors.

It is therefore necessary to improve coordination of preventive measures, such as the adoption of and effective compliance with seismic building codes adapted to the specific location in which buildings or other structures are to be constructed.

Tsunamis are highly unlikely events in this part of the world, but their potential impact is huge nonetheless. More than one thousand Spaniards lost their lives as a result of the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 and the tsunami it generated, which hit Spain's entire Atlantic coast, especially the provinces of Cadiz and Huelva. And we cannot rule out the possibility of the Mediterranean coast and the Balearic Islands being affected by a similar event, albeit of a lesser intensity, due to seismic activity in the Alboran Sea or along the northern coast of Algeria, as occurred in 2003 (Boumerdes earthquake, Algeria).

## 2.2.4. Volcanic activity

HAZARD	VOLCANIC ACTIVITY
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>Spain's has a relatively active volcanic history, with several significant eruptions over the centuries.</p> <p>The eruption of Tajogaite in La Palma, which began on 19 September 2021 and is considered to have ended on 13 December 2021, had a major impact on people, critical infrastructure, trade flows, property, and goods, as well as on the service sector. The civil protection system had no prior experience of managing an emergency of this nature, which laid bare the importance of disaster preparedness planning, and the need for support and scientific monitoring for the purposes of advising those responsible for emergency management. Equally important are actions to repair the damage done and the payment of compensation by Spain's Insurance Compensation Consortium to those affected.</p> <p>The Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands is the only Spanish region that has experienced recent volcanic activity, and for this reason it is the only part of Spain for which current legislation stipulates the need for a Civil Protection Plan for said risk. There is evidence of volcanic activity during the Holocene on mainland Spain but the volcanos in question are already extinct (Olot, Campo de Calatrava, Sierra de Gata).</p>

## 2.2.5. Adverse weather events

HAZARD	ADVERSE WEATHER EVENTS
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>An adverse weather event is any weather event capable of directly or indirectly causing harm to people and their property or significantly altering human activity.</p> <p>Adverse weather events cause serious personal and economic harm and are the deadliest natural hazard in Spain in terms of annual fatalities. Since the beginning of the century, approximately 83% of fatalities in Spain resulting from natural hazards have been caused by adverse weather events, whether directly or, more frequently, indirectly, for example, in the case of people with pre-existing health issues dying during periods of particularly hot weather.</p> <p>The events that usually have the greatest impact on our country are storms, heatwaves and strong winds, both inland and along the coast. Moreover, in recent years, extratropical storms have also had an impact, in particular in the Canary Islands.</p> <p>Drought, referring to prolonged periods of below-normal rainfall, affects Spain on a systematic basis, causing various kinds of socio-economic problems. The effects of climate change are expected to intensify throughout the 21st century, with more warm days and longer heatwaves, while the number of days of frost and precipitation is expected to fall.</p>

HAZARD	ADVERSE WEATHER EVENTS
<p><b>DESCRIPTION</b></p>	<p>Storms are increasingly intense at a local level; examples include the cut-off low which devastated the region of Murcia and the south of Alicante in September 2019, considered one of costliest storms in economic terms, and the cut-off low that hit central mainland Spain, Madrid and Castilla-La Mancha in September 2023, causing a number of fatalities as well as substantial damage to property and infrastructure.</p> <p>Storm Filomena, which caused heavy snowfall in central mainland Spain between 8 and 10 January 2021, can be classed as historic due both to the depth of the snow and to its extension across almost half of the country's mainland territory. Heavy rainfall in Andalusia, above all Malaga, reached torrential levels in some places on 8 January and caused two deaths. The economic costs of Filomena were also significant and the civil protection system was put to the test.</p> <p>Between 2 and 4 September 2023 Spain was hit by a cut-off low originating from the Atlantic. The provinces of Toledo, Cuenca, Ciudad Real and Guadalajara suffered the worst of the storm, which caused numerous flood-related incidents in all the provinces affected, leading to the temporary closure of main roads and secondary roads and interrupting rail services.</p>

## HAZARD

## ADVERSE WEATHER EVENTS

### DESCRIPTION

Sadly, this event caused eight fatalities nationwide, with some victims being swept away by currents and others being trapped in flooded buildings. In different parts of Castilla-La Mancha, people were forced to leave their homes and, in certain cases, entire neighbourhoods were evacuated. In Catalonia, the populations of several municipalities were ordered to stay in their homes for their own safety, due to the potential danger from overflowing rivers and flooding.

Weather records for Spain show a substantial rise in average temperatures since the last decade of the past century, especially in the summer months. Since the beginning of this century, the historical records for the highest daily maximum and minimum temperatures have already been exceeded (on 10 August 2023 the observatory at Valencia airport logged a new record temperature for the region of 46.8° C). Considerable season creep has also been observed.

