

# The three crisis management systems of MoU High North

A comparative analysis of Finland's, Norway's and Sweden's crisis management systems from the perspective of the regional administrative authorities



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**Published by:** Länsstyrelsen Västerbotten

**Text:** Victor Outinen, Länsstyrelsen Västerbotten

**Illustration:** Länsstyrelsen Västerbotten

**Address:** Länsstyrelsen Västerbotten,  
901 86 Umeå, Sweden

**Telefon:** +46 10 225 40 00

**E-mail:** [vasterbotten@lansstyrelsen.se](mailto:vasterbotten@lansstyrelsen.se)

**Webb:** [www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasterbotten](http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasterbotten)

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# Description of abbreviations and concepts

## Abbreviations

CAB = County administrative board, a form of regional administrative agency in Sweden.

CBRNE = Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive, often mentioned in relation to different substances.

DSB = The Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection, The civil protection agency of Norway.

MSB= Swedish civil contingencies agency, The agency responsible for civil preparedness in Sweden.

NGO= Nongovernmental organization, an organization not affiliated to any government, for example WWF or Greenpeace.

RSAA = Regional state administrative agency, a Finnish regional authority who has responsibilities within several different areas, one of them being preparedness.

RVA = Risk and vulnerability analysis, a type of analysis identifying risks and vulnerabilities through event-based scenarios, identifying functions of societal importance and sometimes groups especially vulnerable to specific types of crises.


TCG = The County Governor, a Norwegian regional authority who has responsibilities within several different areas, one of them being preparedness

## Concept

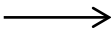
**Responsibility of oversight** = There is a responsibility to monitor the organizations work in relation to laws, regulations and policies. This can for example be performed through, advising, planning, monitoring, supporting and reviewing.

Illustrated by a solid line 


**Responsibility of contribution** = There is an obligation to contribute with necessary measures as per agreement. An example of this is NATOs article 5 stating that an attack against a NATO member is treated as an attack towards all NATO members. Following this, actions that are deemed necessary will be taken collectively or individually. The NATO member countries are obliged to defend the attacked NATO member country.

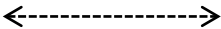
Illustrated by a dotted line 

**Unidirectional relationship** = The relationship goes one way. For example, the Civil contingencies agency (MSB) has a unidirectional responsibility of oversight towards certain County administrative boards regarding CBRNE preparedness. However, the CABs do not have the same responsibility towards MSB making it unidirectional.

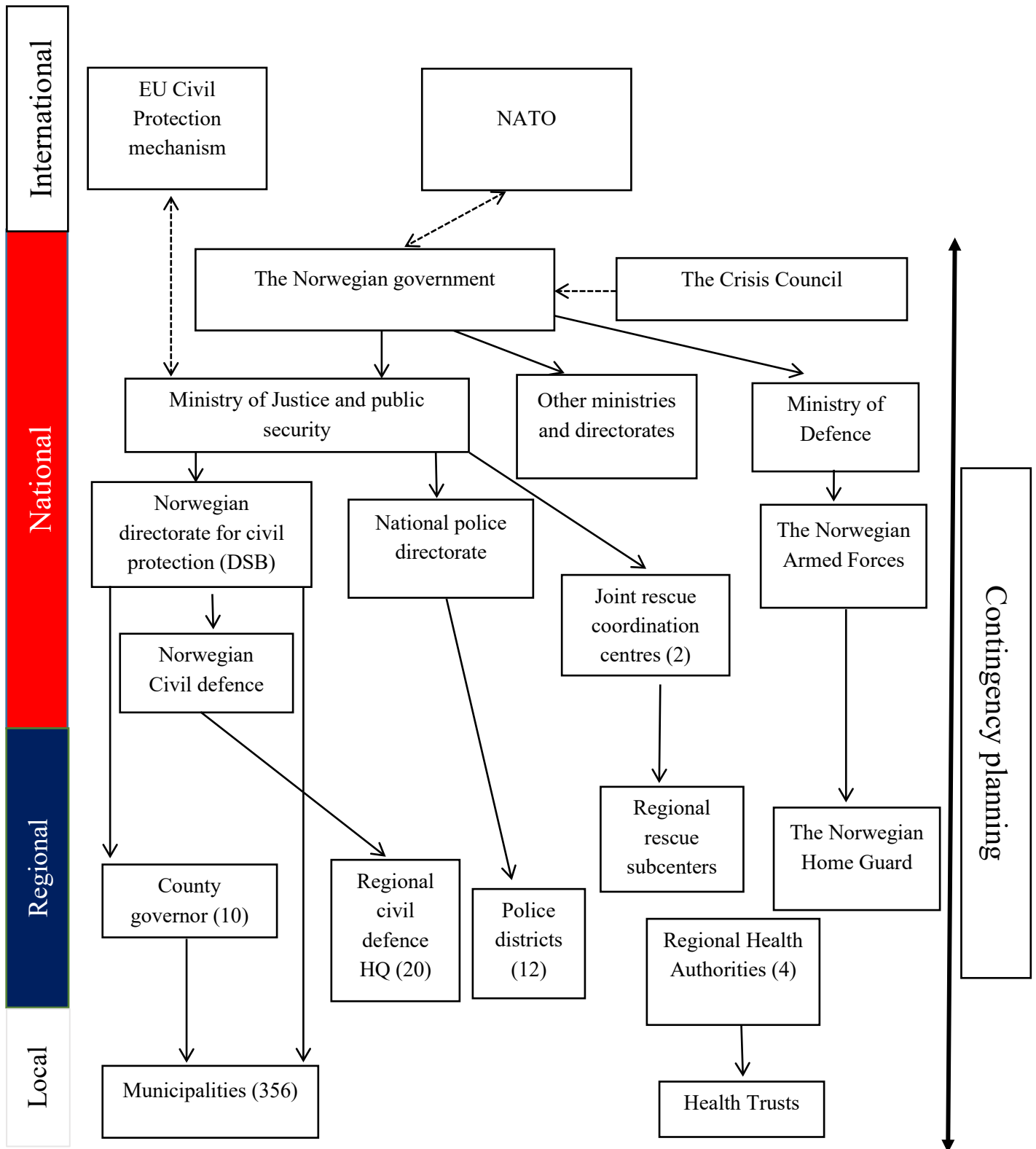
Illustrated by an arrow at the point of direction 

**Bidirectional relationship** = The relationship goes both ways. An example of this is NATO article 5 which is a bidirectional responsibility of contribution. If a country attacks Norway the NATO members are obliged to defend Norway. In the same way, if a NATO country is attacked Norway is obliged to defend said country.

Illustrated by arrows at both ends of the line 

**Example:** bidirectional responsibility of contribution 

# The Norwegian crisis management system





## Guiding principles

*Responsibility* entails that the organization that is responsible for an area in a normal situation is also responsible for the necessary emergency preparations and for handling extraordinary incidents in the area.

*Similarity* implies that the organization handling the crises should be as similar as possible during crisis as on a daily basis. For example, the organization might have the same locations and personnel.

