

# ADAPT

Awareness of Disaster Prevention  
for Vulnerable Groups



## Final report of the project “Awareness of Disaster Prevention for Vulnerable Groups” (ADAPT)

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## 1. Introduction / Overview

The ADAPT project concluded with its final conference on 7 February 2017, with wrap-up work being done over the course of the remainder of February 2017. With any scheduling shifts and changes, as reported to the Commission during the project duration, considered, the project has completed. The final status is as follows.

### Summary of final project status

- With the assistance of our academic partner, suitable communities were identified by the four operative partners, three of which ultimately could ensure the cooperation of their communities and thus took up local implementation of ADAPT.
- The selected community in Denmark could not participate for reasons of the local public structures and the resulting position of local authorities on cooperation with NGOs in civil protection. Our Danish project partner DPA nonetheless was able to provide valuable input for the discussions leading to the development of the project's two main pillars.
- Legal questions regarding data protection were clarified for the partners' countries, with an outlook on considerations for transferability in additional EU member states.
- First main pillar: "Database":
  - The project group conceptualized ADAPT-DB, a software tool to help with the collection, structuring and maintenance of evacuation-relevant information about vulnerable people.
  - Three of the project's four international workshops focused on the creation of ADAPT-DB.
  - The conceptualization process as well as the subsequent implementation of the software was done in collaboration with an IT subcontractor.
  - ADAPT-DB has been made available as free and open source software, to allow for best transferability and expandability to situations of third communities and future needs of participating communities.
- Second main pillar: "Community-based management":
  - Based on their experiences in the project, the group compiled a comprehensive guideline document on community-based management of the ADAPT-approach. At an international workshop, the main points were collected from participating local stakeholders. The steering group completed their work at an extraordinary writing meeting. The operative partners ANPAS, ASB, DPA and WK also contributed case studies on their local work. The academic partner included an introduction to their research accompanying the project.
  - The Community-based management approach was published on the project website on the day of the final event.
- Dissemination: Various dissemination efforts were undertaken during the project. Besides central public communication about the project by the coordinator, ADAPT also reached an extensive academic audience. Most important of all, the implementing local groups were able to run successful dissemination campaigns, with the exact choice of methods tailored to local circumstances and opportunities.
- Follow-up: The bulk of the follow-up lies with the local groups, as the local implementations are still in early stages. The mayors of the three implementing communities have signaled their commitment to continue the local work in collaboration with local NGO stakeholders.
- Budget: The project remained well within its budget and incurred total costs of EUR 389.744,19, about 86,1% of the estimated amount (**Annex 17**).

## Encountered challenges and how they were approached

- As the concept for ADAPT-DB took form, the sub-contractor estimated an amount of total work-hours that required the moving of some funds toward this budget item. Additional funds became necessary at a later point, due to the comprehensiveness of the features and solutions the project chose in the development process. The complete amount could be re-allocated from other budget items without compromising the project's results, as all partners found ways to deliver some of their tasks in kind.
- As the writing process of the final document proved to be difficult via telework alone, the partners held a separate, previously unplanned, writing meeting in November 2016. The overall travel expenses remain below the total amount appropriated in the budget.
- The administrative side of the project was subject to delays in delivery of documentation to the coordinator, which in turn led to delays in reporting to the Commission. Teleconferences with status updates and reminders were introduced and had a limited impact on mitigating the problem to some extent, though not completely.

## 2. General summary of project implementation process

### Overview of timeline

Step	Planned time	Actual time
Working kick-off	early January 2015	26 January 2015
Survey development	January 2015	February-March 2015, Draft on March 9, updated version March 30
Steering group meeting (with presentation of selected communities)	April 2015	27 April 2015
Local Action Group formation (planned / actual date of conclusion of all initial local workshops)	June 2015	22 June 2015
First international workshop	July 2015	25-27 August 2015
Second international workshop	January 2016	18-20 November 2015
Third international workshop	March 2016	9-11 March 2016
Fourth international workshop	June 2016	28-30 September 2016
Local dissemination / "awareness campaigns"	October-November 2016	March 2016-ongoing
Writing meeting	Not planned	30 November 2016
Final conference	December 2016	February 2017

### Explanation on process

Overall, the schedule fit the final outline as coordinated and clarified as of the last intermediary report.

While the database ("ADAPT-DB") was functional by the time of the last report, testing, bugfixing and other finalising activities took place until the end of the project timeframe, to prepare for final release. This is a normal process in software development.

Dissemination activities are ongoing, which started in the participating communities early in 2016. The general legal requirement for an opt-in procedure prompted the local groups to spread their awareness and dissemination efforts over a longer period of time.

