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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PRIMARY SCHOOLING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX B: **20 COUNTRY CASE STUDIES**

TAFF

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

BULGARIA

Acronyms and abbreviations

DPPI	Disaster Management Training Programs for South-Eastern Europe
DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoI	Ministry of Interior
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
UN	United Nations
QA	quality assurance

Bulgaria, European Union (EU) Member State

In Bulgaria, preparedness education is required by law but driven by civil-protection legislation and compliance requirements rather than curriculum learning outcomes. Preparedness education is delivered mainly through training overlays, drills, and project-based interventions, with strong involvement of civil-protection authorities and NGOs. Integration into early childhood and primary education, as well as teacher education, or quality assurance is limited. The Bulgaria case study therefore highlights how strong statutory obligations do not automatically translate into systematic, age-appropriate preparedness education, underscoring the gap between regulation, pedagogy, and curriculum coherence.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Education in Bulgaria is governed by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) under the Pre-school and School Education Act, with compulsory education spanning primary (grades 1–4; ISCED 1), lower secondary (grades 5–7; ISCED 2) and upper secondary (grades 8–12; ISCED 3). [1]

Bulgaria faces a multi-hazard risk profile, including significant seismic risk, recurring floods, landslides, forest fires and severe weather, as well as industrial and nuclear hazards. The national disaster management system is regulated by the Disaster Protection Act, with disaster protection organised at national, regional and municipal levels and coordinated through an Integrated Rescue System.[5]

Disaster risk awareness has received political attention since the mid-2000s, particularly following the adoption of the Disaster Protection Act and related instructions introducing statutory disaster protection training in kindergartens and schools (including drills). [3] Bulgaria represents a context where preparedness, risk reduction or continuity of learning are not explicitly referenced in national curricula at either early childhood or primary education and remain outside initial teacher education standards and quality-assurance frameworks. In practice, preparedness is addressed mainly through ad hoc activities while the main education strategy (2021–2030) engages with preparedness only indirectly through digital-skills, STEM, and cybersecurity priorities.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

The Bulgarian curriculum is organised under national state educational standards, covering early childhood (ages 3–6; ISCED 0), primary (grades 1–4; ISCED 1), lower secondary (grades 5–7; ISCED 2) and upper secondary (grades 8–12; ISCED 3) education. The Strategic Framework for the Development of Education, Training and Learning 2021–2030 and related reforms aim to shift towards competence-based learning and key competences from early ages. [4] Preparedness is not labelled as a stand-alone curricular area at early childhood or primary education level. Instead, preparedness education content is delivered through cross-curricular themes (civic, health, environmental education) and form-teacher hours, building on a strong legal mandate in the Disaster Protection Act and Instruction No. 2 (2004) on training children and staff in safe behavior in the event of disasters, accidents and fires.

In early childhood education, curriculum is focused on children's wellbeing, safe environment, and supervised learning through play. Preparedness education is therefore implicit and developmental, not instructional and no dedicated teaching hours or progression exists.

In primary education, preparedness education may be addressed through existing subject, such as Man and Nature and during class-teacher hours, but this integration is not mandated through explicit learning outcomes.

By contrast, training overlays are mandatory: under the Disaster Protection Act and Instruction No. 2 (2004), schools must provide training on safe behaviour in disasters, accidents and fires, including drills and simulations. These requirements function as safety and compliance measures, not as curriculum-based instruction. Therefore, in Bulgaria preparedness education is present in activities and strategic frameworks around curriculum but has not been formalised as a component in early childhood and primary curriculum.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness education is not explicitly referenced in national curricula for either early childhood education or primary education.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Preparedness-related topics are addressed only indirectly and partially. The main strategic education document (Strategic Framework for Education, Training and Learning 2021–2030) touches on elements related to preparedness through digital skills, STEM education and cybersecurity. However, it does not address core preparedness elements such as natural hazards, emergency response, first aid, civic resilience, or learning continuity. Practical exposure to hazards or emergency response occurs mainly through external, non-curricular activities.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Integration within the curriculum is neither mandatory nor systematic. In practice, preparedness is addressed through optional, ad hoc activities, such as one-off simulations, drills or awareness-raising sessions delivered by municipalities, fire services or non-governmental organisations (NGOs), rather than through required curriculum content or defined learning outcomes.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  A legal mandate for preparedness education and first aid is established through the Disaster Protection Act (Article 16) and Instruction No. 2 (2004), which require preparedness-related topics to be integrated into teaching activities, even though they are not formally embedded within early childhood or primary education curriculum. This statutory framework constitutes an enabling condition for future curricular integration that could be formalised within curriculum standards and learning outcomes.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  No explicit, age-differentiated preparedness related learning outcomes for early childhood and primary education. Preparedness related topics are covered implicitly and are dispersed across subjects and class-teacher periods.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teaching materials for preparedness are shaped by a mix of national regulations, civil protection guidance, and project-based initiatives. The Disaster Protection Act requires that programs, teaching materials and aids for kindergartens and schools, as well as training plans for managerial staff and teachers, are approved by the MoES after coordination with the Ministry of Interior (MoI). [5] This establishes MoES as the authority responsible for overall content approval, while technical accuracy is ensured through coordination with civil-protection institutions.

Instruction No. 2 (2004) and subsequent guidance specifies the need for age-appropriate preparedness materials, including kindergartens, and requires school directors to organise training activities adapted to children's age and developmental level. [6] Additional resources have been developed through EU-funded cross-border initiatives such as 'Safety for Our Children' (Bulgaria–Romania), which produced training materials and methodological guidance on forest fires and other hazards. [7] Civil protection authorities and the Bulgarian Red Cross complement these materials with brochures, first-aid posters and youth-oriented activities on preparedness and response. [8] More recently, academic–school partnerships have piloted digital geospatial tools and inquiry-based lesson plans to help children analyse disaster maps and understand local risks. [9] However, these innovations remain localised. There is limited evidence of a unified national repository or systematic quality assurance for preparedness education materials at early childhood and primary levels.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Teaching materials related to preparedness are optional and not prescribed through the national curriculum. Their use is not required at either early childhood or primary level and depends on school initiative or external engagement.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Preparedness-related materials are primarily developed and delivered by external actors, including municipalities, fire services, civil protection authorities, and non-governmental organisations. Schools typically play a receptive role rather than acting as developers of structured teaching tools.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Dissemination occurs mainly through one-off, activity-based interventions, such as simulations, demonstrations, talks, or awareness-raising sessions delivered directly in schools by external actors. These resources are used episodically, outside regular teaching, and are not systematically integrated into lesson planning, textbooks, or digital learning platforms.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Officially endorsed preparedness education teaching materials (e.g., colouring books, storybooks, posters) for kindergartens and schools under Instruction No. 2 and the Disaster Protection Act.
- EU-funded ‘Safety for Our Children’ and forest-fire projects producing structured lesson plans and teacher guides on hazards and safe behavior and innovative geospatial digital learning activities and structured inquiry models for teaching about disasters in geography classes.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Regulations state that disaster training is required in all schools, but the coverage, quality and actual use of preparedness teaching materials vary across municipalities and schools. In addition, many resources are produced through time-bound projects, therefore sustainability and integration into mainstream textbooks and digital platforms remain limited.
- Few materials appear to be systematically adapted for children with disabilities, Roma students or other vulnerable groups.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