*Proximity* suggests that disasters should be handled at the lowest level possible. In Norway, municipalities are the first ones who coordinate crisis management efforts on a strategic level.

*Cooperation* entails that authorities, businesses and agency have an independent responsibility to ensure the best possible cooperation with relevant actors and businesses in the work on prevention, preparedness and crisis management.<sup>1</sup>

## Actors

### NATO

Norway is one of NATO's founding members and has been a part of the alliance since 1949.<sup>2</sup> NATO's article 3 states that "In order to more effectively achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack." This gives each member state an incentive to increase their resilience against a major shock to society, which is a national responsibility. The military forces of the alliance are dependent on the civilian and commercial sector for transport, communications, and basic supplies such as food and water. Therefore, civil preparedness is a central pillar to strengthen the alliance's collective defence, and which is why NATO also assists their member states in strengthening their civil preparedness. During crisis NATO can assist their members in situations such as natural disaster or war by adapting their response depending on the situation.<sup>3</sup> NATO can involve military and non-military measures to address the full spectrum of crises – before, during and after conflicts.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/samfunnssikkerhet-og-beredskap/innsikt/hovedprinsipper-i-beredskapsarbeidet/id2339996/>

<sup>2</sup> [NATO - Topic: Member countries](#)

<sup>3</sup> [NATO - Topic: Resilience, civil preparedness and Article 3](#)

<sup>4</sup> [NATO - Topic: Crisis management](#)

NATO's article 5 is one of the cornerstones of the alliance and commits the members to protect each other resulting in a collective defence where an attack against one ally is considered an attack against all allies.<sup>5</sup>

### **EU Civil Protection Mechanism and rescEU**

The EU civil protection mechanism aims to improve prevention, preparedness and response to disasters and can be used when the response capabilities of a country is overwhelmed. The preventive work involves that participating States report their national risk assessments and risk management analyses where countries can support one another by providing evaluation and advice. There are also early warning systems for forest fires and flooding, as well as services based on the EU's satellite system Copernicus. Regarding preparedness, a common pool based on national resources are available and can be accessed when requested from the European commission.<sup>6</sup> During crisis this mechanism makes it possible to deploy specialist teams and equipment, for example, search, rescue and medical teams and firefighting planes.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Norwegian Government**

The Government has principal responsibility for emergency preparedness in Norway, including the principal political responsibility and management of crises that occur. Each minister has constitutional responsibility within his or her area, within the acts and allocations laid down by the Storting. The individual minister also retains his or her constitutional responsibility during a crisis.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Crisis Council**

The Crisis Council consists of the secretary generals of the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Health and Care Services. The crisis council is responsible for the strategic coordination of complex crises, but a crisis does not have to be particularly severe for the crisis council to be convened. It assesses which ministry should lead the response and ensures that the measures implemented are closely coordinated and that information to the media, the public

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<sup>5</sup> [NATO - Topic: Collective defence and Article 5](#)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.msb.se/en/about-msb/international-co-operation/cooperation-with-eu/eu-and-the-civil-protection-cooperation/>

<sup>7</sup> [EU Civil Protection Mechanism \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [samfunnssikkerhetsinstruks\\_engelsk.pdf \(regjeringen.no\)](#)

and others is clear and consistent. This is a central crisis management coordination tool which helps the government perform its duties. <sup>9</sup>

### **The Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection (DSB)**

DSB's overall task is maintaining a complete overview of various risks and vulnerability in general. DSB's responsibilities cover local, regional, and national preparedness and emergency planning, fire safety, electrical safety, handling and transport of hazardous substances, as well as product and consumer safety. Nødnett – the Norwegian Emergency Public Safety Network, a separate radio network, built specifically for rescue and emergency users, is owned and managed by DSB. DSB is also to follow up Norway's responsibilities and commitments regarding civil protection in international organizations such as the EU, UN and NATO. <sup>10</sup>

### **The Ministry of Justice and Public Security**

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security is responsible for the preservation and development of basic guarantees of the rule of law. There are 9 departments, where arguably, the most important for crisis management is the department of public security whose areas of responsibility include the Norwegian search and rescue service, national security, crisis management, civil protection, total defence, national cyber security, as well as coordination of civil protection and civil emergency planning in NATO, the EU and UN. <sup>11</sup>

### **The Norwegian Civil defence**

The Norwegian Civil Defence is the state's reinforcement for the emergency and rescue departments in the event of major accidents and special incidents. <sup>12</sup> The civil defence is divided into 20 regional districts where Nordland, Vest-Finnmark, Øst-Finnmark, and Troms are examples of these regional districts. <sup>13</sup> The civil defence has several tasks and capabilities, for example it has competencies, is organized and equipped to render operative support to the emergency and rescue departments, it provides training in the areas of response and rescue for own personnel and other parties within the Norwegian rescue services as well as providing support to international humanitarian rescue operations. Furthermore, it constitutes a part of the nuclear emergency response organization and plays an important part in the national measurement network, they operate countrywide

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<sup>9</sup> [Meld. St. 12 \(2010–2011\) - regjeringen.no](#)

<sup>10</sup> [About DSB | Direktoratet for samfunnssikkerhet og beredskap](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Department of Public Security - regjeringen.no](#)

<sup>12</sup> [About Norwegian Civil Defence | Sivilforsvaret](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Ditt distrikt | Sivilforsvaret](#)

public warning service in the event of immediate danger and attends to tasks in case of war.<sup>14</sup> If several civil defence districts are deployed to deal with for example a flooding, these are coordinated on a national level by DSB.

### **The National Police Directorate**

The National Police Directorate is the highest police authority in Norway. It is part of the government administration under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and has a national responsibility of the police.<sup>15</sup> During crisis the local chief of police has the operational responsibility of coordinating relevant actors.

### **Joint Rescue Coordination Centres and Emergency numbers.**

The Joint Rescue Coordination Centres have the overall operational responsibility during search and rescue operations. The operations are coordinated either directly from one of two Joint Rescue Coordination Centres which are situated in Bodø and in Sola near Stavanger, or through one of 13 rescue sub centres.<sup>16</sup> Norway has three numbers to dial depending on the assistance needed, 110 is the number to the fire department, 112 is for emergency calls and calls to the police and 113 in case of medical emergencies.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Norwegian Armed Forces**

The Norwegian Armed forces has a general responsibility of keeping Norway and its people safe. When the police or other civil authorities need help The Armed Forces can contribute with their personnel and equipment's. The Armed forces can assist in situations such as search operations for missing persons, removal of explosives and counter-terrorism operations. More specifically the Coast guard is especially important in search and rescue operations at sea as well as towing and oil spill response capacity making them an important actor in minimizing environmental damage. Of course, this is done in cooperation with the police and other civil authorities.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Regional Crisis Emergency Council**

During a crisis several different authorities may be involved and in such situations the county governor may coordinate their efforts within their county. This can be achieved through the County Emergency Council which is composed of

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<sup>14</sup> [About Norwegian Civil Defence | Sivilforsvaret](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Role of the National Police Directorate – Politiet.no](#)