There were two major changes to the schedule, that were clarified with the Commission before their implementation:

- 1) A small-scale writing meeting, where the steering group members jointly authored the first comprehensive draft of the guideline document for the community-based management approach, was held in Cologne on 30 November 2016.  
The meeting was kept small so the travel budget did not have to be expanded.
- 2) The final conference was moved to 7 February 2017, coinciding with the expansion of the project timeframe to February 2017.

Steering group meetings were attached to every international workshop and, complemented by teleconferencing, constituted the main mode of decision-making with regard to content and administrative issues.

### **3. Evaluation of project management / implementation process**

#### **Positive aspects / opportunities**

The local stakeholders in the three implementing communities and the respective project beneficiaries working with them have found effective ways of local dissemination of the project for their local circumstances (see section on dissemination).

The local partners report continuing commitment from local, regional or national stakeholders. This makes further steps of local implementation of the ADAPT method (including continued collaboration towards automation of data transfers) likely follow-up activities.

Within the project timeframe, the partners started registration for their local ADAPT implementation via an opt-in procedure which, while work-intensive and requiring the effort of the organisations' volunteers, has been found by the local partners to be a good opportunity to make the general populace more aware of the disaster risks of their region. This additional added value for community resilience, which the volunteers provide as part of ADAPT dissemination and opt-in procedures, is also an important factor for our community-based management approach.

#### **Internal and external difficulties encountered / Partnership**

The working environment within the consortium has been generally productive and positive. Over the course of the project, delays on document delivery to the coordinator and subsequently reporting to the Commission occurred on a regrettably frequent basis and could only be mitigated slightly, but not completely solved.

In retrospect, additional face to face working meetings should have been included in the project proposal and the budget. As the additional writing meeting demonstrated, meetings in person are an effective way of focusing the contributions and productivity of all group members, with only minimal distraction by their other duties.

An external challenge the local levels reported is the synchronisation with the regular modus operandi of municipal or regional authorities and other (semi-)public institutions.

On the one hand, this concerns data providers such as public health institutions. They are prospective data sources for the Italian partners, were data protection exceptions that the project's legal counsel found would make such an exchange possible. Yet, while their basic commitment for cooperation still stands, they preferred not to join the project process while it was still ongoing and instead are open to working with the finalised result.

On the other hand, potential technical recipients of ADAPT-DB data were not able to coordinate the development in parallel, naturally focusing on their own challenges in providing a new version first. An example of this is the South Tyrolean *Civil Protection Browser*, which happened to be in the process of being updated during the project timeframe. Yet the civil protection authority could not divide their IT resources to cover both –

their own update and the integration with ADAPT-DB – simultaneously. Connection of the two systems thus had to move into the follow-up. The willingness for integration with the results of ADAPT still stands, but a merging of the development processes proved not feasible.

Technical collaborations (data import and export and IT workflow integration) will continue to be driven forward by the local partners as part of the follow-up. Partners estimate that it may be easier to develop an integration plan with public entities outside of the constraints of the project timeframe and with the final results instead of merging two development processes.

### **Cooperation with the Commission**

From the point of view of the coordinator, cooperation with the Commission was constructive throughout the project timeframe when it came to questions along the way or to handling the delays in reporting the coordinator could not always avoid due to previous delays by individual partners.

### **European added value / transferability**

The European approach and thus the consideration of different national cultures/regional cultures of volunteering was of immense value in the formulation of the ADAPT approach. The project consortium is confident that this has made the project's results applicable in more situations and therefore more transferable. The legal findings of the project also are promising when it comes to transferability, as data protection law in member states is sufficiently similar due to being based on Directive 95/46/EC. At least those data maintenance procedures in an opt-in scenario are transferable.

Changes from the pending applicability of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 will have to be evaluated, though, due to the general increase in harmonisation, no adverse effects on transferability are expected.

Technically, the various inputs from different parts of the EU on the concept of ADAPT-DB also helped to keep it universal enough for better adaptability and transferability. The release as free and open source software also enables transfer and adaptation.

## **4. Activities**

Overall, the project followed its activities as planned.

The exact schedule of the activities deviated from the plan and synchronicity of local action group progress was prevented by local circumstances, as described earlier.

Dissemination activities have moved mostly to the local level, as it has proven most effective to reach the target group and generate sign-ups for the opt-in procedure. The academic partner UNITOV got involved in a consulting capacity in the local events in Italy, which incurred a small amount of additional travel costs (all within budget). Additional national or regional events serve as advertisement for possible transferability.

