



Strengthening the resilience of EU border regions

Cross-border disaster risk management

*Delia Bonsignore, Unit D2 - Interreg
DG Regional and Urban Policy*

Study: Strengthening the Resilience of EU Border Regions

- **Objective:** To assess the **risks** that cross-border regions are exposed to, including their impact, to identify **main gaps** in disaster risk management capabilities at local, regional, national and European level and recommend measures to improve them, as well as to provide examples of good practices.
- **Geographical and risk coverage:**

53 borders (43 EU internal land borders, 4 maritime borders, 6 borders of candidate countries)

12 types of risks:

- Meteorological and hydrological (i.e. floods, fires)
- Geohazards (i.e. Geophysical risks)
- Biological (i.e. Pandemics, animal diseases)
- Technological (i.e. Nuclear and radiological accidents)
- Societal (i.e. Terrorism, Cyber threats, Mass migration).

➤ Border Fiches and Maps

Available at:
[KN-02-24-587-EN-N.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

➤ 10 Case Studies and related good practices

Available at:
[KN-09-24-524-EN-N.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

AUSTRIA - SLOVENIA

Overall review of risks

The risks with a high probability of occurring are: Flooding (4.5); Geophysical risks (4); Wildfires (3.5) are considered high risks. Average risks have been identified for extreme weather (3).

Discrepancies in risk assessment

There are some discrepancies in the assessment of the risks, especially for Wildfires (5 Austria, 2 Slovenia); Geophysical risks (5 Austria, 3 Slovenia); Migration (1 Austria, 3 Slovenia); Extreme weather (2 Austria, 4 Slovenia).

Exposures and vulnerabilities

The Austrian assessment shows that flooding, wildfires, and landslides would expose housing, production capacities, and infrastructure to such risks. In addition, all three would also be exposed to extreme weather and drought, although to a lesser degree.

Similar goes for Slovenia: flooding and landslides could affect housing, production and infrastructure as seen in the floods in summer 2023. Extreme weather could have similar effects, while wildfires and drought would affect the area to a lesser degree.

Potential impact

On the Austrian side of the border, meteorological and geophysical risks would likely impact all aspects (economy, infrastructure, functional capacity of the population and services, international and EU activities, defence, and internal capabilities). The same goes for Slovenia, with high risks of floods.

Governance readiness and gaps

There are a few minor discrepancies in the assessment of capabilities to address risks (1 point difference). For extreme weather, the capability on the Slovenian border has been assessed as medium, while no capability was identified on the Austrian border.

Availability/gaps of cross-border tools/agreements

On the Austrian side of the border, no tools or agreement were identified for meteorological (except flooding), geophysical, and biological risks. However, the agreement on cooperation in prevention and mutual assistance in the event of disasters or severe accidents could be applied in these contexts. For risks of nuclear accidents, cyber threats, and migration risks, only one agreement is available. However, there is nothing or very little in addition to this agreement in terms of processes, tools, institutions, or projects.

Recommendations

Strengthen Capability through Cooperation Projects:

Implement targeted cooperation projects and capacity-building initiatives to strengthen the capability of both Austria and Slovenia in addressing high and average risks identified in the border region. These projects should focus on areas such as flood management, wildfire prevention, and landslide mitigation.

Focus on Additional Risks:

Direct future cross-border cooperation projects towards addressing risks of nuclear accidents, cyber threats, and migration, which have been identified as areas lacking sufficient agreements, tools, and institutions. Develop joint strategies and action plans to enhance preparedness and response capabilities for these emerging risks.

Improve Data Availability and Quality:

Enhance cross-border information-sharing mechanisms and conduct joint risk assessments specific to the cross-border region to improve data availability and quality. Establish collaborative platforms for sharing risk-related data and conducting joint analyses to better understand shared risks and vulnerabilities.

Transparency and Collaboration in Risk Assessment:

Promote transparency and collaboration in risk assessment processes by engaging key experts from both countries and leveraging publicly available data. Foster dialogue and cooperation between relevant authorities to ensure comprehensive and accurate risk assessments that account for cross-border contexts.

Risk assessment and capabilities for joint action
Austria-Slovenia

LEGEND

Each side of the petal represents a different risk level, with the smallest petal indicating a low risk level (1).

When risk groups have identical values, they are depicted within the same petal, segmented by the color associated with each risk group.

