



Zivilschutzverband



Österreich

Austrian Civil Protection Association

EVCPP Conference

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Austrian Civil Protection Association (ACPA)





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The EVCPPF – an international non-governmental organization (INGO)?

Aims and objectives

European Voluntary
Civil Protection Forum



Austrian Civil Protection Association (ACPA)



The future of the EVCPF



The Austrian Civil Protection Organization (ACPA) aims to start a discussion on the future of the EVCPF about the following content:

- ▲ Vision, mission, role, legal entity of the EVCPF within the framework of Civil Protection stakeholders in Europe
- ▲ Status of EVCPF as NGO and possibly INGO (inter-national non-governmental organization)?
- ▲ Its co-operation with the European Union and international organizations as the Council of Europe and the United Nations



Internationally accepted NGOs



The requirements to become an accepted International NGO are defined as follows:

Definition I: United Nations

“A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens’ group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens’ concerns to Governments, monitor policies and encourage political participation at the community level. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements. Some are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, the environment or health. Their relationship with offices and agencies of the United Nations System differs depending on their location and mandates.”



Internationally accepted NGOs II



Definition 2 – The Council of Europe on the basic principles of an NGO:

1. For the purpose of this recommendation, NGOs are voluntary self-governing bodies or organizations established to pursue the essentially non-profit-making objectives of their founders or members. They do not include political parties.
2. NGOs encompass bodies or organizations established both by individual persons (natural or legal) and by groups of such persons. They can be either membership or non-membership based.
3. NGOs can be either informal bodies or organizations or ones which have legal personality.
4. NGOs can be national or international in their composition and sphere of operation.
5. NGOs should enjoy the right to freedom of expression and all other universally and regionally guaranteed rights and freedoms applicable to them.



Internationally accepted NGOs II



6. NGOs should not be subject to direction by public authorities.
7. NGOs with legal personality should have the same capacities as are generally enjoyed by other legal persons and should be subject to the administrative, civil and criminal law obligations and sanctions generally applicable to those legal persons.
8. The legal and fiscal framework applicable to NGOs should encourage their establishment and continued operation.
9. NGOs should not distribute any profits which might arise from their activities to their members or founders but can use them for the pursuit of their objectives.
10. Acts or omissions by public authorities affecting an NGO should be subject to administrative review and be open to challenge by the NGO in an independent and impartial court with full jurisdiction.



What are the missions and visions of the EVCPF?



In order to target international acceptance and recognition on the level of civil-/self-protection, know how and expertise as well as on the political level, the Forum has to clearly set out its missions and visions as a self-definition for the future and message to international bodies (EU, UNO, etc.)

- ▲ Statements that explain who we are
 - ▲ *Type of organization*
 - ▲ *Projects and co-operations we do*
 - ▲ *Needs we fill, each on national and international level*

- ▲ Statements that explain our direction, our purpose, our reason for being
 - ▲ *What difference do we make?*

- ▲ Statements that explain what makes us unique
 - ▲ *Values*
 - ▲ *People within organization*
 - ▲ *Activities*



Missions and visions II



For the Civil Protection Forum, intending to enter the floor of international NGOs, in the vision of the Austrian Civil Protection it is necessary to take into consideration a wider field of aspects, focussing activities and competence related to safety, prevention, disaster preparedness and response, risk management and intervention in case of emergency:

- ▲ Urban and regional development: infrastructure and development of towns and municipalities, tourism
- ▲ Industrial development
- ▲ Environmental and health protection
- ▲ Water management
- ▲ Waste management



Recognition of International NGOs



European Council by the European Convention on the Recognition of the Legal Personality of International Non-Governmental Organisations (ETS No. 124)



Personality and capacity as acquired in a Party where that organization has its statutory offices.

Austrian Civil Protection Association (ACPA)



Recognition of International NGOs II



United Nations, by application at the Department of Public Information (DPI) and has to fulfill the following criteria:



- ▲ The NGO must support and respect the principles of the Charter of the United Nations;
- ▲ Must be of recognized national or international standing;
- ▲ Should operate solely on a not-for-profit basis and have tax-exempt status;
- ▲ Must have the commitment and the means to conduct effective information programmes with its constituents and to a broader audience about UN activities by publishing newsletters, bulletins and pamphlets; organizing conferences, seminars and round tables; or enlisting the attention of the media;



The future of the EVCPF



- ▲ Should preferably have a satisfactory record of collaboration with UN Information Centres/Services or other parts of the UN System prior to association.
- ▲ Please note that in cases where the NGO has no record of collaboration but the DPI Committee on NGOs approves its applications, it will have a provisional association status of two years until which it can establish a partnership with the relevant UNICs/UNISs or UN system organization;
- ▲ The NGO should provide an audited annual financial statement, indicated in US currency, and conducted by a qualified, independent accountant;
- ▲ The NGO should have statutes/bylaws providing for a transparent process of taking decisions, elections of officers and members of the Board of Directors.
- ▲ Should have an established record of continuity of work for a minimum of three years and should show promise of sustained activity in the future.



The European Union and NGOs



The European Commission consider the NGOs as part of the Civil Society and does consult them without a special recognition process:



“The Commission adopted the Discussion Paper "The Commission and NGOs : building a stronger partnership" on 18 January 2000 [COM (2000) 11]. In December 2002, the Commission adopted a Communication "General principles and minimum standards for consultation of interested parties", which sets up a coherent and flexible framework for consultation of stakeholders, including NGOs.”



The European Union and NGOs II



EU funding (Grants and loans)

According to the European Commission, “the Commission pays direct grants to different beneficiaries, such as universities and NGOs, in pursuance of EU policies, in such fields as social affairs, research and development, education, environment, consumer protection and external policies. All EU funding is channeled towards precise objectives and priorities under the various policies, which, in turn are based on provisions of the Treaties.”

- The EVCPCF has to participate in specific calls of projects, i. e. for Regional Development (ERDF), Civil Protection, Environment, etc., assuring co-financing and financial liquidity, in order to obtain EU funds.
- Are there any other possibilities to be supported by the European Union?



Conclusions and outlook



Knowing the steps to an international NGO, the certification bodies and the necessary commitments, the Austrian Civil Protection Association proposes:

1. To asks all the Forum Members and Partners to provide a statement on the mission and vision of the EVCPE (Slide 5), from their point of view, in order to take further measures.

Deadline and organizational details should be fixed.

2. To draft a letter with main questions adressed to the DG ECHO, to explore the possibilities of an EU support – financial and political
3. To submit an invitation to the European Commissioner Ms Kristalina Georgieva, for the next meeting of the Forum





Thank you for your attention!

The Austrian Civil Protection Association kindly asks for your contribution