The Disaster Protection Act explicitly requires education in disaster protection and first pre-medical aid in the national education system and universities, with training programs and materials for managers and teachers approved by the MoES in coordination with the MoI. Instruction No. 2 (2004) extends this mandate to kindergartens and schools, requiring preparation and training of teaching staff, administrative and auxiliary personnel in safe behavior in emergencies. Kindergartens and schools, under the civil protection authorities, deliver courses for teachers and school leaders on disaster preparedness, safe behavior and implementation of school protection plans, alongside extracurricular disaster-protection camps for children and youth. [10] However, these courses are optional and often organised on a project or program basis, rather than as a systematic element of initial teacher education or mandatory in-service professional development. OECD analyses highlight more generally that improving the quality and relevance of initial teacher training and in-service professional development remains a priority for Bulgaria. [11]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?**

Preparedness is not systematically addressed in either initial teacher education or continuous professional development frameworks for early childhood or primary teachers. There is no formal requirement for teacher-preparation programs or in-service training to include preparedness-related content.

- What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?**

Where preparedness-related topics are covered, they typically arise indirectly and on an ad hoc basis, for

example through one-off training sessions linked to emergency response, safety procedures or externally delivered simulations. These activities are not mandatory, and do not form part of a structured or sequenced set of skills related to disaster risk reduction, first aid, learning continuity, or psychosocial preparedness.

 Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

Preparedness-related training is not reflected in teacher certification requirements, credit or points systems, or salary progression frameworks.

 What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Reach and uptake are uneven and limited, as participation depends largely on whether individual schools engage with municipalities, emergency services or NGOs. There is no national data or monitoring system tracking teacher participation in preparedness-related training.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  National Training Centre courses for school staff on disaster protection and safe behavior, linked to implementation of school plans and drills.
-  Inclusion of disaster protection and first aid as topics that must be addressed in education, creating a legal basis for integrating preparedness education into teacher training.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Preparedness does not appear as a clearly defined, mandatory module in initial teacher education for early childhood and primary teachers. In addition, in-service preparedness training is fragmented across projects and institutions, with uneven reach and no systematic tracking of participation and coverage.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance (QA) in Bulgarian education combines internal school self-evaluation with external inspection carried out by a national Education Inspectorate and Regional Education Directorates, guided by school quality standards. External evaluations focus on teaching and learning processes, school climate, leadership, and inclusion. While health and safety are part of broader quality considerations, there is no evidence that preparedness education or disaster risk reduction (DRR) competencies are monitored as a discrete dimension, particularly at early childhood and primary levels. [12] The Disaster Protection Act requires the National Program for Disaster Protection to outline directions for the content of educational program and calls for monitoring of implementation, including training of the population. [13] However, the focus is more on institutional responsibilities, plans and infrastructure than on student learning outcomes or classroom practice. Municipal disaster protection plans and school-level disaster protection plans – including mandatory drills – provide a form of procedural assurance, but inspections tend to verify the existence of plans and records rather than the pedagogical quality of preparedness

activities. National assessments (e.g., state external evaluations after grades 4 and 7) do not examine preparedness competencies in students. [14] Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) work on evaluation and assessment reforms underscores the need to clarify roles of Regional Education Directorates and the Inspectorate and to better connect evaluation findings to school improvement planning – an opportunity to embed preparedness-related indicators in future frameworks. [15]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Preparedness education topics are not explicitly included in school-inspection or external-evaluation frameworks. Inspections do not assess student learning, classroom practices, or pedagogical use of drills and simulations as learning opportunities related to preparedness.

Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

There are no dedicated indicators or assessment frameworks used to evaluate how teaching, school leadership or community engagement build students' preparedness-related knowledge, skills or behaviors, including prevention, response, recovery or continuity of learning.

Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

There is no systematic evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of preparedness-related activities. Where preparedness activities occur (e.g. drills or simulations), there is no structured mechanism to feed results back into curriculum design, teaching materials, teacher education or school improvement planning.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

No dedicated good practices were identified in relation to monitoring preparedness education outcomes. Existing quality-assurance mechanisms focus on general teaching quality and school management, and do not currently assess preparedness-related learning or behaviors.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

Preparedness is not integrated into learning assessments or systematically observed in classroom practice during inspection.

Existing monitoring focuses more on compliance (existence of plans, performance of drills) rather than on student knowledge, skills, behavior, and psychosocial readiness.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Bulgaria has a comprehensive strategic framework for disaster risk management. The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2018–2030 defines long-term goals for managing natural and technological risks and emphasis prevention, preparedness and public awareness. [16] A National Program for Disaster Risk Reduction 2021–2025 operationalises this strategy, including measures at national and local levels. [17] The Disaster Protection Act provides the statutory backbone, requiring education for disaster protection and first aid in national education and universities, and entrusting municipalities with organising voluntary education for the population. The Strategic Framework for the Development of Education, Training and Learning 2021–2030 and its action plans are aligned with Bulgaria 2030 and EU funds, prioritising key competences, safe and inclusive learning environments, digitalisation and sustainable development. [18] However, preparedness education is not highlighted as a standalone education priority. Ongoing curriculum reform suggests a move towards more practice-oriented, skills-focused education, which could provide an entry point for further integrating preparedness into learning outcomes and classroom practice in early childhood and primary education. [19]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or disaster risk management (DRM)-related strategies?

Bulgaria does not have a dedicated national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness into education. Preparedness is addressed primarily through national DRM and civil-protection frameworks, rather than through education-sector strategies or curriculum policy.

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

There is no publicly articulated reform agenda, pilot program or timeline specifically aimed at integrating preparedness education into early childhood or primary curricula. However, current curriculum reform announcements suggest a possibility for further integrating preparedness into early childhood and primary education.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Education facilities are mandated to have emergency preparedness plans under DRM regulations. These plans typically focus on procedural and operational measures, such as evacuation arrangements and emergency response procedures, rather than on structured learning objectives or pedagogical integration.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2018–2030 and associated programs explicitly prioritise

awareness-raising, training and community resilience. The Protection Act embeds preparedness education and first aid in national legislation, creating a clear mandate for the education sector.