<sup>16</sup> [English - Hovedredningsentralen](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Emergency services - UNHCR Norway](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Our missions - Norwegian Armed Forces \(forsvaret.no\)](#)

representatives from the key emergency services, as well as representatives from voluntary and private organizations that have expertise in civil protection and emergency preparedness. The Council acts as a forum for mutual orientation on emergency preparedness planning and, in a crisis situation, will be the County Governor's main means of providing coordination and support.<sup>19</sup>

### **Regional Health Authorities and Health Trusts**

The specialist healthcare services are owned by the Norwegian state and are divided into four regional health authorities which are responsible for that the population in the region is offered these services. This is achieved through safeguarding the ownership of the health trusts who are independent legal entities and the providers of the specialist healthcare services.<sup>20</sup> These authorities are obliged to have preparedness plans to provide their services even in times of crisis and war.<sup>21</sup>

### **Municipalities**

The municipalities have comprehensive responsibility and play a key role in emergency management and preparedness work. According to the Civil Protection Act, the municipalities are obliged to draw up a comprehensive risk assessment and a general contingency plan. The plan has to be coordinated and integrated with other contingency plans in the municipality. The contingency plan is coordinated in cooperation with other relevant actors, such as health trusts, county authorities, the Norwegian Armed Forces, the police, Norwegian Civil Defence, local and joint rescue coordination centres, religious communities, NGOs and private entities<sup>22</sup>. The municipalities also provide primary health care, social services and care services and rehabilitation.<sup>23</sup> The municipalities are the first ones responsible for coordinating crisis management efforts on a strategic level.

### **The Norwegian Home Guard**

The Home Guard is a part of the Norwegian Armed forces and consists of 40,000 soldiers distributed on eleven regional districts. Their main task is safeguarding the territorial integrity of Norway, protecting important infrastructure, and strengthening military presence. However, they can also with their extensive local

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<sup>19</sup> [Crisis management and coordination | County Governor - Statsforvalteren.no](#)

<sup>20</sup> [The Department of Hospital Ownership - regjeringen.no](#)

<sup>21</sup> [hod\\_national\\_health\\_preparedness\\_plan\\_eng.pdf \(regjeringen.no\)](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Local Social Services in Nordic countries in Times of Disaster \(stjornarradid.is\)](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Norway | Commonwealth Fund](#)

knowledge support the police, rescue services or other authorities in events such as disasters, accident and search and rescue operations.

## **Main tasks of The County Governor**

### **Before a crisis**

- Prepare risk and vulnerability analysis (RVA) and contingency plan for their region, in cooperation with regional stakeholders.
- Provide guidance to municipalities and monitor how they meet their legal requirements for preparedness and emergency management.
- Provide advice, run courses, carry out inspections and organize exercises in the areas of civil protection and emergency preparedness.<sup>24</sup>
- Act as the link between local and national level in implementing measures and reporting in relation to existing regulation of emergency management.
- The county governor appoints and leads a Crisis emergency council which consists of regional stakeholders. For example, those responsible for critical infrastructure or societal functions, police and other emergency services, civil defence, military, NGOs, as well as national and regional state agencies relevant for emergency management within the county. The crisis emergency council is to contribute to the RVA and be a forum for discussion and planning of societal security, preparedness and emergency management.<sup>25</sup>

### **During crisis**

- The county governor is the coordinator at the regional level where in emergencies, the main meeting place for relevant actors is the Crisis emergency council.<sup>26</sup>
- In time of war the County Governor has authority to safeguard important societal interests if communications with central government are disrupted.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> [Civil protection | County Governor - Statsforvalteren.no](#)

<sup>25</sup> Bjørkquist, C, GV Hansen, & H Ramsdal, 'Meetings as an Arena for Coordination in Crisis: The County Governor's Contingency Coordination through the County Emergency Council in Norway'. in Administrative sciences, 12, 2022, 2-3

<sup>26</sup> Aasland, Braut, 'Independence, trust, and loyalty. The county governor's coordination of public and voluntary resources in crises in Norway'. in Journal of contingencies and crisis management, 2022. 2

<sup>27</sup> [Crisis management and coordination | County Governor of Innlandet \(statsforvalteren.no\)](#)

- The main task in emergencies is to achieve collaboration both vertically and horizontally.<sup>28</sup>

## Scenario

### Description:

*Three days of heavy rain and melting snow in May results in a massive waterflow and flooding in the rivers and lakes of Nordland. This results in streams forming where water usually does not flow, and several landslides occurs in valleys which affects the local population.*

### Administrative government actors relevant for this scenario<sup>29</sup>

	Levels of government	Sector Authority	Lead agency
<b>National</b>	Ministry	Ministry of petroleum and energy	Ministry of justice and public security
<b>National</b>	Directorate	The Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE)	The Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection (DSB)
<b>Regional</b>	County Governor	County Governor	County Governor
<b>Local</b>	Municipality	Municipality	Municipality

### Response

The meteorological institute issues an extreme weather warning which in turn is followed by The Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE) issuing a regional flood alert. This warning is received by the county governors, the rescue coordination centers and other emergency response authorities at local, regional and national level as well as the public.<sup>30</sup> The initial operational response

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<sup>28</sup> Aasland, T, & GS Braut, 'Independence, trust, and loyalty. The county governor's coordination of public and voluntary resources in crises in Norway'. 2022

<sup>29</sup> Administrative government actors responsible for handling flooding. Source: Lillestøl, CS, & LH Rykkja, 'Dealing with Natural Disasters: Managing Floods in Norway'. in Working paper, 2016.

<sup>30</sup> [p2001636\\_aks\\_2019\\_eng.pdf\(dsb.no\)](#)

by the rescue services are coordinated by the local chief of police where emergency personnel from the municipalities are participating. The municipalities are coordinating the response on a strategic level.

Since the flooding affects several municipalities and is beyond the capacity of the municipalities on their own, the county governor takes over the role as coordinator on a strategic level. Meanwhile the operational response is still coordinated by the police. The county governor uses the Crisis emergency council as the main meeting place between the DSB, NVE, the emergency services, as well as representatives from voluntary and private organizations with expertise in civil protection. Since the flooding is so severe, regional and local rescue personnel are not sufficient. This results in the Regional Emergency Council deploying the Civil defence district of Nordland to help the local and regional personnel deal with the consequences of the floodings. As all the affected has been evacuated, received medical attention, and been provided a safe environment the extreme weather settles down and the flooding stops.

## **Crisis Communication**

The County Governor mainly has a coordinating role. This means that it is each individual agency that is responsible for communication in each case. The county governor naturally contributes with both support, coordination and distribution through relevant channels.

This may, among other things, apply to information from central authorities that is to be distributed to municipalities. When the County Governor communicates on its own, it is often to highlight our role and task in a larger picture, as there are benefits of contributing to society's understanding of what the County Governor's responsibilities are. In a situation like the abovementioned scenario, The County Governor has a responsibility to communicate the overall situation.