## **5. Presentation of the technical results and deliverables**

### **Meeting reports/minutes**

Minutes of international meetings were created and shared with the Commission as part of informal intermediary reports via e-mail. Results from the local meetings are documented in the form of either minutes or presentations of the results at a follow-up meeting. International meetings have also been documented in photographic form. Minutes and accompanying materials can be found in the **annexes 1-11**.

## Community-based management approach

The community-based management approach was published at the final event, after being drafted and authored at the fourth international workshop in Bolzano (see minutes in **annex 10**) in September 2016 and the dedicated writing meeting in Cologne (see minutes in **annex 11**) in November 2016. The document was subsequently also published on the project website.

Besides the group effort to describe the management of ADAPT in a community as a general guideline, the document also includes case studies from all three implementing communities, discourse on the added value volunteers and volunteer organisations provide to community-based improvement of disaster resilience and the experience of Danish project partner DPA, who found that NGO participation in civil protection in a particularly strongly state-centered welfare system such as Denmark proves extra challenging.

The community-based management approach guideline document also includes general information on the project and therefore has a double role as the final project result document (see **annex 15**)

## Legal opinion

The legal opinion, which was written by a subcontracted legal counsel and has already been shared with the Commission, can be found in **annex 13**. The bottom line for the practical applications of the project is that the legally admissible way working in all participating countries (and, with regards to transferability, all EU countries) is an opt-in procedure. For Italy, the project's counsel has identified an exception for data held by public entities for civil protection purposes, which facilitates municipal cooperation when it comes to data exchange with the registrar's office and will be the basis for data import from public sources in the follow-up (for the challenges on integration of project workflow with public entities' procedures, see the chapter on internal and external challenges).

## Database

The concept for the database "ADAPT-DB", was completed together with the project group at the third international workshop in Nykøbing/Falster, Denmark. Afterwards, in coordination with the coordinator and – in turn – coordination with the steering group via teleconferencing, the software was developed into its project-final<sup>1</sup> state by the IT subcontractor Explicatis from Cologne.

A first demo version of ADAPT-DB was set-up in April 2016. The project group was called upon to test the demo version for bugs and functionality. The feedback from this process led to numerous updated versions with increasingly complete functionality, until the feature complete version at the end of the project. To enable usage of the demo for dissemination purposes, the demo was split into a "testing" instance, running the latest developed features, and an instance that kept the name "demo", which was updated less frequently to deliver a more stable experience for public presentations of the status quo. Access to the demo instance was shortly thereafter also shared with the Commission.

The demo will be kept available by the coordinator for at least a year after the end of the project timeframe.

ADAPT-DB has been released as free and open source software on the project website and, to facilitate additional development even further, also been made available on GitHub, a popular platform for open source developers. This also ensures another channel of enduring availability independent of the project website.

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<sup>1</sup> „Project-final“ since, as ADAPT-DB was released as free and open source software, further development and adaptation by programmers independent from the project is always and easily possible.

The software package includes documentation on set-up of an instance. The program code is documented in-line.

A copy of the release package is in **annex 14**.

## Dissemination

The project website was continuously updated with information on the progress of the project. The coordinator's website and newsletters also prominently featured the project. The bulk of additional dissemination occurred on the respective local levels. Given that opt-in was found to be the major source of data for the project timeframe, all three implementing communities have started working on local dissemination in combination and/or with the aim of getting the target group to directly sign up for ADAPT.

All implementing local groups have held events to introduce the local populace and additional stakeholders to the project. As locally active volunteer organisations, they all also have found ways to utilize their contact with the local populace to advantage the local ADAPT effort.

Illustrative examples include:

- The local group headed by ASB Vogtland has given information about ADAPT and sign-up possibilities to the personnel of their regular membership drive, thereby offering it directly to interested members of the target group.
- The local group of White Cross South Tyrol has, after a successful townhall meeting with most relevant stakeholders from Klausen and interested citizens, taken to advertising ADAPT via their regular membership payment mechanism. White Cross has a very large membership base in the local populace and many people, particularly the elderly, come by in person around the turn of the year to pay their annual membership fee and get information about ADAPT in the process.
- The Sicilian local group from Saponara has worked together with our academic partner from the University of Rome Tor Vergata to develop an information gathering technique for the local volunteers. The volunteers are rooted in local society and enjoy a significant level of respect and trust. Volunteers have had a seminar on qualitatively interviewing the potential ADAPT sign-ups, getting the necessary information and consent without making it appear as a technical or bureaucratic matter, which would likely be met with more skepticism by the local populace. To reach those more open to more direct approach, the local ANPAS branch in Saponara will incorporate dissemination of ADAPT into their regular computer courses for the elderly.