- 🟡 The Strategic Framework for Education 2021–2030 emphasises key competences, safe learning environments and sustainable development, supporting integration of preparedness content.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 Preparedness education is not framed as a specific objective within education strategies, which limits visibility and prioritisation in curriculum and teacher policy.
- 🟡 Future curriculum reforms have not yet been fully specified in terms of how they will strengthen preparedness and resilience competencies in early childhood and primary education.
- 🟡 Implementation responsibilities for preparedness education are spread across ministries and levels of government, with limited evidence of coordinated monitoring and evaluation.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education in Bulgaria involves multiple stakeholders. The MoI (through civil protection structures and the National Training Centre) and the MoES cooperate on training programs, teaching materials and school planning for disaster protection, as required by the Disaster Protection Act. The Bulgarian Red Cross is an important partner, working to increase population preparedness, providing first aid units, deploying voluntary youth emergency teams and participating in the National Disaster Protection Plan. Schools collaborate with municipal authorities and local emergency services in preparing and updating disaster protection plans, organising drills and participating in awareness campaigns, often supported by the EU. Bulgaria also participates in regional initiatives such as the Disaster Management Training Programs for South-Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE), and hosts large-scale international emergency management exercises (e.g., North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ‘Bulgaria 2025’), which can include components on community and school preparedness. International organisations support DRR and resilience efforts more broadly: Bulgaria’s DRR strategy aligns with the Sendai Framework, and climate adaptation and DRR investments draw on EU funds and World Bank technical support (including flood risk mapping). [20] While inclusive education policies are in place, there is limited evidence that DRR activities are systematically designed with and for children with disabilities, Roma children or refugee and migrant students.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Collaboration is ad hoc and activity-based rather than systematic. Schools typically engage with municipal authorities, fire services, civil protection actors and NGOs for one-off simulations, drills or awareness-raising sessions. Engagement with parents is limited and not structured around preparedness education.

- 🟡 **Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

Preparedness activities are primarily top-down, focused on information delivery or demonstrations. There is limited evidence of participatory approaches that actively involve children, or of targeted inclusion of vulnerable groups (e.g. children with disabilities or from marginalised communities) in the design or implementation of preparedness activities.

What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

The role of international organisations is indirect. While international frameworks and guidance influence national policies on DRM, preparedness education initiatives are not systematically implemented through sustained partnerships with international organisations.

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multisectoral or cross-border partnerships exist but are project-based and time-bound. Partnerships tend to involve education authorities, civil protection actors and NGOs, sometimes supported by EU-funded or cross-border initiatives, rather than permanent multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Strong tripartite collaboration between the MoES, civil protection authorities and Bulgarian Red Cross in disaster management and preparedness activities.
-  Cross-border and EU-funded projects (e.g., SafetyROBG) that involve schools, municipalities and civil protection services in developing joint training materials and conducting drills.
-  Use of World Bank-supported flood hazard and risk maps as potential tools for local education and awareness-raising in schools.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Partnerships with schools mostly focus on drills and awareness campaigns rather than co-developed, curriculum-linked learning activities in early childhood and primary education.
-  Limited evidence of systematic involvement of children – especially those from vulnerable groups – as active contributors (e.g., co-designing materials, mapping local risks).

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

CANADA

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
INVALSI	National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoI	Ministry of Interior

Canada, Global Comparator

Canada demonstrates contrasting approaches to preparedness education within its decentralised system. Media literacy has been mandatory since 1987 in Ontario and is now integrated into curricula across most provinces, primarily within English Language Arts. In contrast, disaster preparedness education remains largely voluntary and resource-based, despite Canada's significant exposure to natural hazards. While provinces like British Columbia offer programs such as "Master of Disaster" and schools maintain emergency plans and drills, disaster risk reduction is not a national curriculum priority. Multi-level partnerships between provincial governments, federal agencies, and organisations like MediaSmarts and PreparedBC support resource development.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Canada's decentralised education system grants provinces and territories exclusive authority over curriculum design and implementation, creating diverse approaches to preparedness education. The country faces significant disaster risks including wildfires, floods, coastal storms, severe winter hazards, and seismic threats, particularly in British Columbia (earthquakes and tsunamis), Alberta (wildfires and extreme weather), and Manitoba (Red River flooding).

Canada was selected for its contrasting approaches to preparedness education: media literacy has been mandatory since 1987 in Ontario and is integrated into most provincial curricula, while disaster preparedness education remains largely voluntary despite substantial hazard exposure. The country has developed extensive preparedness education resources, with provinces like British Columbia offering comprehensive programs (e.g., "Master of Disaster," annual provincewide drills) and Ontario mandating emergency management programs through Emergency Management Ontario. This case illustrates how decentralised governance enables innovation and resource development through multi-level partnerships between provincial governments, federal agencies, and organisations like MediaSmarts and PreparedBC.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Across jurisdictions, disaster preparedness concepts are integrated into existing subjects and supported by supplementary government and NGO resources. At the primary level, preparedness appears within Science, Social Studies, Health and Physical Education, and Career Education, and is reinforced through provincial safety policies, school board emergency management plans, and classroom toolkits such as British Columbia's Master of Disaster and the Canadian Red Cross Expect the Unexpected program. In early childhood education, disaster preparedness is addressed primarily through regulatory and operational requirements rather than formal curriculum. Licensed child-care centers must maintain written emergency plans, conduct mandatory drills, and train staff, under Ontario's Child Care and Early Years Act. In British Columbia, public health authorities such as Vancouver Coastal Health and Northern Health provide guidance to ensure inclusive, developmentally appropriate emergency procedures in early learning environments.

Preparedness education on media literacy follows a different trajectory: it has been mandatory in provinces like Ontario since 1987 and is integrated into English Language Arts curricula across most of Canada from Kindergarten through Grade 12.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Hazards and safety awareness are often built into provincial health and physical education curriculum at the primary education level. For example, Ontario's Grades 1–8 HPE curriculum explicitly includes increasing students' ability to respond to dangerous situations including fire, severe weather, or threats to personal safety. At the early childhood education level, preparedness is typically referred to as 'recognition of hazards and potentially unsafe situations' such as in British Columbia's Physical and Health Education curriculum.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

At the primary level, disaster preparedness education typically addresses natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, wildfires, and severe weather, along with associated protective behaviors including evacuation, shelter-in-place, and household preparedness planning. Programs such as British Columbia's Master of Disaster (Grades 4–8) introduce local hazards and personal safety actions, while the Canadian Red Cross Expect the Unexpected program offers age-appropriate activities (ages 7–8, 9–11, and 12–13) on risk identification, emergency communication, and coping strategies. These learning experiences are reinforced through school emergency-management plans and routine drills. In early childhood settings, disaster preparedness is addressed primarily through operational requirements such as evacuation procedures, staff training, and mandatory drills. Is integration mandatory or optional?

Integration of disaster preparedness in Canada is optional. Provinces and territories may incorporate preparedness concepts within existing subjects, but there is no national mandate or consistent provincial requirement for DRR education in K–12 curricula.

GOOD PRACTICES:

-  British Columbia – Master of Disaster (Grades 4–8): Curriculum-aligned lessons cover local hazards, evacuation routes, shelter-in-place routines, and 72-hour kit planning.
-  ShakeOut BC: Annual provincewide earthquake drill involving schools, reinforcing Drop, Cover, Hold On and evacuation procedures.
-  Ontario Health & Physical Education (Grades 1–8): “Personal Safety and Injury Prevention” expectations build students' ability to respond to dangerous situations (e.g., fire, severe weather, community hazards).
-  Manitoba Science (Grade 5, SLO 5-4-17): Requires students to describe preparations for personal safety during severe weather or natural disasters.
-  Canadian Red Cross – Expect the Unexpected (ages 7–8, 9–11, and 12–13): Provides classroom and take-home materials on hazard awareness, emergency communication, coping strategies, and family preparedness.
-  Ontario: First jurisdiction in North America to mandate media education (1987); a required component of English curriculum Grades 1–12; digital literacy formally added as curriculum discipline in 2023.