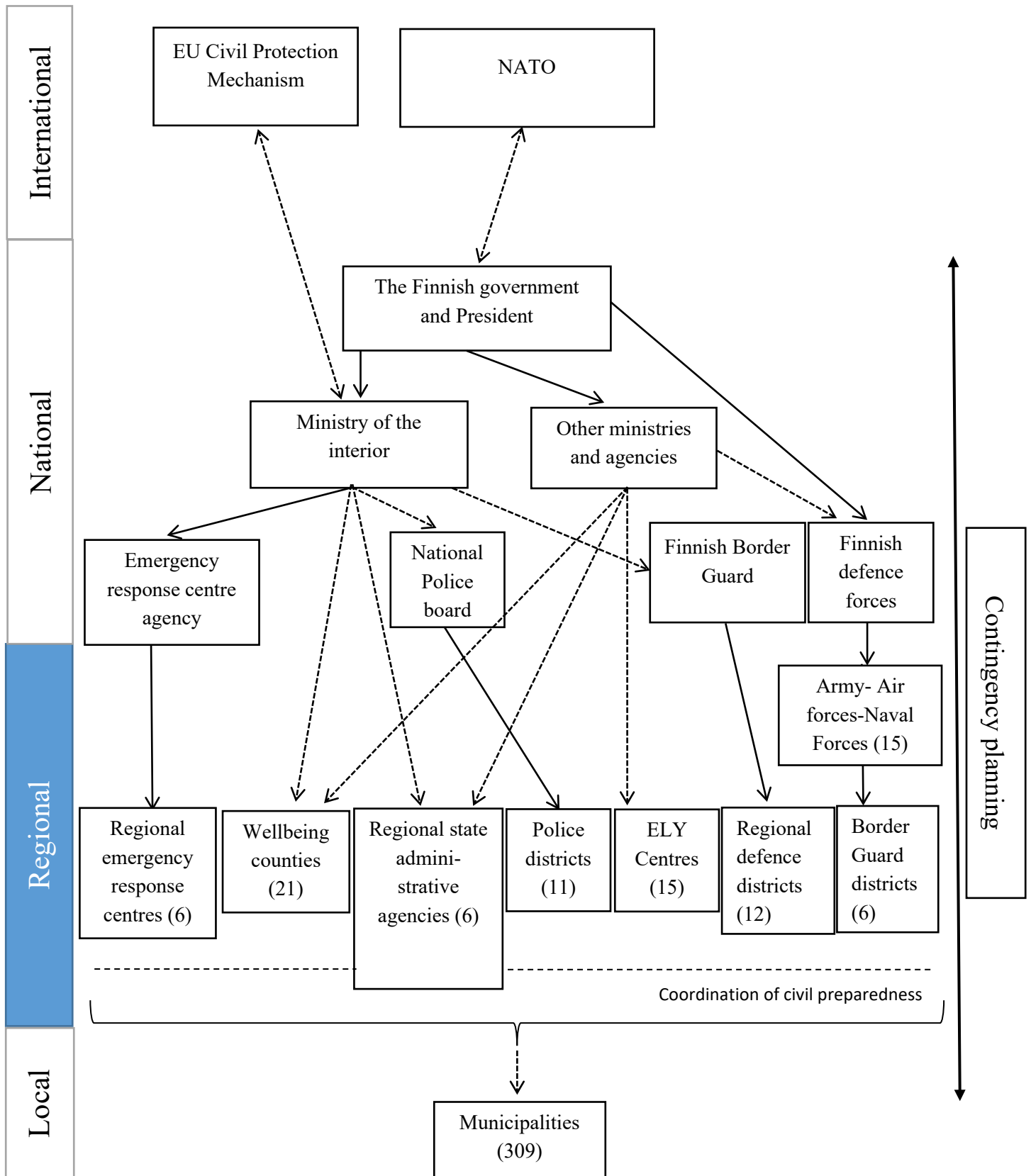
Crisis communication is only part of the tasks of the communications units at the County Governor, and no single agency has dedicated communicators whose only task is crisis communication. The most important task is therefore to contribute to ensuring that communication between other actors and to the citizens is as complete as possible and, not least, is on time.

However, crisis communication is not the County Governors operational responsibility. Therefore, the agency's most important contribution is to ensure the best possible coordination, as well as to help various actors reach out to a sufficient



extent. To ensure that the exchange of information and sharing of experience is the best possible, the agency has established a network for crisis communication where the most central players who can be thought of as having a role in a crisis are members. Here the members share experiences, support each other and meet regularly for discussion.

# The Finnish crisis management system



## Guiding principles

The *Comprehensive security* concept is the cooperation model of Finnish preparedness, where vital societal functions are handled together by authorities, businesses, organizations and citizens. There are 7 different vital societal functions outlined in the concept, these are, Leadership, International and EU activities, Defence capability, Internal security, Economy, infrastructure and security of supply, Functional capacity of the population and services and lastly psychological resilience.<sup>31</sup> Each area has a comprehensive description of what these vital societal functions requires, for example, effective leadership requires 1. clear lines of authority, explicit assignment of responsibilities and competent authorities with decision-making capability. 2. a situational picture (situation awareness, assessment of future developments), 3. crisis communications, 4. Sharing of information and technical solutions supporting this, 5. continuity management and 6. Cooperation.

## Actors

### NATO

Finland is the most recent member of NATO joining in 2023 becoming NATO's 31<sup>st</sup> member country.<sup>32</sup> NATO's article 3 states that "In order to more effectively achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack." This gives each member state an incentive to increase their resilience against a major shock to society, which is a national responsibility. The military forces of the alliance are dependent on the civilian and commercial sector for transport, communications, and basic supplies such as food and water. Therefore, civil preparedness is a central pillar to strengthen the alliance collective defence and which is why NATO also assists their member states in strengthening their civil preparedness. During crisis NATO can assist their members in situations such as natural disaster or war adapting their response depending on the situation.<sup>33</sup> NATO can involve military and non-military measures to address the full spectrum of crises – before, during and after conflicts.<sup>34</sup> NATO's article 5 is one of the cornerstones of the alliance and

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<sup>31</sup> [Comprehensive security – Turvallisuuskomitea](#)

<sup>32</sup> [NATO - Topic: Member countries](#)

<sup>33</sup> [NATO - Topic: Resilience, civil preparedness and Article 3](#)

<sup>34</sup> [NATO - Topic: Crisis management](#)

commits the members to protect each other resulting in a collective defence where an attack against one ally is considered an attack against all allies.