Furthermore, ADAPT was of course also present in the regular channels of the project partners including social media, more conventional publications and other dissemination opportunities such as the national conferences of the project partners or civil protection trade fairs, such as the CIVIL PROTECT 2016 in Bolzano, Italy in early 2016, for which a basic project leaflet was designed (**annex 16**). Academic partner UNITOV brought attention to ADAPT at large scientific conferences such as the European Sociological Association's Conference 2015 in Prague, where they presented their research based on the project<sup>2</sup>.

## 6. Evaluation of the technical results and deliverables

Overall, the technical results are as expected.

The community-based management approach document allows for good insight into the methods needed to apply ADAPT in a community and, by its case studies and the lessons learned from them, allows insight into typical challenges encountered.

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[http://esa12thconference.eu/sites/esa12thconference.eu/files/esa\\_2015\\_programme\\_book\\_lastupdate\\_20150825.pdf](http://esa12thconference.eu/sites/esa12thconference.eu/files/esa_2015_programme_book_lastupdate_20150825.pdf), p. 173

ADAPT-DB has been met with positive feedback from the project partners and their stakeholders. We expect the local implementations to function as planned.

The previously described development regarding the technical collaboration of various public partners is unfortunate, as the project partners originally envisioned a larger amount of data in the timeframe of the project and the initial responses from downstream-users of the data also raised expectations of a technical connection within the project timeframe. However, the official commitment still stands, so the outlook for these steps as part of the follow-up is good.

Since this situation focused the efforts of the Italian partners (for whom a data protection exception would enable automated gathering from other public sources at all) on opt-in sign-ups for the project timeframe, the situation in turn also had positive spin-off effects, such as the opportunity for direct raising of disaster risk awareness due to the contact with volunteers.

For the quality, relevance and transferability of results, the challenges encountered when approaching public entities (particularly those beyond the municipal level) are an added value. The lessons drawn from them and laid out in the community-based management document and its case studies will be useful to prospective adopters of ADAPT who face similar situations.

## 7. Follow-up

The project results will remain available on the project website for at least two years after the project timeframe. The coordinator and the partners will also continue to disseminate ADAPT in suitable contexts. Local dissemination is also planned to continue, as is necessary for the continued implementation of the developed community-based approach.

Within the project consortium, collaboration with local and regional public entities will continue, thereby advancing local usage of the results.

Beyond the consortium, low-threshold transferability is enabled by the high degree of universal applicability as well as supporting technical properties of our results.

Several of the project partners (ANPAS, UNITOV, SAM.I. and WK) also already apply their knowledge gained in ADAPT in another project financed through the prevention and preparedness financial instrument: The ongoing project INDRIX also focuses on the resilience of vulnerable groups and benefits from our results, particularly from what has been learned about volunteers as a vehicle to convey risk awareness.

## 8. Annexes

This document has the following annexes:

- Annex 1: Minutes of the Working kick-off / steering group meeting in Frankfurt a.M., Germany on 26 January 2015
- Annex 2: Minutes of the steering group meeting in Berlin, Germany on 27 April 2015
- Annex 3: Minutes of the steering group meeting in Bolzano, Italy on 25 August 2015
- Annex 4: Minutes of the first international workshop in Bolzano, Italy on 25-27 August 2015 (+ annexes)
- Annex 5: Minutes of the steering group meeting in Villafrance Tirrena, Italy on 18 November 2015
- Annex 6: Minutes of the second international workshop in Saponara, Italy on 19-20 November 2015
- Annex 7: Minutes of the steering group meeting in Nykøbing, Denmark on 9 March 2016 (+ annexes)

- Annex 8: Minutes of the third international workshop in Nykøbing, Denmark, on 10-11 March 2016 (+ annexes)
- Annex 9: Minutes of the steering group meeting in Bolzano, Italy on 28 September 2016
- Annex 10: Minutes of the fourth international workshop in Bolzano and Klausen, Italy, on 29-30 September 2016
- Annex 11: Minutes of the extraordinary writing meeting on 30 November 2016 in Cologne, Germany
- Annex 12: Documents on community selection / initial contact (Survey report/guidelines on selection/initial assessments)
- Annex 13: Legal opinion on data protection issues of the project
- Annex 14: Project-final release of ADAPT-DB
- Annex 15: Community-based management approach and final document (screen version – a template for professional print is available from the coordinator upon request)
- Annex 16: Dissemination leaflet from Bolzano CIVIL PROTECT trade fair
- Annex 17: Financial statements and payment request for the final balance

Publications on and pictures of the meetings can be found on the project website at:  
<http://adapt.samaritan-international.eu/>