- British Columbia Digital Literacy Framework: Competence-based framework covering six characteristics; mandated in all Language Arts courses K–12 (one-third of material).
- The Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii) provides free K-12 AI literacy resources to help students understand artificial intelligence and machine learning concepts.
- Manitoba integrates media literacy throughout its K-12 English Language Arts curriculum, with media education embedded across five general learning outcomes and 56 specific learning outcomes for each grade, emphasising viewing and representing texts.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Coverage depends on provincial requirement and teacher choice and most DRR content is optional.
- Early childhood programs emphasise plans and drills and system-level compliance more than classroom instruction.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

A wide range of teaching materials and classroom tools support disaster-preparedness education at the primary level in Canada. Most are developed by provincial government agencies, national NGOs, and civil-protection authorities, including British Columbia's Master of Disaster program and the Canadian Red Cross Expect the Unexpected resources. At the early childhood level, dedicated DRR-specific teaching resources are more limited. Guidance for licensed child-care settings focuses mainly on operational emergency procedures rather than conceptual learning. Public health authorities such as Vancouver Coastal Health recommend using external age-appropriate stories, activities and games, including those available through FEMA's children's preparedness website, to introduce basic emergency awareness. In addition, ShakeOut BC provides an annual province-wide earthquake drill for schools and communities, promoting early familiarisation with earthquake and tsunami safety practices.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Are these resources mandatory or optional?**

Disaster preparedness resources are typically optional, and teachers decide whether to use them as supplements to the regular curriculum. British Columbia's Master of Disaster program is a provincially endorsed, curriculum-aligned emergency preparedness tool recommended for BC classroom use. The Canadian Red Cross Expect the Unexpected program is another widely promoted national resource, offering structured lesson plans, activity booklets, and take-home materials to reinforce preparedness learning at school and at home.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Disaster preparedness: Developers include provincial and territorial governments through emergency-preparedness education programs (e.g., PreparedBC), regional public health authorities (e.g., Vancouver Coastal Health), non-governmental organisations (e.g., Canadian Red Cross), and civil-protection collaboratives (e.g., BC Earthquake Alliance).

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Disaster preparedness: Resources are disseminated through online portals, downloadable materials, classroom kits, and voluntary participation in province-wide initiatives. British Columbia's Master of Disaster program allows educators to order full teaching kits, including teacher guides, student workbooks, drawstring bags, and 'Letters Home' to engage families. The Canadian Red Cross Expect the Unexpected program provides downloadable modules for different age groups and parent booklets. ShakeOut BC is an annual, province-wide voluntary earthquake drill with drill scripts, posters, videos, and educator guidance available through its website.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Master of Disaster (British Columbia): Curriculum-aligned kits for Grades 4–8, including lesson plans, student workbooks, hazard facts and a 'Letter Home' to engage families.
-  Expect the Unexpected (Canadian Red Cross): Age-differentiated modules (ages 7–13) with activities on hazard identification, preparedness planning, emergency communication, and parent booklets.
-  ShakeOut BC School Drill Package: Province-wide voluntary earthquake drill with downloadable teacher guides, videos, and class drill scripts to practice "Drop, Cover, Hold On."
-  Fire Smart BC educational program: FireSmart BC uses its mascot, Ember the FireSmart Fox, to teach and communicate wildfire risks to children through age-appropriate stories, videos, coloring pages, and activities that build understanding of fire safety and community preparedness.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Limited resources for early childhood education: Most DRR tools target Grades 4–8; limited structured materials for early primary (K–3)
-  Non-mandatory and inconsistent uptake: Resources are voluntary and unmonitored.
-  Lack of evaluation or evidence on effectiveness: No province systematically monitors how often these DRR resources are used in classrooms or their impact on student learning, resulting in limited evidence to guide improvement or scale-up.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teacher preparation for both disaster preparedness and media literacy in Canada occurs primarily through continuous professional development (CPD) rather than comprehensive initial teacher education (ITE), though media literacy has achieved greater institutionalisation in some provinces. Disaster preparedness learning for teachers occurs mainly through locally delivered training and voluntary workshops. Provincial emergency-management agencies, NGOs such as the Canadian Red Cross, and municipal emergency programs offer optional training sessions and classroom-ready resources. Most training focuses on operational preparedness—school emergency plans, staff roles, evacuation, communication protocols, and routine drills. The emphasis is on safety and regulatory compliance rather than on DRR pedagogy or resilience-building approaches for young children.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Disaster preparedness: Addressed primarily through continuous professional development (CPD) via voluntary training offered by NGOs, municipalities, and emergency-management agencies. Examples include Emergency Preparedness workshops for early-childhood educators delivered by the Early Childhood Educators of BC with PreparedBC and North Shore Emergency Management, and school-focused training linked to programs such as Master of Disaster and Expect the Unexpected. There is no evidence of systematic integration into initial teacher education programs.

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Disaster preparedness: Training typically covers hazard awareness, evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures, family preparedness, communication during emergencies, and supporting children's psychosocial needs. In early-childhood settings, staff must complete emergency-procedure training as part of licensing compliance (e.g., Ontario CCEYA Part 10), but DRR-specific pedagogical training is not mandatory for primary teachers. Most DRR-related training remains optional and supplementary.

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

Disaster preparedness: There is no evidence that DRR or emergency-preparedness training contributes to teacher salary advancement, certification upgrades, or Additional Qualification (AQ) credits.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Disaster preparedness: No province tracks teacher participation in DRR training, so national uptake is unknown. Available evidence suggests participation is voluntary and uneven.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Joint training with emergency-management agencies: Workshops delivered through partnerships (e.g., PreparedBC collaborates with North Shore Emergency Management and ECEBC) strengthen school–municipal coordination.
- Participation in province-wide drills: ShakeOut BC provides annual, structured earthquake-safety practice for whole school communities.
- ECE licensing requirements: Early-childhood educators receive mandated training on evacuation, staff roles, and emergency procedures through provincial licensing frameworks (e.g., Ontario CCEYA Part 10).
- Accredited certification pathways: Ontario's AML Media AQ courses (Parts 1, 2, and 3) provide structured, progressive professional development accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers, contributing to teacher professional development

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- No mandatory DRR content in initial teacher education (ITE).
- Lack of monitoring mechanism for teacher competency in preparedness education or emergency-response skills.
- CPD is mostly optional: Workshops and resources depend on educator initiative; no province requires DRR-focused PD.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Disaster preparedness monitoring emphasizes operational compliance, such as emergency plans, drills, and safety requirements, rather than learning outcomes or the effectiveness of teaching materials and teacher professional development. Media literacy monitoring is more curriculum-focused in provinces where it is mandated, with some assessment of student competencies, though implementation and evaluation remain inconsistent and often lack standardised measures.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?**

In early childhood settings, compliance is checked through licensing inspections. Ontario requires written emergency plans, staff roles, and mandatory drills as part of Child Care and Early Years Act inspections (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2025). In K–12, provinces issue emergency-planning guidance, such as Alberta's Emergency and Pandemic Planning for K–12 Schools and BC's K–12 Emergency Management Resource Package (2025), but these are operational frameworks, not curriculum-evaluation tools. Fire and life-safety codes also enforce evacuation and drill requirements but do not assess teaching or learning. School inspections do not evaluate whether drills are used as learning opportunities or whether students

are developing preparedness knowledge and skills.

- Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

While provinces such as Manitoba embed explicit learning outcomes on severe weather and personal safety within the science curriculum, there is no dedicated provincial or national indicator framework to assess DRR learning outcomes, student competency, the use of teaching materials, or the effectiveness of teacher training. Monitoring focuses on operational compliance (existence of plans, completion of drills) rather than educational outcomes.

- Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

There is no systematic evaluation or documented feedback loops on the effectiveness of school-based DRR programs (e.g., Master of Disaster; Expect the Unexpected). Their reach and outcomes remain unreported. No province tracks whether emergency drills improve student preparedness knowledge or whether DRR teaching materials enhance learning outcomes. Compliance data (e.g., whether drills were conducted) is collected for licensing and safety purposes but is not analysed for educational effectiveness or used to improve curriculum, teaching materials, or professional development.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- ECE licensing inspections include mandatory checks on emergency plans and drills (e.g., Ontario CCEYA Part 10), ensuring minimum operational preparedness standards.
- Provincial emergency-management guidance (e.g., BC's Emergency Management Planning Guide; BC's 2025 K–12 Emergency Management Resource Package) provides structured templates and procedures to support consistent planning and coordination across schools and districts.
- Early-learning emergency handbooks (e.g., Northwest Territories' Responding to Emergencies: A Handbook for Early Childhood Programs) offers practical, child-centered guidance on drills, communication, and psychosocial support.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Lack of curriculum-focused oversight: DRR as a learning outcome is often not considered; monitoring focuses on operational safety (drills, evacuation procedures), not instructional quality.
- Absence of indicator frameworks: Neither provincial ministries nor federal agencies have indicators to assess DRR learning, teacher competencies, or educational impact.
- No evidence of system-level evaluation: Voluntary DRR programs (e.g., Master of Disaster; Expect the Unexpected) are not tracked for reach, effectiveness, or student learning results.
- ECE focus limited to compliance: Early childhood settings monitor emergency procedures only; resilience-building or hazard-awareness learning is not included in quality assurance mechanisms.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Disaster preparedness in education is not governed nationally but is framed within federal strategies such as the Emergency Management Strategy for Canada (EMS) and the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS). These strategies outline goals for community resilience, risk awareness, emergency planning standards, and whole-of-society preparedness, but they do not define DRR learning outcomes for early years or primary education. Teaching materials and initiatives therefore originate at the provincial/territorial level or through NGOs such as the Canadian Red Cross.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?

Preparedness in education is not governed nationally but is framed within federal strategies such as the Emergency Management Strategy for Canada (EMS) and the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS). These strategies outline goals for community resilience, risk awareness, emergency planning standards, and whole-of-society preparedness, but they do not define DRR learning outcomes for early years or primary education. The Sendai Framework commitments provide international context, but influence on education is indirect, primarily through infrastructure resilience expectations and emergency planning requirements rather than curricular mandates. Teaching materials and initiatives therefore originate at the provincial/territorial level or through NGOs such as the Canadian Red Cross.

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

Disaster preparedness: There is no evidence of federal curriculum reform, pilots, or national initiatives to embed DRR into formal early-years or primary curricula. National strategies include timelines to 2030 under the Sendai Framework, but any influence on education is indirect, primarily through infrastructure resilience expectations, emergency planning requirements, and provincial reviews, not curricular reform.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Disaster preparedness: Operational preparedness is mandatory in some jurisdictions. Ontario's Child Care and Early Years Act requires licensed child-care centers to maintain written emergency plans, assign staff roles, and conduct regular drills. Provinces such as Alberta and British Columbia issue emergency-planning guidance for school boards. Provincial fire and life-safety codes further require evacuation drill compliance. These mechanisms ensure operational readiness but do not constitute DRR curriculum requirements.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

Disaster preparedness

- Strong provincial guidance for operational preparedness: Provinces such as British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario publish school- and district-level emergency planning guidelines covering drills, hazard protocols, reunification, communication, and continuity of learning.
- Mandatory emergency plans in early learning: Ontario's Child Care and Early Years Act requires written emergency and evacuation plans, designated staff roles, and regular drills for licensed child-care centers.
- Public Safety Canada's Get Prepared materials and Alert Ready alerts provide national messaging used by schools and families.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Preparedness expectations vary widely across provinces and territories due to the absence of national, education-specific preparedness guidelines.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Disaster preparedness stakeholder engagement for early childhood and primary education is shaped by Canada's multilevel governance. Provinces and territories hold responsibility for education, while emergency management is shared between federal, provincial/territorial (P/T), municipal, and Indigenous governments. As a result, partnerships in early childhood settings and primary schools rely heavily on local emergency management offices, fire services, public health authorities, and non-governmental organisations. National bodies, including Public Safety Canada, the Canadian Red Cross, and Indigenous Services Canada, provide tools, training, and family-focused guidance used by early childhood programs and elementary schools to promote preparedness among young children and their caregivers. However, partnerships are not mandated in any national curriculum; collaboration varies significantly across jurisdictions.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Disaster preparedness: Many school boards partner with municipal emergency management offices and local fire departments (e.g., Toronto Office of Emergency Management, Calgary Emergency Management Agency) for drills, hazard education sessions, and family preparedness outreach. The Canadian Red Cross delivers school- and community-based preparedness workshops nationwide, including the Expect the Unexpected program and youth-focused initiatives.

- Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

Disaster preparedness: The Canadian Red Cross and Public Safety Canada offer multilingual family preparedness guides, child-friendly activity sheets, and resources tailored for people with access and functional needs. The Red Cross pilot program "Raising Awareness Through Play Among Indigenous Youth and Children" uses LEGO® Serious Play® to support culturally grounded, child-centered risk awareness.

 What is the role of international organizations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

Disaster preparedness: Canada aligns with the UNDRR Sendai Framework principles and participates in OECD and UNESCO safety initiatives, but these do not directly dictate provincial curriculum.

 Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Disaster preparedness: Cross-sector collaborations include the Red Cross Ready Rating Program, provincial wildfire education initiatives, and joint emergency exercises involving schools, police, fire, and Indigenous communities.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  British Columbia: Province-wide earthquake drills and school engagement through ShakeOut BC and Emergency Management BC.
-  Alberta (Calgary): CEMA partners with schools and offers the Ready Squad e-course for children aged 7–12 to build basic emergency-preparedness skills.
-  Ontario (Toronto): Toronto OEM provides ‘Get Emergency Ready’ school resources and collaborates with Toronto Fire Services to deliver child-focused fire safety education, including ‘Learn Not to Burn’ for preschool–Grade 2.
-  Canadian Red Cross: National Youth Disaster Preparedness workshops, including Expect the Unexpected and the pilot program ‘Raising Awareness Through Play Among Indigenous Youth and Children’, using LEGO® Serious Play® to support culturally grounded, child-centered risk awareness.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Partnerships are not mandated nationally, resulting in uneven engagement across provinces, territories, and municipalities.
-  Collaboration often depends on local capacity, resources, and priorities, leading to variability across jurisdictions.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

CROATIA

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
ETTA	Education and Teacher Training Agency
EU	European Union
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MSEY	Ministry of Science, Education and Youth
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
QA	quality assurance

Croatia, EU Member State

The Croatia case illustrates a school-based and partnership-supported approach to preparedness education, coordinated in part through civil-protection institutions, but not yet embedded in curriculum mandates or system-wide pedagogical standards. At the national level, the Civil Protection Directorate plays an important coordinating role by developing and disseminating educational materials and programs, while schools and external actors, including NGOs, support implementation in proactive. However, in the absence of curriculum-embedded mandates and system-wide pedagogical standards, the depth and consistency of implementation may vary across schools. In comparative terms, Croatia illustrates a system where preparedness education is supported primarily through procedural safety measures, civil-protection led educational resources and external interventions, rather than formal curriculum integration, reflecting an opportunity to strengthen the alignment between education and disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Croatia is exposed to multiple natural and technological hazards. The National Risk Assessment highlights high seismic risk (e.g., Zagreb and Petrinja earthquakes in 2020), flood risk along the Sava and Danube basins, and frequent wildfires along the Adriatic coast. DRR is coordinated by the Government of Croatia (GoC) with the support of the Civil Protection Directorate under the Ministry of Interior (MoI). [1]

Education is governed by the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MSEY). Compulsory education includes one mandatory pre-primary year (ISCED 0), followed by an eight-year single-structure primary school system (ISCED 1). Teaching and learning are guided by the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and a set of subject curricula and seven cross-curricular topics introduced through the national curriculum reform (2018 onwards), including Health, Civic Education and Sustainable Development. [2] These cross-curricular areas promote wellbeing, responsible citizenship and environmental understanding, which provide potential entry points for integrating risk awareness and preparedness. [3] School-level preparedness is shaped primarily by civil protection legislation, under which all educational institutions must maintain emergency plans and conduct annual evacuation drills. Although these measures position schools as key sites for preparedness practice, they function as procedural safety requirements rather than curriculum-based learning. In parallel, the Civil Protection Directorate operates the Educational corner ('Edukativni kutak') within the national Disaster Risk Reduction Portal, offering educational packages for children to ensure preparedness education for children is more enjoyable. [4]

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Primary education in Croatia is organised as a single-structure, compulsory eight-year primary school system covering ISCED 1-2, preceded by non-compulsory early childhood education with one mandatory pre-primary year (ISCED 0).[5] Croatia's NCF sets the structural and pedagogical foundations for preschool, compulsory primary education and non-compulsory secondary education, which defines core values, key competences and inter-subject themes such as environmental protection, safety and health, and civic education [6] While the NCF establishes seven cross-curricular topics (Personal and Social Development, Health, Civic Education, Sustainable Development, Entrepreneurship, Learning How to Learn and ICT), it does not explicitly reference preparedness-related competencies. These cross-curricular themes are interconnected with all relevant curriculum areas and implemented through compulsory and elective subjects, 'head-teacher' classes, integrated teaching, projects, outdoor learning/field trips, and extracurricular activities. Certain preparedness-related learning expectations are prescribed through, for example, cross-curricular theme Sustainable Development which seeks to raise awareness and deepen understanding of all issues related to sustainability and help students critically examine potential solutions and actions directed toward sustainability, developing relevant skills and traits regarding issues important to themselves and to society as a whole. Cross-curricular theme Personal and Social Development encourages the development of self-control and resilience, which is crucial for reacting calmly in crises, while the Health theme aims for students to learn how to recognise and avoid potential hazards and behave

appropriately in those situations, including basic protection and first aid procedures. These cross-curricular themes therefore offer potential entry points for integrating preparedness education concepts, but integration is not mandated, and preparedness is not recognised as a stand-alone learning area with defined learning outcomes. [7]

At early-childhood level, the National Curriculum for Early and Preschool Education (2015) set pedagogical principles and goals for institutions serving children from 6 months to school entry, including aims related to children's wellbeing, protection and a safe, supportive environment. [8] Preparedness-related concepts at this level are embedded implicitly within a developmental and care-oriented pedagogical framework, rather than articulated as instructional content or specific competencies, reflecting the distinct pedagogical approach of early childhood education.

In primary education, preparedness education content appears only indirectly in selected subjects. For example, the Grade 5 Geography curriculum introduces natural processes such as earthquakes and volcanoes but does not require instruction in preparedness or safe behavior. Environmental and science topics in lower grades address weather and local environmental conditions, again without explicit preparedness outcomes. Consequently, there are no dedicated or standalone instructional hours for preparedness education within the primary curriculum. Practical preparedness activities are delivered in cooperation with civil-protection authorities and complement the formal curriculum by supporting the implementation of relevant cross-curricular topics.

Annual evacuation drills and school-level emergency planning are carried out in all educational institutions; however, these activities stem from civil protection legislation, not from curriculum requirements, and are therefore procedural in nature rather than curriculum-embedded learning activities. Taken together, Croatia's curriculum provides a structured entry point for preparedness education through existing subjects and cross-curricular themes, which is further supported by practical school-level and civil-protection led activities.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness education is not explicitly referenced in early childhood education. It is referenced implicitly within the National Curriculum for Early and Preschool Education (2015), which emphasises children's wellbeing, safety, and development of competencies for a secure environment. In primary education, neither the NCF nor subject curricula (2018–19) introduce preparedness education as a stand-alone area. Instead, safety and risk-awareness concepts appear through cross-curricular themes e.g. Sustainable Development, Personal and Social Development, or Health, which are implemented through cooperation with civil protection authorities. While there is no clear intent to include preparedness education in curricula, the system offers a structured entry point to be built upon.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Dimensions present in the primary school curriculum relate to general safety and wellbeing (personal safety, health protection, emotional wellbeing and responsible behavior), environmental awareness, and basic