## 2.2.6. Accidents at facilities or in processes where dangerous substances are stored or used

These hazards must be identified and analysed depending on the type of accident, the nature of the facilities, their geographical location, and the class of dangerous substance that could affect the population:

### 2.2.6.1. Chemical hazards deriving from accidents at facilities or in processes where chemical substances are used or stored

HAZARD	CHEMICAL HAZARDS
DESCRIPTION	<p>After a considerable increase at the beginning of the 21st century, over the past five years the number of establishments in Spain storing dangerous substances and therefore subject to Directive 2012/18/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2012 on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directive 96/82/EC, (the Seveso-III Directive) has stabilized and even fallen slightly, currently totalling 867 nationwide.</p> <p>Spain's Seveso sectors are primarily engaged in the storage and distribution of petroleum products and natural gas, the production and supply of energy, and the manufacture of basic organic chemical substances, among others.</p>



HAZARD	CHEMICAL HAZARDS
DESCRIPTION	<p>This high number of establishments contrasts with the relatively low number of accidents that typically occur at them, which can be attributed to the improvement in the regulations to which said establishments are subject. Over the past five years, the DGCPE has been notified of a total of 33 accidents at Seveso establishments, only one of which led to serious consequences off site.</p> <p>As regards the causes of the accidents reported, most of them are due to faults in mechanical systems or to staff operating errors.</p>

### 2.2.6.2. Biological hazards deriving from accidents at facilities or in processes where biological substances are used or stored

HAZARD	BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS
DESCRIPTION	<p>The recent pandemic has led to greater social awareness of the threat represented by biological hazards and the importance of implementing the measures necessary to control them. Situations deriving from the accidental release or deliberate use of pathogenic agents or genetically modified organisms can constitute events which, in some cases, have their origin in illicit activities and whose aim is to cause harm to people or property.</p> <p>Biotechnology is a sector with the potential to become one of the main drivers of technological change and this has led to a substantial increase in activities in which biological hazards must be assessed.</p>

### 2.2.6.3. Nuclear hazards deriving from accidents at facilities or in processes where combustible substances utilized at nuclear plants are used or stored

HAZARD	NUCLEAR HAZARDS
DESCRIPTION	<p>Spain currently has seven operating nuclear reactors at five nuclear power plant sites located in four different provinces. The activities carried out at these nuclear facilities are considered to entail a risk of accidents that could result in off-site radioactive emissions with the potential to cause serious damage to human health and to property.</p> <p>Civil protection preparedness for and response to potential emergencies resulting from the operation of these nuclear plants is specifically addressed within the National Civil Protection System, with all phases of such action falling under the responsibility of the Central Administration.</p> <p>In addition to those in operation, Spain also has three nuclear reactors, located at three different nuclear plant sites, that have been shut down and are in different administrative situations. One of these reactors, located in Santa María de Garoña (Burgos), will remain under the nuclear hazard protection system for as long as it continues to store spent fuel and until completion of its transition to the radiological hazard protection system.</p> <p>The Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030, of 16 March 2021, envisages the orderly closure of Spain's nuclear plants during the 2027-2035 period.</p>

#### 2.2.6.4. Radiological hazards deriving from accidents at facilities or in processes where radioactive substances are used or stored

HAZARD	RADIOLOGICAL HAZARDS
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<p>Spain has four other nuclear facilities in addition to its nuclear power plants: the Quercus uranium concentrate manufacturing plant in Saelices el Chico (Salamanca); the Energy, Environment and Technology Research Centre (Ciemat), in Aravaca (Madrid); the fuel element plant in Juzbado (Salamanca); and the storage facility for very low-level, low-level and intermediate-level radioactive waste in El Cabril (Córdoba). All four are considered facilities at which emergency situations entailing radiological hazards could arise, but with consequences that would be limited to the plant site or would represent insignificant off-site radiological hazards.</p> <p>This risk category also includes two former nuclear plants that are at an advanced decommissioning phase and no longer considered to represent a nuclear hazard. The first of these is the Vandellós I nuclear plant (Tarragona), which was shut down in October 1989 and is currently dormant, having been partially decommissioned, and awaiting full decommissioning. The second is the José Cabrera nuclear plant (Guadalajara), which was shut down in April 2006 and is currently in the final phase of its full decommissioning. These facilities, and the activities carried out at them, do not present a significant risk of off-site accidents with radiological consequences, which in all cases would be limited to the plant site.</p>

HAZARD	RADIOLOGICAL HAZARDS
DESCRIPTION	<p>Spain also has 1,267 radioactive facilities of different categories, at which radioactive or nuclear substances are handled, processed and/or stored. All of these facilities represent a risk of uncontrolled or accidental release of radioactive substances outside of the site premises, and an accident at these facilities could entail, in certain cases, a health risk for the staff of the facilities themselves, for the emergency response staff sent in to manage the situation, and for the people living in the vicinity of the facilities, as well as the contamination of the natural environment.</p> <p>Furthermore, Spain has infrastructure such as airports, seaports, customs offices and other facilities at which radiological incidents with possible off-site consequences could occur and this same risk is present in a number of unregulated activities, including the recovery, storage or handling of metallic materials for recycling.</p> <p>Lastly, it is not possible to rule out radiological hazards from exceptional events deriving from the inappropriate, negligent or illicit use of radioactive materials.</p>

## 2.2.7. Road and rail transport of dangerous goods

HAZARD	ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS
DESCRIPTION	<p>The road and rail transport of dangerous goods in Spain involves a large volume of goods and a considerable number of vehicles and transfers. According to data from the most recent national maps charting flows of dangerous goods, approximately 1.5 million tonnes of dangerous goods are transported by rail each year in Spain, and an estimated 30 million tonnes by road.</p> <p>The flow of substances between facilities belonging to different national industries and between Spain and its neighbours (imports and exports) is especially high due to the large number of facilities at which dangerous substances are stored and their location across mainland Spain. The most frequently transported products include flammable liquids (primarily diesel fuel and petrol) and gases (such as liquefied petroleum gas [LPG] blends), which account for more than half of the volume transported.</p>

