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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Can social media and crowdsourcing createmore disaster resilient societies? The LINKS H2020 project has the answers.**

**June 2021 will mark the first year of work under LINKS, a project financed under the European Commission Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme.**

Social media platforms and crowdsourcing (SMCS) strategies are increasingly being integrate into crisis management for cooperation and collaboration across European communities in all phases of crises. The European funded LINKS project wants to know more about how these processes impact societal resilience. As the project coordinator, Nathan Clark from Vrije University in Amsterdam puts it - "Social media and crowdsourcing offer many opportunities for engaging with, and giving voices to, different stakeholders within a community which can support disaster risk management efforts and ultimately create more resilient societies. But at the same time there are still risks, challenges and unknowns associated with these technologies and processes which can just as easily compromise resilience.”

Over the past year LINKS has taken up the challenge to dig deeper into these opportunities and challenges social media and crowdsource pose in disaster settings. In spite of the COVID19 pandemic, the consortium has collaborated virtually across 6 European countries and 15 organizations to set the conceptual and methodological foundations for the upcoming field research in the project. This has included a study across [three core knowledge domains](http://links-project.eu/assessing-the-framework-the-links-approach/) focusing on social (*disaster risk perception and vulnerability)*, institutional (*disaster management processes*), and technical (*disaster community technologies)* dimensions of SMCS in disasters, led by partners at the University of Florence, the University of Copenhagen, and the Safety Innovation Center. The findings from those studies are freely available as reports on the project website, and will be applied in the field work taking place starting this November.

Together with local [practitioner partners](http://links-project.eu/meet-our-practitioners/), LINKS will be conducting studies across five diverse case scenarios across Europe including: flooding in Denmark, droughts and terrorism in Germany, earthquakes in Italy and industrial hazards in the Netherlands, to better understand the role of SMCS for local communities in disasters. As such, LINKS will contribute to the wider debate on risk and vulnerability and will also provide building blocks for disaster resilient communities and societies.

The results of the case studies will feed into the development of the [LINKS Framework](http://links-project.eu/first-steps-of-the-links-framework-the-essence-of-links/) which, ultimately, will provide a set of learning materials (for example: methods, guidelines, best practices for trainings, lessons learned on how to best use SMCS in disasters) for a wide variety of stakeholders, including practitioners, policy makers and local communities. The LINKS Framework will be accessible to everyone through the LINKS Community Center (LCC). The LCC is presently being designed as a flexible web-based platform and enabling stakeholders exchange knowledge and experiences, to and access knowledge on the usage of SMCS in disasters.

The project is also interested in engaging with the broader crisis management community through the LCC and other project activities. Those interested in taking part in the “LINKS Community” can register to do so through an online [questionnaire](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/LINKSLCCSurvey2021?fbclid=IwAR1Htwrh8_4cafmdz3hBq7viZNGs0QVzOuni_eBwDzwJzdWpuo1caqDsY_I). In addition, the main results achieved in the first year of the project will be presented for interested stakeholders during the “[First LINKS Conference](https://www.cmine.eu/events/59711)” taking place on 2 July, 2021. The event is open to all.

For further information on LINKS see the project website at links-project.eu. The main outputs of the project can also be downloaded here: <http://links-project.eu/deliverables/>.

**For more information:**

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