### **EU Civil Protection Mechanism and rescEU**

The EU civil protection mechanism aims to improve prevention, preparedness and response to disasters and can be used when the response capabilities of a country is overwhelmed. The preventive work involves that participating States report their national risk assessments and risk management analyses where countries can support one another by providing evaluation and advice. There are also early warning systems for forest fires and flooding, as well as services based on the EU's satellite system Copernicus. Regarding preparedness, a common pool based on national resources are available and can be accessed when requested from the European commission.<sup>35</sup> During disasters this mechanism makes it possible to deploy specialist teams and equipment, for example, search, rescue and medical teams and firefighting planes.<sup>36</sup>

### **The Finnish government and president**

The Finnish government has a responsibility to lead and supervise emergency preparedness work which all independent ministries and all levels of government is obligated to have.<sup>37</sup> The government can also declare a state of emergency together with the president, which gives each ministry and the government additional powers. It does not have to be approved by the parliament in urgent circumstances.<sup>38</sup> A declaration of state of emergency has previously been used during the pandemic to enforce for example closing down Finland's borders and schools.<sup>39</sup> Each ministry has a responsibility to lead, supervise and coordinate the emergency preparedness work in their own area.<sup>40</sup> In each ministry, the task of the permanent secretary is to ensure the overall security and preparedness of their ministry and its administrative branch.<sup>41</sup> The Finnish president is the Supreme commander of the Defence forces of Finland and has power over decisions over:

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.msb.se/en/about-msb/international-co-operation/cooperation-with-eu/eu-and-the-civil-protection-cooperation/>

<sup>36</sup> [EU Civil Protection Mechanism \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/eu-civil-protection-mechanism/)

<sup>37</sup> 29.12.2011/1552, 3kap 12§-13§

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 2 kap 6§ and 7§

<sup>39</sup> [Finland closes schools, declares state of emergency over coronavirus | News | Yle Uutiset](https://yle.fi/uutiset/2020-03-14/finland-closes-schools-declares-state-of-emergency-over-coronavirus)

<sup>40</sup> 29.12.2011/1552, 3kap 12§

<sup>41</sup> [YTS 2017\\_english.pdf \(turvallisuuskomitea.fi\)](https://www.turvallisuuskomitea.fi/yts-2017-englisch.pdf) s11

Key principles, important changes in readiness, principles of implementation and other military activities of importance.<sup>42</sup>

### **Ministry of interior**

The ministry of interior and their department of the rescue services has the responsibility to coordinate national level preparedness and arrangements for the rescue services as well as developing cooperation efforts among ministries and other sectors.<sup>43</sup> In addition to this, the ministry has a general responsibility of directing and guiding rescue services and having an oversight of their quality.<sup>44</sup> The department also makes decisions about international assistance.<sup>45</sup>

### **Emergency response centre agency (ERCA)**

The emergency response centre agency operates at a national level but have regional offices as well. The task of the ERCA is to receive emergency calls from all over the country that fall within the scope of the rescue, police, social and health services, as well as other information relating to the safety of people, property and the environment and to forward their content to the appropriate authorities or partners.<sup>46</sup>

### **National Police board**

The National Police Board's tasks include planning, directing, developing and supervising police operations and their related support functions. In addition, it decides on cooperation between police units and is in charge of their performance management.<sup>47</sup> The regional police force consists of 11 police departments which operates under the national police board.

### **Finnish defence forces**

The Finnish defence forces have a general responsibility of protecting Finland and its people. In the area of crisis management, the arguably most important task for the Finnish defence forces are supporting other authorities, which includes: a) work with other authorities to maintain law and order and security, prevent and stop terrorists and to secure society in general; and b) taking part in rescue operations

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<sup>42</sup> [About us - Finnish Defence Forces - Puolustusvoimat - The Finnish Defence Forces](#)

<sup>43</sup> 29.6.2021/613, 3 kap 7§.

<sup>44</sup> Ministry of the interior, Rescue services reform aimed at improving services, Ministry of the interior, <https://intermin.fi/en/projects-and-legislation/rescue-services-reform> (Hämtad 2022-10-04)

<sup>45</sup> [Finland \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

<sup>46</sup> <https://112.fi/en/administration>

<sup>47</sup> [National Police Board of Finland - Police \(poliisi.fi\)](#)

by providing equipment, personnel and expertise for the use of the rescue services.<sup>48</sup>

### **Wellbeing counties**

The wellbeing counties are the organizer of health, social, rescue and preparedness services as of 2023, which previously was the responsibility of the municipalities. They are obliged to have a contingency plan and their level of standards are assessed by the regional state administrative agency.<sup>49</sup>

### **Municipalities**

The municipalities are obliged to provide statutory services for the residents in both normal and abnormal situations. They also have an obligation to have preparedness plans, launch preliminary preparations for measures to be taken in abnormal situations as well as other steps to make sure it accomplishes these tasks as well as possible. The preparedness work is usually led by the municipal manager together with the municipal board. They are supported by regional emergency service departments, government regional administrations and voluntary organizations when needed.<sup>50</sup>

## **Main tasks of the Regional State Administrative Agencies (RSAA)**

### **Before a crisis**

- The overall tasks of the Regional State Administrative Agencies are to promote fundamental rights and the realisation of legal protection, access to basic services, environmental protection, sustainable use of the environment, domestic safety, and the health and safety of living and work environments at both the regional and national level.
- The key task regarding crisis management is to coordinate civil preparedness in their respective regions. The task involves organising cooperation, coordinating preparedness planning, supporting preparedness planning in municipalities, and promoting security planning in regional and local government.

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<sup>48</sup> [About us - Finnish Defence Forces - Puolustusvoimat - The Finnish Defence Forces](#)

<sup>49</sup> [Wellbeing services counties - Aluehallintovirasto \(avi.fi\)](#)

<sup>50</sup> [Regional administration and municipalities – Turvallisuuskomitea](#)

- Oversees and assesses the level and standard of the rescue services, which must correspond to national, regional and local needs. As well as overseeing and assessing the risk of incidents and accidents.<sup>51</sup>
- Together with the Finnish Defence Forces, the Regional State Administrative Agencies regularly organise regional national defence courses where the preparedness of society is reviewed through different themes. The Regional State Administrative Agencies also regularly organise preparedness exercises across Finland. These exercises focus on themes that help develop civilian preparedness and cooperation, such as civil defence.
- In connection with the courses and exercises, the municipalities in the region are also provided the opportunity to review and update their preparedness planning. Situational awareness concerning the regional security of supply has also become an increasingly integral part of preparedness. At the same time, the Regional State Administrative Agencies have begun coordinating the necessary functions, value chains and services arising from the needs of each region to guarantee the living conditions of their residents and the operating conditions of the companies that are located there.
- Maintains different cooperation networks in their regions, one of the most important being the Regional Preparedness Committee where key authorities in the region can share up-to-date information on their situational awareness. The preparedness committees, security forums and division-specific cooperation teams have carried out long-term work in each region to promote the overall security of society.
- The Regional State Administrative Agency provides separate expert assessments of the rescue services for each wellbeing services county and carries out its national assessment.<sup>52</sup>
- Monitors the regional preparedness of health care actors for major accidents and special health care situations.
- Participates in the assessment of major emergency management training events for the cooperation between rescue services and other emergency responders in sites vulnerable to major emergencies.

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<sup>51</sup> [Rescue services reform - Ministry of the Interior \(intermin.fi\)](https://intermin.fi)

<sup>52</sup> [Wellbeing services counties - Aluehallintovirasto \(avi.fi\)](https://avi.fi)

- Strives to increase preparedness and cooperation of businesses and ordinary citizens as they are an integral part of creating a resilient community.<sup>53</sup>
- Has specialized tasks, for example the regional state administrative agency of Northern Finland manages and coordinates aerial forest fire surveillance efforts.<sup>54</sup>
- Over the years, the Regional State Administrative Agencies have created well-functioning cooperation networks in their own regions, which, for their part, have provided a strong foundation for preparedness in Finnish society. Northern Finland is served by the Regional State Administrative Agency for Lapland in Rovaniemi and the Regional State Administrative Agency for Northern Finland in Oulu. There is great demand for international cooperation across borders, especially with Sweden and Norway.