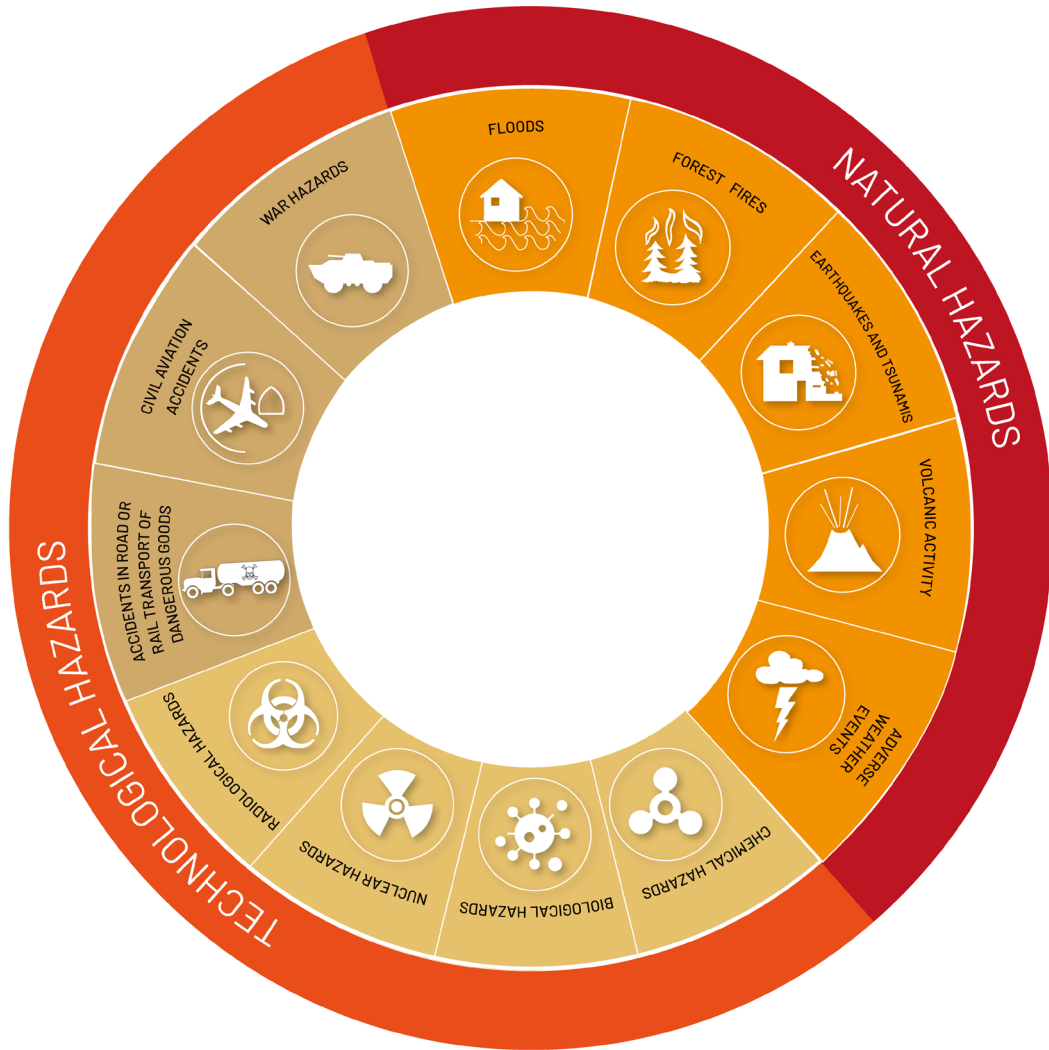
## 2.2.8. Civil aviation accidents

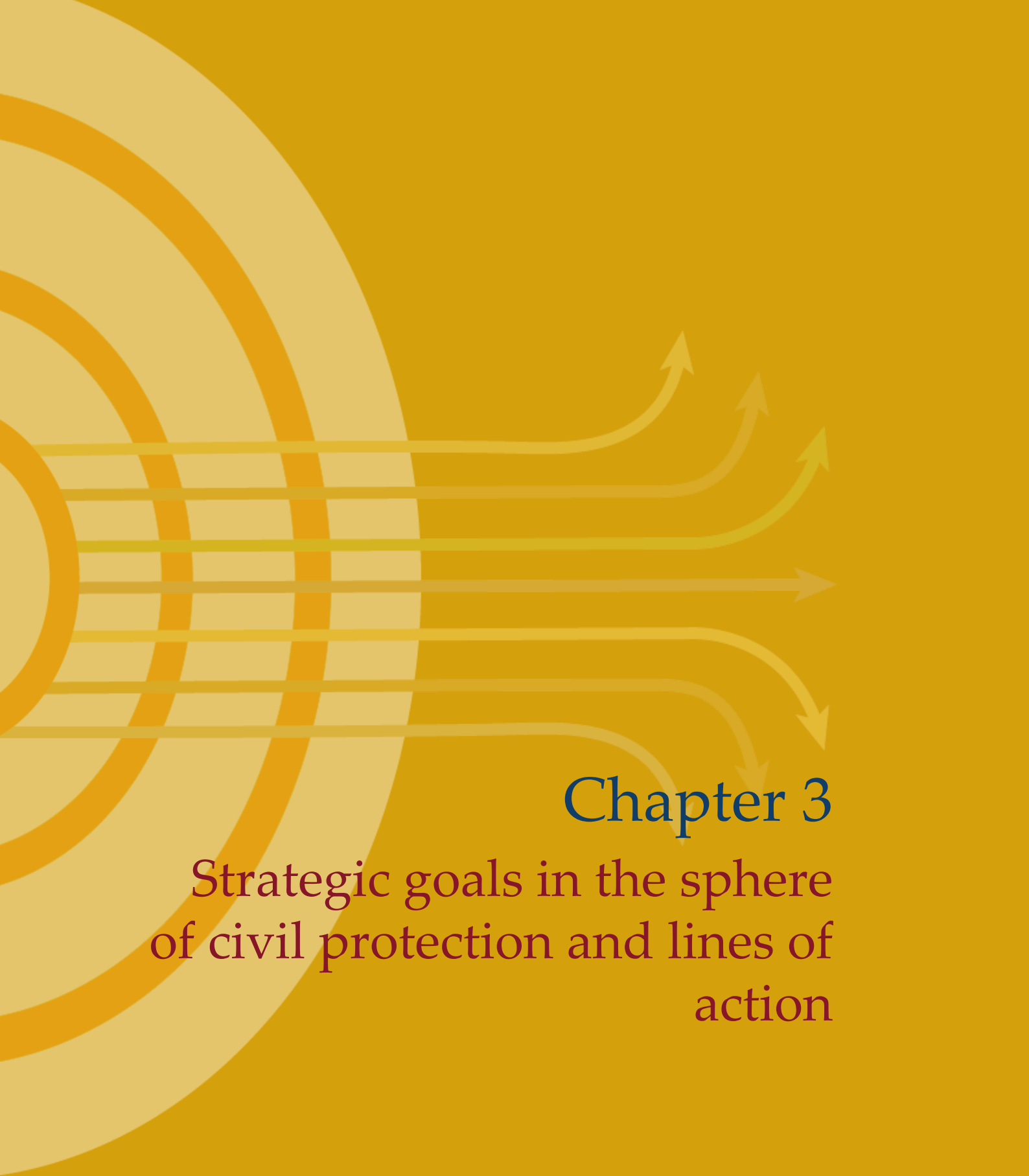
HAZARD	CIVIL AVIATION ACCIDENTS
DESCRIPTION	<p>Spain has a high volume of air traffic in line with the large inflows of tourists it receives each year.</p> <p>The risk referred to under this category relates to civil aviation accidents occurring in airspace under Spain's sovereignty and responsibility, as well as those occurring outside airspace under Spain's responsibility when the aircraft involved has departed from or is travelling to Spain.</p> <p>Aviation accidents can constitute major civil protection emergencies, being highly scalable disasters in which, for every person who dies or is injured, an average of one to five additional individuals are negatively affected in other ways.</p> <p>The legislation applicable to this risk in Spain comprises Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the investigation and prevention of accidents and incidents in civil aviation, whose aims include that of improving assistance to the victims of air accidents and their relatives, and Royal Decree 632/2013, of 2 August, on assistance to victims of civil aviation accidents and their relatives, which seeks to strengthen and define stipulations for planning in the sphere of civil protection and by other bodies with responsibilities related to accidents of this nature.</p>

## 2.2.9. Risk of war

HAZARD	RISK OF WAR
DESCRIPTION	<p>In recent years, confrontation and competition have prevailed over negotiation and agreement in the international geopolitical arena, leading to a general deterioration in international relations in all areas: trade, technology, diplomacy, and defence. This situation is further destabilized by the recent decline in democracy.</p> <p>Meanwhile, there has been a rise in the use of hybrid strategies which seek to exploit the vulnerabilities of States and their institutions with the aim of causing their political, social, or economic destabilization or coercion through coordinated multidimensional actions. It is difficult to identify the perpetrators of such strategies, and the methods they use may include, not only conventional actions, but also disinformation campaigns, cyberattacks, espionage, social subversion, sabotage, economic coercion, and asymmetric warfare.</p> <p>The current uncertain scenario characterized by greater fragmentation and complexity, the existence of war conflicts in our immediate environment and the proliferation of long-range weapons are indicators of the deterioration of the European security architecture and increase the risk for the security and well-being of citizens.</p>