Probability (P):
1 - low
5 - high

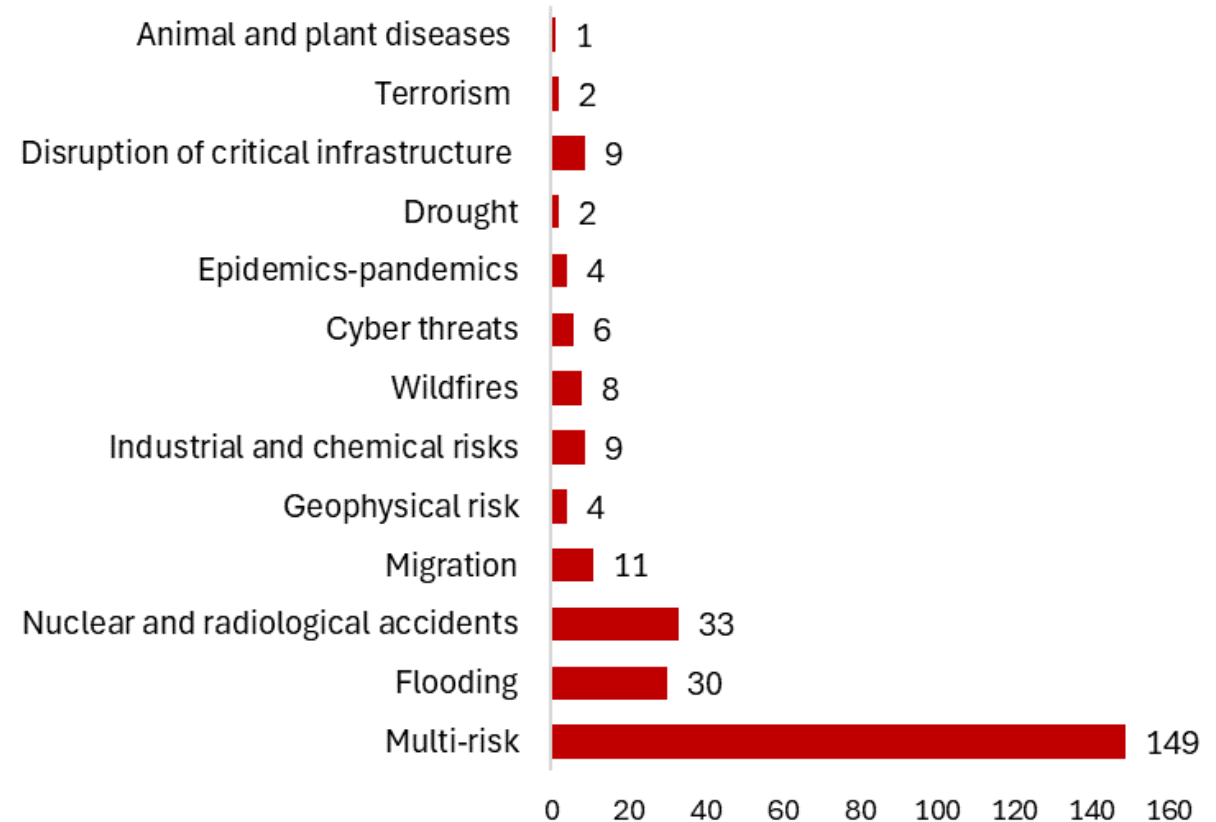
Impact (I):
1 - low
5 - high

		Probability		Impact		Capability
		Austria	Slovenia	Austria	Slovenia	Average
Meteorological and hydrological		2	4	1	2.33	2
		5	4	3.57	2.83	1
		2	2	1	2.17	0.5
Geohazards		5	2	3.5	2	0.5
Biological		5	3	3	1.33	0.5
		1	2	1	1.5	0.5
Technological		1	2	1	1.33	0.5
		1	1	1	1	1.5
Societal		1	2	1	1.17	0.5
		1	3	1	2.83	1
		1	3	1	3.33	1
		1	3	1	2.5	1.5

Key findings

- **339 legal and governance tools** to address the 12 types of risks
- **268 agreements**, 192 are one-border, while 76 are multi-border
- **110 projects** on cross-border risk management through **Interreg** or **UCPM**

Figure 4: Number of agreements per type of risk (single-border or multiple-border)



Key takeaways

1. Need for **more common joint** risk assessments in cross-border areas;
2. A **better understanding of legal frameworks across the border** is key for improved DRM;
3. **National and regional support** is vital for DRM at **local level**;
4. Need to improve **data availability and comparability** across borders;
5. Need to strengthen **cross-border cooperation/ teams/ mechanisms/ exercises**;
6. From INTERREG projects to **mainstreamed solutions for cross-border DRM**.

Pilot action: Resilient Borders



- **Two lots:**
 - **Crisis management**
 - **Spatial planning**
- **Managed by MOT and AEBR on behalf of DG REGIO**
- **9 pilots selected for crisis management lot**
- **A grant budget up to 40 000€ for each pilot**

Useful links

- **Inforegio: Strengthening the Resilience of EU border regions**
 - **Final report**
 - **Border Fiches and Maps**
 - **Case Studies**
- **Resilient Borders pilot action**

Thank you



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