### **During**

- Has close contact with the ministry of the interior in managing rescue services, collecting necessary data, and maintaining situational pictures.<sup>55</sup>
- Play an important role in situations where society is faced with different disruptions and emergencies. As they cross-administrative opportunities for regional-level understanding and collaboration and coordinate measures between different actors.

### **Crisis Communication**

The Regional State Administrative Agency in Lapland chairs the emergency committee of regional authorities (e.g. Finnish armed forces, the police, the border agency, health and social care, emergency service). The committee has three subsections: the secretariat, the network of local governments and the network of crisis communication professionals.

The crisis communications network consists of communications professionals from regional authorities in Lapland. The network chaired by the Head of Regional Communications meets regularly, provides a forum to discuss crisis

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<sup>53</sup> [Security actors – Turvallisuuksomitea](#)

<sup>54</sup> [Rescue services - Our services - About us - Aluehallintovirasto \(avi.fi\)](#)

<sup>55</sup> [Rescue services - Our services - About us - Aluehallintovirasto \(avi.fi\)](#)



communications and raises awareness on mis/disinformation. In addition, the network organizes capacity building and training events.

During a crisis, the core crisis group of the Regional State Administrative Agency produces a situation report, a section of which focuses on communications, to inform national authorities of the situation. The crisis communications network can, if so requested, provide the lead organization with practical communications support.

The Regional State Administrative Agencies bring together regional actors and provide regional level understanding and measure coordination

## Scenario

### Description

*Three days of heavy rain and melting snow in May results in a massive waterflow and flooding in the rivers and lakes of Lapland. This results in a water level rise in rivers and lakes. Streams forming where water usually does not flow causing damages to road networks and buildings which affects the local population.*

### Administrative government actors relevant for this scenario

	<b>Levels of government</b>	<b>Sector Authority</b>	<b>Lead agency</b>
<b>National</b>	Ministry	Ministry of agriculture and forestry	Ministry of interior
<b>Regional</b>	Regional authority	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment	Regional state administrative agency.
<b>Local</b>	Municipality	Municipality	Municipality

*Source: Räsänen, A, V Kauppinen, S Juhola, G Setten, & H Lein, 'Configurations of community in flood risk management'. in Norsk geografisk tidsskrift, 74, 2020, 170-171*

### Response

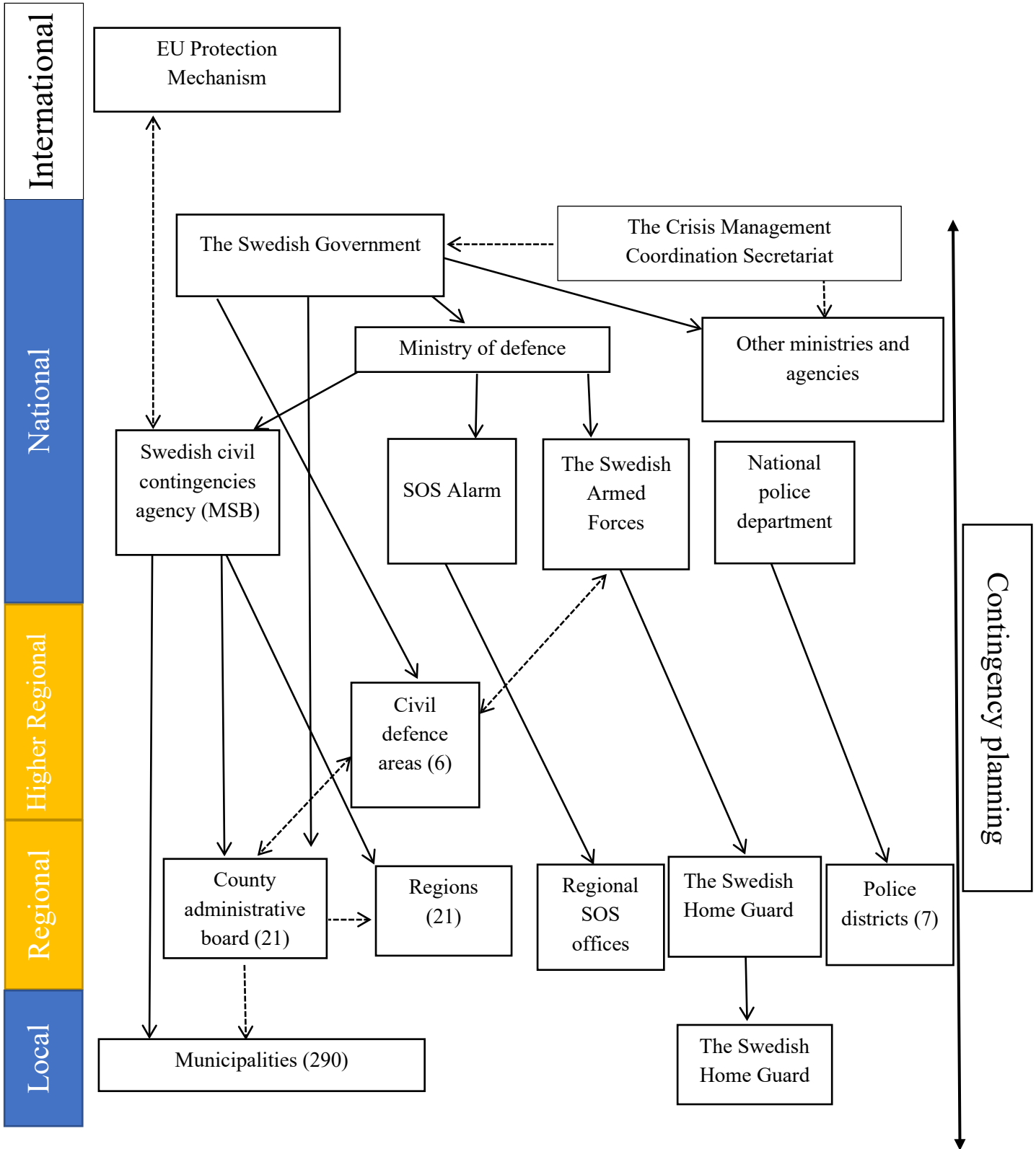
The Finnish environment institute, the Finnish Meteorological institute and the Flood centre sends out extreme weather and flood warnings to the regional state

administrative agency of Lapland as well as rescue departments, the public and other relevant actors at local, regional and national level. <sup>56</sup> The initial operational responsibility is coordinated by the local rescue services where the Regional Emergency Response Centre provide information to the rescue services. The regional state administration of Lapland acts as a situation centre where the leaders of the municipalities, the police, volunteer organizations and rescue services provide information on how the situation develops and how each actors can help. However, as the flooding is too much for the local rescue services these are assisted by rescue services from non-affected municipalities of Lapland and the Finnish Defence Forces. As all the affected has been evacuated, received medical attention, and been provided a safe environment the extreme weather settles down and the flooding stops.