## Chapter 3

Strategic goals in the sphere  
of civil protection and lines of  
action

# Strategic goals in the sphere of civil protection and lines of action

## 3.1. Introduction

The mission or ultimate aim of civil protection strategies, as public safety policy instruments, is to protect people and property by guaranteeing an appropriate and adequate response to different types of natural and human-made emergencies and disasters, taking into account any factors that potentially heighten threats and hazards—in particular, climate change—as well as the need to strengthen community resilience to such events.

In Spain, public civil protection policy is coordinated on the basis of joint action that efficiently brings together all the necessary resources from the different public authorities and the private sector, as well as active citizen participation. This policy aims to achieve shared civil protection goals with respect to preparedness, prevention, effective response and necessary recovery following damage caused by disasters occurring in Spain, which may require joint action with other international stakeholders.

The purpose of establishing these strategic goals is to ensure a comprehensive approach to risk management and civil protection that addresses the different actions of the National Civil Protection System, otherwise known as the emergency cycle, which includes the following phases: Preparedness, Prevention, Planning, immediate Response and Recovery. It is important that these goals be adapted to the specific circumstances of each community and updated regularly in response to any changes in risks and capabilities.

Taking into account the aforementioned considerations, as well as the analysis of the main risks and threats affecting Spain in the sphere of civil protection, NCP Strategy must establish guidelines and lines of action for improving disaster prevention, preparedness and response systems in the sphere of civil protection, which must in turn seek to prevent new risks of disaster, reduce existing risks, and manage residual risk, thereby improving disaster resilience. It is also essential that the Central Administration have the necessary material and human resources to implement these guidelines and lines of action.