understanding of natural processes (e.g., earthquakes or volcanos in Geography – 5th grade). However, the curriculum does not specify structured competencies in natural hazard response, first aid, evacuation behavior, crisis communication, or civic resilience. Practical preparedness (e.g., evacuation drills) derives from civil-protection regulations, not curricular requirements. In line with that, practical preparedness is delivered through cooperation with civil protection authorities.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Integration of preparedness depends on teacher interpretation of subject curricula or school initiative. There is no requirement within the national curriculum to integrate preparedness education content into teaching and learning activities. Curriculum does not mandate disaster preparedness content. Evacuation drills are mandatory under civil protection law, but these are procedural safety requirements, not curricular requirements. Civil Protection Directorate develops and disseminates educational programs at national level.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Primary school-level preparedness education engagement through annual International Day for DRR activities: Osnovna škola Ivana Filipovića in Osijek regularly marks 13 October with participatory disaster preparedness events, during which students learn about natural hazards through interactive presentations, safety-protocol exercises and risk-awareness games. Although not mandated as part of curricula, and implemented on voluntary basis, these activities illustrate how schools use the flexibility of cross-curricular themes (e.g., Health, Personal and Social Development, Sustainable Development) to integrate preparedness education through non-formal, experiential learning.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Lack of explicit preparedness learning outcomes in both early-childhood and primary curricula, despite reference to safety and wellbeing.
-  Absence of hazard-specific competencies (e.g. earthquakes, floods, fires) within subject programs or cross-curricular topics.
-  The depth and continuity of preparedness education teaching vary widely, as integration depends on teachers' interpretation of cross-curricular topics and subject requirements rather than national guidance.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education in Croatian schools is supported by practical school-level measures and a wide-range of materials developed by civil-protection authorities and NGOs, as a unified national preparedness education package has not been established. While Croatia has developed a diverse set of preparedness-related resources, these have not yet been consolidated into a unified, curriculum-integrated national preparedness education package. The MSEY does not prescribe standardised preparedness teaching tools for early childhood or primary

education, nor does it define national criteria for age-appropriateness, pedagogical sequencing or content consistency of preparedness-related educational materials. In general, responsibility for ensuring age-appropriateness, accuracy and content consistency of preparedness related material is shared among relevant actors, with the Civil Protection Directorate playing a national coordinating role in developing and disseminating education materials and programs. The arrangements for assuring the appropriateness of materials differ depending on the type of materials and educational setting: (i) for textbooks and officially approved teaching materials used in primary education, responsibility lies with MSEY through a mandatory expert review and approval process; (ii) for early childhood education, responsibility lies primarily with early childhood institutions and educators within the principles of the National Curriculum for Early and Preschool Education; and (iii) for preparedness-specific materials developed outside the formal curriculum (e.g. brochures, games, guidance), responsibility lies with the producing organisations themselves (civil protection authorities, local governments or NGOs), with schools deciding whether and how to use them.

As a result, schools draw on a diverse set of preparedness resources, including emergency plans, evacuation maps, hazard-awareness leaflets and first-aid materials, mostly developed by the Red Cross or the Civil Protection Directorate. While these resources provide valuable exposure to safety practices, there is scope to make their development and use more systematic, continuous and curriculum-aligned over time, including by strengthening pedagogical sequencing and progression across grades. Child-friendly materials, such as earthquake and fire-safety brochures, animated videos and simple preparedness instructions, are produced periodically by civil-protection authorities and local governments and provide an important complementary resource base that could be further integrated into a more coherent curriculum aligned toolkit.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Schools are not required to use specific preparedness related teaching material. While practical components such as evacuation drills are mandatory under civil protection regulations, accompanying educational resources are not prescribed.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Resources are mostly developed by civil protection authorities, local authorities, and NGOs. Examples include: (i) a Guidebook for teachers, developed by the Civil Protection Directorate in cooperation with the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA); (ii) child-friendly safety leaflets and community preparedness materials developed by local governments and fire services and (iii) child friendly first aid and preparedness education material developed by Croatian Red Cross. [9] While these actors typically ensure technical accuracy and age-appropriate presentation within their own materials, there is no overarching national mechanism to ensure consistency, progression or alignment of these resources across education levels.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Materials are disseminated through school emergency planning processes (e.g. evacuation maps), visits, workshops and demonstrations by civil protection services, firefighters or Red Cross teams or school websites.

Their classroom use varies across schools and depends on teacher initiative, school leadership and local partnerships, which points to an opportunity to further systematise their use within curriculum-linked preparedness education.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 A Guidebook for Teachers, developed in cooperation with the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA), demonstrating strong alignment with pedagogical standards and following national curriculum 'entry points' supporting in that way the relevant topics in subjects like geography, biology, chemistry, physics and lower primary school curriculum.
- 🍌 Educational Corner for Children: The Civil Protection Directorate, in cooperation with UNICEF and UNDRR, developed the child-focused educational package 'Let's Learn More About Disaster Risk Reduction!'. The package includes the board game 'RiskLand', which teaches students how to reduce disaster impacts through interactive questions and scenarios. As part of the project 'On the Road to Disaster Risk Reduction', the Directorate produced and distributed two copies of the game to every primary school in Croatia, ensuring nationwide access through school libraries.[10] The initiative provides an innovative, engaging tool that supports disaster-risk awareness and complements school-level preparedness activities.
- 🍌 The Croatian Red Cross offers structured early-age materials on first aid and safe behaviour.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 Uneven practices across schools due to lack of standardised, curriculum integrated preparedness teaching toolkit.
- 🍌 Reliance on external actors which results in variability in coverage and quality of preparedness education.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

While preparedness education is indirectly reflected in the curriculum, initial teacher education programs at universities do not include hazard awareness, emergency procedures or DRR competencies. [11] National continuous professional development has largely centered on supporting the 2018 curriculum reform, during which approximately 40,000 teachers were trained to implement new subject curricula and cross-curricular topics such as Health, Civic Education and Personal and Social Development. These large-scale trainings strengthened general pedagogical competencies and student-centered approaches but did not include dedicated modules on disaster preparedness education. At the same time, teacher awareness and practical capacity are supported through targeted activities implemented in cooperation with the Civil Protection Directorate and partner organisations, including campaigns, school-based indoor and outdoor activities, and programmes such as 'Safer Schools and Kindergartens'. The Civil Protection Directorate has also developed initiatives to strengthen knowledge of disaster risk reduction among both educators and students, including a Guidebook for Teachers developed in cooperation with the Education and Teacher Training Agency.

Following the 2020 Zagreb and Petrinja earthquakes, advisory notices encouraged schools to review evacuation plans, strengthen safety protocols, and ensure staff familiarity with emergency procedures. These measures, together with practical training and partnership-based initiatives, have helped strengthen teacher capacity in preparedness and emergency response. However, they complement rather than replace a formal, system-wide approach to preparedness education in teacher development. There is no national preparedness education competency framework for teachers, nor mechanisms to formally recognise preparedness-related training through promotion, certification points or salary progression. Consequently, opportunities for educators to develop preparedness-related competencies are available through civil-protection led and partnership-based activities, but their integration into formal teacher education and professional development remains limited.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Neither initial education nor continuous professional development includes preparedness specific modules or courses. However, a Guidebook for Teachers was developed by the Civil Protection Directorate in cooperation with ETTA, offering an opportunity to strengthen teachers' capacity.

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Preparedness related knowledge is not defined as mandatory teaching competence nor linked to structured classroom activities or age-appropriate instructional material. Teachers receive general training on well-being, classroom management and civic responsibility, but none of these explicitly cover hazards, evacuation, or crisis management. However, the Civil Protection Directorate has implemented initiatives aimed at strengthening teachers' knowledge on DRR.