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<sup>56</sup> [Flood Centre - syke.fi](https://www.syke.fi/en/health-topics/a-z-index/flood-centre)

# The Swedish crisis management system



## Guiding principles

- The principle of responsibility entails that those actors responsible for an activity under normal circumstances retain this responsibility in the event of societal disruptions. Actors have a responsibility to act, even in uncertain situations. The expanded principle of responsibility stipulates the actor are obliged to collaborate with and support each other.
- The principle of proximity – societal disruptions shall be managed where they occur and by the responsible actors most closely involved.
- The principle of similarity – actors are not to make changes to their organization that are more far-reaching than the situation demands. Accordingly, in the event of societal disruptions, operations shall function as they do under normal circumstances, to the extent possible.<sup>57</sup> In Sweden, this means that the municipalities are the first responsible actors.

## Actors

### EU Civil Protection Mechanism and rescEU

The EU civil protection mechanism aims to improve prevention, preparedness and response to disasters and can be used when the response capabilities of a country is overwhelmed. The preventive work involves that participating States report their national risk assessments and risk management analyses where countries can support one another by providing evaluation and advice. There are also early warning systems for forest fires and flooding, as well as services based on the EU's satellite system Copernicus. Regarding preparedness, a common pool based on national resources are available and can be accessed when requested from the European commission.<sup>58</sup> During disasters this mechanism makes it possible to deploy specialist teams and equipment, for example, search, rescue and medical teams and firefighting planes.<sup>59</sup>

### The Swedish Government

The government has a geographical area responsibility at the national level and is supported by the crisis management coordination secretariat. The Government's duties primarily concern matters of a strategic nature and the state secretary to the

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<sup>57</sup> [Krisshanteringens grunder - Krisinformation.se](#)

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.msb.se/en/about-msb/international-co-operation/cooperation-with-eu/eu-and-the-civil-protection-cooperation/>

<sup>59</sup> [EU Civil Protection Mechanism \(europa.eu\)](#)

prime minister is primarily responsible. Responsibility for managing and coordinating operations lies with the relevant agencies. During crisis, each ministry handles issues within their area of responsibility.<sup>60 61</sup>

### **The Crisis Management Coordination Secretariat**

The Government Offices has a special Director-General and a secretariat for crisis management. They support the State Secretary to the Prime Minister and develop, coordinate and follow up crisis management at the Government Offices. The Director-General's responsibilities include ensuring that the Government Offices makes necessary preparations for crisis management response. This may include early warning of a situation that may develop into a crisis, or training and exercises to increase crisis management capacity in general.

The Crisis Management Coordination Secretariat monitors developments both nationally and internationally around the clock. It should be able to raise an alert and produce comprehensive status reports and a picture of the combined impact on society of all individual events. After a crisis situation, the Secretariat should be able to follow up and evaluate the measures taken.<sup>62</sup>

### **Ministry of Defence**

The Ministry of Defence is responsible for Sweden's military and civil defence as well as society's emergency preparedness. Its strategic planning includes international operations and security-building activities, which the agencies are instructed to implement and follow up.<sup>63</sup> The ministry of defence is a central actor in the crisis management system as it is responsible for several of the crisis management agencies and businesses, for example MSB, SOS alarm and the Swedish armed forces.

### **Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB)**

The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency is responsible for helping society prepare for major accidents, crises, and the consequences of war.<sup>64</sup> The agency consists of several different departments, for example the international coordination department, crisis preparedness and civil defence, and cybersecurity

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<sup>60</sup> <https://www.krisinformation.se/detta-gor-samhallet/mer-om-sveriges-krisanteringssystem/samhallets-ansvar/regeringen>

<sup>61</sup> [Crisis management at the Government Offices - Government.se](#)

<sup>62</sup> [Crisis management at the Government Offices - Government.se](#)

<sup>63</sup> [Ministry of Defence - Government.se](#)

<sup>64</sup> [About MSB](#)

and safe communications.<sup>65</sup> Their areas of responsibility are civil protection, crisis preparedness and civil defence where MSB is supposed to take action before, during and after an accident, crisis or war.<sup>66</sup> MSB decides, with support from the government, in which ways the municipalities and county administrative boards work with preparedness. A biannual risk and vulnerability analysis report is an example in which the MSB governs these authorities as well as educating and contributing with expertise in certain areas.

### **SOS Alarm**

SOS alarm is responsible for the emergency number 112 which is used when there is a danger to life, property or the environment. SOS alarm has a central role in the crisis management efforts and alerts emergency actors in the case of an accident, crisis or other disturbances to society. Their access to information, advanced technology and situational pictures gives them the ability to provide accurate information to emergency services.<sup>67</sup> SOS alarm therefore has close contact with rescue services, police, and medical personnel.

### **Swedish Armed Forces**

The Swedish armed forces have a general responsibility of protecting Sweden and its people. During disasters the Swedish armed forces can assist the rescue services with different tasks, for example, evacuation, health care, clear roads from debris and search for missing persons. They are also obligated to participate in rescue operations if there are appropriate resources and if the participation doesn't seriously hinder the day-to-day activity. During national crises or when supporting civil society, the operations are led by the leading staff of the military region where the crisis has happened.<sup>68</sup>

### **The Swedish Police**

The national police commissioner, who is appointed by the Swedish government, is solely responsible for the entire police agency operations. There are 7 regional departments of the police, which have overall responsibility within their geographical area.<sup>69</sup> The national operations department coordinates every parts of the police agencies contingency planning. The preparedness work is done primarily within the areas RVA, continuity management, total defence, CBRNE, exercise

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<sup>65</sup> [Ledningsgrupp \(msb.se\)](https://www.msb.se)

<sup>66</sup> [Vårt uppdrag \(msb.se\)](https://www.msb.se)

<sup>67</sup> [112 Sweden - SOS ALARM](https://www.msb.se)

<sup>68</sup> [Stöd till samhället - Försvarmakten \(forsvarsmakten.se\)](https://www.forsvarsmakten.se)

<sup>69</sup> [Organisation | Polismyndigheten \(polisen.se\)](https://www.polisen.se)

and training, and protection of critical societal functions.<sup>70</sup> During crises the police can for example help evacuate the affected or search for missing persons and if the local departments don't have enough resources they can request help from regional or national departments.<sup>71</sup>

### **Civil Defence Areas**

The Civil defence areas consists of 2 or more County administrative boards (CAB) where the civil defence geographical area corresponds to the counties the CABs are responsible for. The Civil defence areas are led by one of the CABs which has an overall responsibility of strengthening and rebuilding the civil defence in the area.<sup>72</sup> They have a geographical area responsibility regarding tasks relating to a heightened state of alert and war. The areas have both tasks in peacetime and during a state of heightened alert. In peacetime they assist the CABs before crisis with coordinating planning and preparedness efforts and during crisis they can support the CABS if an event affects several counties. Before a heightened state of alert, they coordinate civil defence planning and preparedness, for example regarding Host Nation Support. During a heightened state of alert, they coordinate the civil defence efforts, cooperates and coordinates with the Swedish Armed forces the military and civil defence efforts to achieve highest defence capabilities possible.<sup>73</sup>