## 3.2. Strategic goals and lines of action

As seen in the figure below, the goals set forth in the Strategy correspond to the different phases of the civil protection cycle as defined in the NCP System Act: Preparedness, Prevention, Planning, Immediate Emergency Response and Recovery.

In addition to these strategic goals, the Strategy includes two cross-cutting goals—to provide training and to foster international relations—which are crucial to the functioning and ongoing improvement of the System, but not directly aligned with any of the strategic goals. A third cross-cutting aspect is technology, essential to both communications and to the information systems supporting decision-making. However, this third aspect is not considered a goal in itself, rather a tool to enable and facilitate the pursuit of the goals established.

Consequently, in the sections below, the lines of action related to technology have been included under the strategic goal they are intended to support.

STRATEGIC GOALS



### 3.2.1. Preparedness

This consists in identifying the risks in a specific territory based on vulnerabilities and potential threats, and comprises analyses and studies providing information and predictions on dangerous situations.

To pursue this goal, it is necessary to carry out the following lines of action:

- **Line of action 1:** Examine the possibility of including additional risks in the official catalogue of risks for which civil protection planning is required (Appendix I to Royal Decree 524/2023). This line of action would include undertaking a technical study of landslide risk as well as the risk originating from the entry of space objects into the earth's atmosphere.
- **Line of action 2:** Improve national civil protection information, centralizing and coordinating it and ensuring that it is consistent across the different levels of the Administration, including inputs from science and RDI, within the framework of the National Civil Protection Information Network.
- **Line of action 3:** Coordinate the updating of civil protection risk assessments for different risks and across the different levels of the Administration.
- **Line of action 4:** Study and assess possible courses of action for the application of artificial intelligence principles and tools to early risk detection, cascading risk analysis, early damage assessment, and other aspects of civil protection in which, due to their complexity, the application of these technologies could prove advantageous.

### 3.2.2. Risk prevention

Foster the measures and actions aimed at preventing or mitigating the possible adverse impacts of emergency risks and threats.

To pursue this goal, it is necessary to carry out the following lines of action:

- **Line of action 5:** Identify and promote preventive actions, in the sphere of civil protection, which can contribute to reducing existing risks, especially those actions that enable fostering and promotion of inter-sectoral cooperation.
- **Line of action 6:** Establish inter-administrative coordination between sectoral and civil protection bodies to determine spheres, goals, territories and priorities for focusing prevention programmes.
- **Line of action 7:** Promote research into emergencies, working together with the national and international scientific community to develop methodologies and tools that enable the monitoring of hazards and prevent their reoccurrence to guarantee the efficiency of society's response to these events in a manner that is socially, economically and fiscally sustainable.
- **Line of action 8:** Define, develop, and make available to the different components of the National Civil Protection System, shared information and communications systems that enable the detection, handling and prompt reporting of any situations that entail or could entail civil protection risks. Such systems constitute the National Alert Network defined in the NCP System Act.

### 3.2.3. Planning

Contribute to the preparedness of all public authorities to assure a planned response to emergency situations, establishing preparedness measures with the necessary foresight so as to act effectively and opportunely when faced with emergency situations that could potentially arise from civil protection risks.

To pursue this goal, it is necessary to carry out the following lines of action:

- **Line of action 9:** Complete and update planning for protection risks in the terms established in the Basic Regulations on Civil Protection.
- **Line of action 10:** Create a national response mechanism (NRM) for emergencies, managed by the DGPCCE through the National Centre for the Monitoring and Coordination of Emergencies (CENEM), as well as the National Civil Protection System operational instrument for mobilizing capabilities.
- **Line of action 11:** Foster knowledge of planning among the different territorial areas, integrating, among other measures, analysis of natural hazards and/or human-made hazards in urban and spatial planning legislation at a regional and municipal level, and seeking especially to strengthen relations between neighbouring regions and municipalities for the purpose of shared emergency management.
- **Line of action 12:** Promote the approval by the National Civil Protection Council of a sectoral plan for psychological intervention in emergencies and disasters that enables the inclusion of psychological care in civil protection planning, in compliance with Article 16 (Chapter IV) of the NCP System Act, which provides for psychological intervention as an additional action in emergency situations and the subsequent recovery stage.



- **Line of action I3:** Ensure that the components of the National Civil Protection System have access to information and communications systems that enable the sharing of information about civil protection risks, plans, response capabilities and the damage caused by emergencies in the sphere of civil protection. These systems will constitute the National Information Network defined in the NCP System Act.

### 3.2.4. Immediate emergency response

Foster immediate emergency response actions by the public civil protection emergency response and assistance services identified in Article 17.1 of the NCP System Act, and in the General State Plan for Civil Protection Emergencies, as well as by emergency monitoring and coordination centres.

Immediate response to civil protection emergencies refers to action taken by public or private response and assistance services during emergencies or potential emergencies. The aim of such action is to prevent damage, rescue and protect people and property, ensure citizen safety, and meet the basic survival needs of the affected population. It encompasses urgent healthcare and psychological and social care, the provision of shelter, and initial damage repair to re-establish essential services and infrastructure, as well as other actions and evaluations necessary to begin recovery.

To pursue this goal, it is necessary to carry out the following lines of action:

- **Line of action 14:** Strengthen the operational capacity of the central bodies of the System, increasing coordination and improving interoperability in all stages of civil protection.
- **Line of action 15:** Strengthen CENEM to ensure that it is able to carry out all the functions attributed to it in current legislation.
- **Line of action 16:** Make progress towards defining capable, secure and robust communications systems that enable efficient interaction between different emergency management bodies, both at a strategic and a tactical level, and make these systems available for use by the components of the National Civil Protection System. In this context, cyberthreats will be considered intensifiers that can exacerbate the damage caused by civil protection risks.

### 3.2.5. Recovery

Foster effective post-disaster recovery measures in areas described in Chapter V of the NCP System Act, promoting, whenever possible, “build back better” principles, as well as the principles of collaboration, cooperation, coordination, solidarity between regions, subsidiarity, efficiency, participation, inclusiveness and universal accessibility for persons with disabilities.

- **Line of Action 17:** Enhance effective coordination between all administrations with powers relating to recovery.
- **Line of action 18:** Improve training provided by the Central Administration to all those involved in the recovery phase.
- **Line of action 19:** Improve information provided to potential beneficiaries of existing aid measures.
- **Line of action 20:** Ensure aid for citizens affected by disasters, as well as all relevant procedures, records and notifications, are accessible by electronic means, pursuant to Act 39/2015, of 1 October, on the Common Administrative Procedure of Public Administrations, and its implementing regulations.

### 3.2.6. Training

*Provide training on the different phases of emergency management to members of the National Civil Protection System*

- **Line of action 21:** Boost training for National Civil Protection System professionals, seeking the development of staff skills. This applies both to initial training and refresher courses to enhance knowledge and skills on methodology, technologies and coordination with other system members.
- **Line of action 22:** Provide initial training and continued refresher courses for volunteers on performance of their tasks.
- **Line of action 23:** Update to more modern teaching techniques and technology (virtual reality) in civil protection training.
- **Line of action 24:** Coordinate schools and training departments run by the State, by Autonomous Communities and by local authorities in order to optimize system resources and avoid overlap.
- **Line of action 25:** Increase ties with academia and universities, boosting RDI in the field.
- **Line of action 26:** Foster training of professionals in cooperation with the National Institute for Qualifications (and regional equivalents), regional vocational training schools and collaborators with the national employment service in order to boost professional skills in the field.

- **Line of action 27:** Train professional psychologists in line with the criteria set forth in the Sector Plan for Psychological Interventions in Emergencies through specific courses provided by the National School for Civil Protection and create an inventory of available skills at the Central Administration for psychological intervention in emergencies.

### *Foster preventive culture*

A public culture of prevention must be fostered as one of the main tools available to prevent risks but also to support the handling of emergencies.

- **Line of action 28:** Seek the creation of an integrated plan alongside other members of the National Civil Protection System (Autonomous Communities, local authorities, volunteer groups, etc.). This plan must be capable of attaining the goals of educating the public on these matters and raise awareness of the importance of self-protection in any kind of emergency.
- **Line of action 29:** Educate young pupils and students, especially at primary and secondary school, in order to raise awareness of the importance of this field but also to offer pupils and students the opportunity to acquire basic knowledge on self-protection against different types of risks.
- **Line of action 30:** Diversify existing educational material, not only in print but also and especially online (short training videos uploaded to YouTube or similar platforms, podcasts, mobile apps where this

content can be hosted alongside news, alerts or games). Increase the use of social media to promote self-protection among the population and to boost knowledge of basic guidance on action.

- **Line of action 31:** Cooperate with different public administrations to share existing resources and create new resources, optimizing available means.
- **Line of action 32:** Develop prevention programmes that promote values, habits and attitudes in everyday life that minimize risks related to civil protection emergencies. Establish programmes in different social contexts: in education, at work, in centres for older people and through civil society associations.
- **Line of action 33:** Establish mechanisms for active citizen participation in all phases of disaster risk management.

## *Develop training in resilience*

- **Line of action 34:** Develop and implement specific training courses on resilience factors aimed at emergency managers, plan directors and stakeholders in the National Civil Protection System.
- **Line of action 35:** Include personal and organizational resilience as a cross-cutting factor in training in all National School for Civil Protection courses.

## *Implement measures to offer citizens easier access to training in the field of civil protection*

- **Line of action 36:** Create and distribute a guide for citizens which includes guidance on what to do before, during and after an emergency, thus increasing the feeling of self-efficacy and self-protection.
- **Line of action 37:** Work on civil protection as part of the syllabus in the Master Plan for the education system in order to improve interrelations and security in schools and their surroundings.
- **Line of action 38:** Foster public participation in safety drills based on emergency plans addressing different risks.

## 3.2.7. International

### *Global outreach*

The main purpose of this Strategy in the international sphere is to consolidate and broaden the global outreach of the National Civil Protection System, preferably in priority geographic areas. It also aims to meet obligations derived from agreements and commitments that Spain has signed in the field of civil protection and disaster risk management. This goal must be reflected in different lines of action in each of the areas, in alignment with applicable law in each case.

### *Legal framework of the Central Administration's international activity*

Domestically, Articles 41 and 42 of the NCP System Act cover and organize the Central Administration's contribution to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and international cooperation missions.

In addition, Additional Provision Two of Act 36/2015, of 28 September, on National Security, provides that National Security System crisis management rules and procedures must be compatible with and comparable to crisis management tools at international organizations of which Spain is a member, highlighting Spain's commitment to international agendas and agreements to which it is a party.