### **Regions**

There are 21 regions which are responsible for healthcare, public transportation, culture and regional development. This means that the regions are responsible for hospitals, ambulances, and other healthcare related services. Every region has a crisis management plan which aim is to minimize the consequences by a crisis. During a crisis the regions must distribute resources in a way that minimizes the impact on the day-to-day operations, and they can also request help from other regions if needed.<sup>74</sup>

### **Municipalities**

The foundation for the Swedish crisis management system are the municipalities as they are the first ones responsible for handling crisis. They operate in several

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<sup>70</sup> [Beredskapsplanering inom Polismyndigheten | Polismyndigheten \(polisen.se\)](#)

<sup>71</sup> [Särskild händelse | Polismyndigheten \(polisen.se\)](#)

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasterbotten/om-oss/nyheter-och-press/nyheter---vasterbotten/2022-05-19-totalforsvaret-starks---vasterbottens-lan-blir-en-del-av-norra-civilomradet.html>

<sup>73</sup> 2022:525 4-11§

<sup>74</sup> [Regioner - Krisinformation.se](#)

different areas such as elderly care, social services, water supply, heating, rescue services and schools which is supposed to function even in times of crisis. To manage this, they are obligated to have contingency plans of how they will handle extraordinary events which is supposed to be based on RVAs. The municipalities also conduct exercises with relevant actors and educate their elected politicians and employees in the areas of preparedness. The municipalities also build networks so that during crisis there is a functioning cooperation between the relevant actors.<sup>75</sup> This means that during crisis they are the first ones to coordinate the crisis management efforts on a strategic level and their responsibilities are limited to their geographical area.

### **Home Guard**

The Home guard is a part of the Swedish Defence forces and is nearly half of its personnel. The Home Guard consists of many different platoons such as CBRN, traffic, pioneer, and grenade launcher. During disasters, large-scale accidents or other threats against society, the Home Guard stands prepared to assist the police, the rescue services and other authorities. In forest fires, flooding, pandemics or searches for missing people, the Home Guard units provide an extra resource. In total, the Home Guard units comprise approximately 21 000 men and women all over the country.<sup>76</sup>

## **Main tasks of the County Administrative Board (CAB)**

### **Before crisis**

- Has geographical area responsibility on a regional level which means that the CAB is responsible to coordinate efforts between agencies, municipalities, and other actors within their area before, during and after a crisis.
- Conducts regional RVAs and supports the municipalities in their work with local RVAs
- Acts as the link between national and local level, implementing national directives in their region and oversees specific areas for example environmental, regional development, and preparedness.

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<sup>75</sup> [Kommuner - Krisinformation.se](http://kommuner-krisinformation.se)

<sup>76</sup> [Home Guard - Swedish Armed Forces \(forsvarsmakten.se\)](http://forsvarsmakten.se)



- Monitors the municipalities crisis management abilities with the aim to develop and improve preparedness.
- Provides and coordinates exercises and training with relevant crisis management actors such as NGOs, municipalities, agencies and emergency services.
- Has established regional networks to improve coordination of preparedness, crisis management efforts during crisis and reflection after crisis.

### **During crisis**

- During crisis, coordinates the work between relevant actors, such as municipalities, regions, agencies, businesses and NGOs if necessary.
- Is responsible for specific areas, for example, rescue operations and sanitation during and after contamination of radioactive substances.
- In certain cases, can overtake responsibility for rescue services in one or several municipalities.<sup>77</sup>
- Acts as the highest civil total defence authority and takes over the leadership responsibility if communications with the government is disrupted during war.

## **Crisis Communication**

Crisis communication is a part of the Swedish crisis preparedness system.

The CAB has the responsibility to coordinate information and communication to the public and media in the region. The crisis communication is supposed to be integrated in the work of managing crises. That is the main task.

In the county we have a crisis communication network that includes communication officers and managers from the crisis management organizations in our region, for example the municipalities, the healthcare, police, transport administration and Swedish armed forces. The CAB is the convener of the network.

The crisis communication network work together after a common routine. The routine for communication officers describes how we shall collaborate before, during and after a crisis. During times without crisis, we have meetings regularly

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<sup>77</sup> <https://www.krisinformation.se/detta-gor-samhallet/mer-om-sveriges-krishanteringssystem/samhallets-ansvar/lansstyrelsen>

that focus on getting to know each other, prepare coordinated messages, educate, and practice crisis communication, among other things.

During a crisis we focus on coordinated messages, communicative situation reports and common communication campaigns and that usually means a lot of cooperation at a regional and a local level.

When a national crisis happens, like the pandemic, we also collaborate with national actors like MSB and coordinate messages together with other County Administrative Boards.

## Scenario:

### Description

*Three days of heavy rain and melting snow in May results in a massive waterflow and flooding in the rivers and lakes of Västerbotten. This results in streams forming where water usually does not flow and several landslides occur in valleys which affects the local population.*

	<b>Levels of government</b>	<b>Sector Authority</b>	<b>Lead agency</b>
<b>National</b>	Agency	Swedish Civil contingencies agency (MSB)	Swedish Civil Contingencies agency (MSB)
<b>Regional</b>	Regional authority	County administrative board	County administrative board
<b>Local</b>	Municipality	Municipality	Municipality

### Response

As extreme weather and flooding is expected in the region of Västerbotten, the Swedish meteorological and hydrological institute issues a warning to the public, the municipalities, the CAB of Västerbotten as well as other relevant actors at local, regional and national level. The initial response to the flooding is handled at the municipal level where the municipalities' rescue services are responsible for the operational response. Here, the municipality coordinates all the relevant actors and has close contact with the CAB to develop a situational picture. However, as

the flooding affects several municipalities and is so severe that it can't be handled by the municipal level rescue services a request for assistance is sent to the CAB. At this point, the CAB takes over the responsibility of coordinating the crisis management efforts on a strategic level. The CAB manages to get help from the police, The Swedish Armed forces, and rescue services from other non-affected municipalities and coordinates the crisis management efforts. As all the affected has been evacuated, received medical attention, and been provided a safe environment the extreme weather settles down and the flooding stops.

## Common crisis management tools and characteristics

	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Declaration of State of emergency	Yes	No	No
Cooperation principle	No	Yes	No*
Proximity principle	No	Yes	Yes
Responsibility principle	No	Yes	Yes
Similarity principle	No	Yes	Yes
Comprehensive security concept	Yes	No	No
Obligatory contingency planning on all levels of government	Yes	Yes	Yes
Coordinating national agency for crisis management	No	Yes (DSB)	Yes (MSB)
NATO membership	Yes	Yes	Pending
EU Civil Protection partnership	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*The expanded principle of responsibility could arguably correspond to this principle

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## **Länsstyrelsen Västerbotten**

Storgatan 71 B, 901 86 Umeå, Sweden

[www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasterbotten](http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasterbotten)

[vasterbotten@lansstyrelsen.se](mailto:vasterbotten@lansstyrelsen.se)

+46 10 225 40 00