Among these international legal instruments in the field of civil protection are EU regulations and multilateral agreements to which Spain is a party.

- At EU level, Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism,



which has been amended several times in recent years<sup>1</sup>, and its implementing regulations.

- At the United Nations, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which was reviewed in 2023.
- In the Mediterranean area, the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, of 13 July 2008, whereby Spain became a member of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

Moreover, bilateral relations have led to several bilateral agreements, especially with those countries with which Spain shares a border and with other Mediterranean countries. In this respect, cross-border cooperation is one of the lines of action on the agendas of bilateral summits.

Therefore, the State's international activity in civil protection matters must address four priority areas—(a) the –EU; (b) the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; (c) UfM; and (d) bilateral cooperation—without disregarding others.

## A. European Union

The main area for international cooperation is the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, governed by Decision No 1313/2013/EU. DGCPE is the national authority that represents Spain as focal point for the mechanism at the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations.

The EU Mechanism covers all phases of disaster risk management. As a member of the Civil Protection Committee and of several working groups, DGCPE ensures the Spanish system is aligned with Mechanism guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the amendments made by Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 October 2018; Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021; Decision (EU) 2019/420 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2019; and Decision (EU) 2023/2671 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 November 2023.

The Mechanism responds to emergencies inside and outside the borders of the EU through the certified resources of different national systems registered in the European Civil Protection Pool so they can be deployed on a voluntary basis. Spain is one of the largest contributors to the Pool, where it has registered medical care, search and rescue and firefighting resources, among others. The Mechanism system has been strengthened in recent years by creating and financing rescEU capacities, which provide a supplementary level of protection in specific areas and are directly managed by the EU. Spain also contributes to these supplementary capacities in the area of aerial forest firefighting, emergency accommodation and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) decontamination.

In addition, the Knowledge Network created within the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in December 2021 has two pillars: Capacity Development and Science. Spain has played an active part in Mechanism training courses and exercises, where experts and modules from all public administrations receive qualifications to take part in European emergency response teams. The Knowledge Network's Science pillar offers subsidies for multinational cooperation projects, in which Spanish bodies of different public administrations have taken part. This benefits the entire National Civil Protection System. One of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism's most recent achievements has been the development and publication of European disaster resilience goals<sup>2</sup>, a non-binding recommendation for Member States.

In the second half of 2023, thanks to DGCPE, the goals set for the Spanish Presidency of Council of the EU were achieved and Spain's visibility as a Member State participating in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism increased notably. Thereafter, it is important to consolidate and increase this visibility, so as to remain a European leader in civil protection.

Therefore, the National Civil Protection System's continued active participation in all spheres of activity of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism will be sought.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C\\_.2023.056.01.0001.01.ENG](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2023.056.01.0001.01.ENG)

- **Line of action 39:** Ensure Spain's proper and active representation in working groups related to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, both in the Council and in the European Commission.
- **Line of action 40:** Meet obligations to communicate national risk assessments and assessment of risk management capability at national level pursuant to Article 6 of Decision No 1313/2013/EU.
- **Line of action 41:** Support and promote the participation of Spanish administrations and organizations in multinational projects and consortia in the different phases of disaster risk management in the framework of programmes funded by the European Commission.
- **Line of action 42:** Support certification of modules, capabilities and experts at the European Civil Protection Pool of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and boost their participation in exercises and missions.
- **Line of action 43:** Foster and, where appropriate, propose experts' participation in training, exercise and exchange programmes of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, ensuring all competent authorities remain informed of available training programmes.
- **Line of action 44:** Boost the role of the National Civil Protection School as a key element within the European training system.
- **Line of action 45:** Publicize and promote initiatives backed by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism which may lead to an improvement of the National Civil Protection System at all levels.

Moreover, Spain will promote joint initiatives and projects for cross-border cooperation in emergency management at the Committee of the Regions, whose local and regional dimensions makes especially relevant.

## B. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

At United Nations level, Spain adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 as its main international commitment. The main goal of this global framework, whose Midterm Review took place in May 2023, is that States focus on managing disaster risk in order to reduce the losses caused by disasters and build safer and more resilient communities, in coordination with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other international agreements and cooperation frameworks to which it is related. Therefore, four priorities for action are established: 1) understanding disaster risk; 2) strengthening governance of disaster risk management; 3) investing in disaster risk reduction to increase resilience; and 4) increasing disaster preparedness in order to respond effectively and build back better. In addition, seven specific measurable global targets have been established. States must take the action needed to achieve them.

In this context, DGCPE, as secretary of the National Civil Protection Council, performs management and coordination tasks as Spain's Focal Point for the Sendai Framework. These coordination tasks have led to, among others, the 2023 launch of a project to create a database of disaster loss and damage, to be included in the future national data register on emergencies and disasters pursuant to Article 9 of the NCP System Act, responding to the requirement to track progress towards the seven targets of the Sendai Framework in line with indicators created for said purpose.

In this regard, an aim is to promote the necessary action to reduce disaster risk based on the four basic priorities established in the Sendai Framework, later confirmed by the Political declaration approved after its Midterm Review (Resolution 77/289 of the General Assembly of 18 May 2023<sup>3</sup>).

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<sup>3</sup> <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/148/47/pdf/n2314847.pdf>

- **Line of action 46:** Promote and consolidate, in line with United Nations recommendation, the national platform for disaster risk reduction as a focal point to coordinate and guide disaster risk reduction across sectors and disciplines with the participation of public institutions, the private sector and civil society. All stakeholders may participate in their relevant areas of expertise.
- **Line of action 47:** Guarantee Spain's proper active participation in the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and in the Europe and Central Asia Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDDR), as well as in any resulting action.
- **Line of action 48:** Ensure the availability of national data, as well as their quality and accessibility, to guarantee progress towards Sendai Framework targets is tracked and monitored, in line with indicators established for said purpose.

### C. Union for the Mediterranean

Since 2008, the UfM has brought together EU Member States and other Mediterranean States in a multilateral forum, in which civil protection is also discussed. The goal the organization pursues in this matter is to create a Mediterranean civil protection framework, understood as a set of cooperation initiatives for prevention, preparation and response between UfM Member States. Its long-term goal is the creation of a system for cooperation between Mediterranean countries to manage disaster risk, similar to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

The involvement of DGCPE in this sphere must adhere to Spanish strategy for cooperation with UfM in all other sectors in which this organization operates, in line with the special significance that bilateral and regional relations with North African States have for Spain. Spain's membership of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism also

determines some aspects of this cooperation, as it is one of the main sponsors of initiatives aimed at Southern Mediterranean States.

In this regard, a goal is to maintain the current levels of cooperation in Euro-Mediterranean relations, ensuring maximum possible alignment with other decision-making centres of the Central Administration in their relations with the UfM.

- **Line of action 49:** Take active part in initiatives launched at the heart of the regional civil protection platform of the UfM, especially through its working groups.
- **Line of action 50:** Take part in measures to coordinate the different decision-making centres of the Central Administration in their relations with the UfM.
- **Line of action 51:** Promote, insofar as possible, cooperation and mutual support between Mediterranean States to reduce disaster risk.

## D. Bilateral cooperation

Bilateral cooperation constitutes another priority area of international strategy for DGCPE, in which its prime objective is to strengthen ties with neighbouring States and with Ibero-American States.

### *Ties with neighbouring States*

Spain has signed bilateral agreements on civil protection with its European neighbours, France and Portugal, as well as with Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. This has led to intense cooperation with these countries. Some recent examples are support for forest firefighting in Portugal or assistance provided by Spanish search and rescue

teams in the wake of the earthquake that struck Morocco in 2023. It is in the interest of all parties to strengthen these bilateral ties for cooperation, which offer the advantage of an immediate response.

In addition, there is also intense cross-border cooperation at the level of Spain's regional and local authorities, on aspects related to the different phases of disaster risk management through programmes funded by European funds, as well as other instruments within the framework of the EU and the Council of Europe.

In this regard, Spain aims to continue strengthening bilateral cooperation with its neighbours, in addition to making use of the possibilities offered by EU projects and initiatives to promote cross-border cooperation, in collaboration with decision-making centres of the Central Administration responsible for these matters.

- **Line of action 52:** Establish cooperation agreements in civil protection matters with third countries.
- **Line of action 53:** Maintain and strengthen Spain's bilateral relations with France and Portugal, in line with joint activities carried out within the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, and boost sharing of good practices between administrations that take part in cross-border cooperation projects in those countries, to prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters. This also applies to the Principality of Andorra, because of Spain's special relation with the country.
- **Line of action 54:** Increase cooperation with neighbouring countries in North Africa, using the experience and resources of Spain's National Civil Protection School, among others.

## *Ibero-America*

Spain's cooperation with Ibero-American countries is particularly noteworthy. Recently, it has taken the form of different disaster response and prevention activities, both bilateral and through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

As part of relations with these countries, since 2001 DGCPE has collaborated with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) through training programmes co-financed by AECID and DGCPE, aimed at civil servants in Latin America and the Caribbean (INTERCOONECTA programme) In this regard, DGCPE is taking part in a programme called “Training for the improvement of the management system to reduce disaster risk”, which is organized through the Training Centre for Spanish Cooperation in La Antigua (Guatemala).

In addition, since 2022 DGCPE has taken part in international cooperation activities on disaster risk reduction in Ibero-American countries financed by the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIAAPP).

Spain has set itself the goal of maintaining and building on its reciprocal cooperation ties with Ibero-American countries, bilaterally but also on a regional and subregional basis. Moreover, Spain will seek to continue to play a key role in EU cooperation measures in these countries.

- **Line of action 55:** Strengthen bilateral cooperation relations by reaching new agreements or bolster activity within the framework of existing agreements.
- **Line of action 56:** Continue to promote and organize training and other activities in which professionals and experts from different Ibero-American countries take part.



- **Line of action 57:** Promote an annual meeting of directors-general and/or of national civil protection schools to explore possibilities for cooperation and expert exchange, as well as training in civil protection.
- **Line of action 58:** Increase cooperation with FIAAPP in other Latin American countries.



## Chapter 4

### Monitoring, assessment and review of NCP Strategy

## Monitoring, assessment and review of NCP Strategy

A review of the 2024 NCP Strategy shall be conducted at least every five years. It shall also be revised when modifications to the National Security Strategy or new circumstances make it advisable.

A Technical Monitoring Committee of NCP Strategy, chaired by the Under-Secretary for the Interior and with representatives of all ministerial departments and State bodies that are members of the National Civil Protection Council, which will monitor and assess progress on the goals and basic lines of action of NCP Strategy and may accordingly propose revisions.

This Technical Monitoring Committee shall meet at least once a year. The role of Committee secretary shall be performed by the secretary of the Standing Committee of the National Civil Protection Council.