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

Emergency preparedness training is not recognised within the national career progression, points system or salary progression.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Preparedness training occurs mainly through local initiatives or post-earthquake guidance (e.g. national campaign 'Adopt knowledge to reduce damage' [Usvoji znanja da šteta bude manja] by the Civil Protection Directorate), with the aim of raising awareness about DRR. Uptake varies widely across schools.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Croatian Red Cross program Safer Schools and Kindergartens, implemented with civil-protection partners and co-financed under Erasmus+: The program provided targeted training for educators prior to implementation, equipping teachers, preschool staff and Red Cross volunteers with the knowledge and pedagogical tools needed to deliver preparedness education to children. Training covered hazard awareness, emergency procedures, first aid, and psychosocial support, and prepared staff to use structured disaster preparedness teaching materials, including checklists, classroom guides, interactive activities and digital resources. More than 4,000 educational staff across over 400

kindergartens and schools participated, indicating substantial reach despite the program's voluntary nature. [12] Although not part of the national continuous professional development system, the initiative demonstrates how external partners can strengthen teacher capacity for preparedness education by combining structured training, practical resources and school-level implementation support.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 No national preparedness competency framework or formal preparedness modules in teacher education.
- 🍌 Preparedness training is inconsistent across regions and dependent on local leadership.
- 🍌 Drills and safety trainings are often irregular and not sustained over time.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance in Croatian education combines internal school self-evaluation with external oversight from the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA) and the State Inspectorate. While the NCF outlines principles for monitoring learning and school performance, it does not include indicators related to disaster preparedness, safety competencies or resilience-building. There are no mandatory quality assurance requirements for preparedness within the quality assurance system. [13] Existing evaluations focus largely on administrative compliance rather than the quality of preparedness education or pedagogical process. As a result, preparedness education is not systematically assessed, and lessons from emergencies or drill exercises are not consistently used to strengthen teaching or planning processes.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations? (e.g. student learning, classroom practice, and use of drills/simulations as learning opportunities—not only the existence of plans and procedures.)**

Schools are subject to mandatory civil protection and safety requirements, including emergency plans and regular drills, which ensure a baseline level of operational preparedness. There is no available evidence that suggests that inspections systematically assess the quality or frequency of disaster preparedness teaching.

- 🍌 **Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?**

There are no indicators or frameworks to assess preparedness education-related indicators in its national QA or monitoring systems. However, civil protection authorities contribute to practical implementation which supports learning outcomes which are not formally assessed within education QA systems.

- Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

There is limited evidence that preparedness protocols and education activities are effective. Drills are conducted, but their educational impact is not evaluated, and findings are not systematically used to refine teachers' professional development or school improvement plans.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- External inspection by the State Inspectorate ensures that schools maintain required safety plans, evacuation procedures, and compliance with civil-protection regulations. While these inspections focus primarily on procedural compliance rather than pedagogical quality, they provide an institutional mechanism for monitoring operational preparedness and ensuring minimum safety standards across schools.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Lack of national indicators for DRR learning or preparedness competencies.
- Inspections focus on procedural compliance rather than educational quality.
- Limited feedback loops between school practice, emergency lessons learned and curriculum reforms.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In Croatia, preparedness themes are being embedded in broader long-term national strategies: (i) the National Development Strategy 2030; (ii) the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2040/2070); and (iii) the Strategy for Disaster Risk Management 2030. These strategies acknowledge the role of education in building societal resilience but do not contain explicit plans for integrating preparedness into early childhood or primary curricula. Importantly, the Strategy for Disaster Risk Management 2030 and related activities led by the Civil Protection Directorate include public awareness and education components, as well as activities targeting children and schools. Disaster preparedness obligations for schools or kindergartens stem from civil protection legislation rather than from the education sector's strategic direction. The MSEY has not issued preparedness-specific curricular reforms, though post-earthquake recovery efforts have highlighted the need for safer school environments and strengthened emergency protocols. While broader national strategies recognise the importance of public awareness and preparedness, they do not outline a systemic, curriculum-aligned approach for education. Nevertheless, ongoing civil-protection-led initiatives and educational materials demonstrate that preparedness education is being actively developed in practice, even where it has not been formalised through a dedicated curriculum reform. Future opportunities may emerge through EU policy alignment, ongoing infrastructure upgrades, and school safety initiatives.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?

Croatia does not have a national policy to integrate preparedness into education. However, preparedness-related activities and materials continue to be developed and implemented in practice through the Civil Protection Directorate and partner organisations. Post-earthquake measures have also focused on infrastructure and safety protocols.

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

No reforms, pilot programs, or timelines have been formally announced. Post-earthquake measures focus on infrastructure and safety protocols, rather than curriculum integration.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Croatian kindergartens and schools do have emergency preparedness plans that falls under civil protection legislation. Accordingly, schools must maintain evacuation plans and conduct annual drills. Requirements are focused on procedures, while related awareness-raising and educational activities provide an additional practical learning dimension.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Strategy for Disaster Risk Management 2030, overseen by the National Platform for DRR: The Strategy outlines long-term priorities for strengthening prevention, preparedness, public awareness and cross-sectoral coordination, and aligns DRR with broader climate-change adaptation policies. While the Strategy does not yet specify education-sector obligations, it provides a national framework through which preparedness could be more systematically integrated into schooling, including through risk-awareness initiatives, sectoral coordination and the development of supporting materials. Its multi-stakeholder governance structure offers an institutional entry point for future reforms that would embed preparedness education in curricula and teacher training.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- No national commitment to structured preparedness education curriculum integration.
- Limited connection between DRM strategies and education policy.
- School preparedness responsibilities remain primarily procedural, although they are complemented by practical awareness – raising and educational initiatives led by civil protection authorities and partners.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education in Croatia relies heavily on collaboration between schools and external stakeholders rather than on formal curricular structures or guidelines. The Civil Protection Directorate, local civil protection services, fire brigades, police units and the Croatian Red Cross frequently support schools through demonstrations, safety workshops and evacuation exercises. Municipalities are responsible for local civil protection plans and often coordinate school-level preparedness activities. Parental involvement varies, typically through school boards or safety communications, but is not systematically integrated. Participation of children in planning or evaluating drills is limited, and inclusive approaches involving vulnerable groups are not formally mandated.

International organizations (UNICEF, UNESCO or the Council of Europe) have engaged in broader child rights, safety or resilience initiatives in Croatia, but these have not yet shaped a structured national preparedness education program. Cross-border or EU-level collaborations on civil protection strengthen national capacities but do not directly translate into classroom resources or formal learning pathways. As a result, stakeholder engagement is active but fragmented, relying on local partnerships rather than national coordination.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Civil-protection regional offices work directly with primary schools and municipalities to mark the International Day for DRR through educational workshops, demonstrations and joint exercises in cities such as Split, Osijek, Zagreb, Rijeka and others. [14] The Croatian Red Cross collaborates with schools and kindergartens through the Safer Schools and Kindergartens program, which has involved 292 kindergartens and 119 primary schools and more than 4,000 educational workers. [15] In some cases, schools also share civil-protection brochures and instructions with parents via school websites and newsletters, especially around DRR awareness days. Collaboration is therefore active but largely school-driven and varies by locality.

Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

Many preparedness education activities are explicitly participatory. Civil-protection services organise interactive sessions where students engage in discussions, watch demonstrations, and take part in drills and simulations. [16] The ‘Safer Schools and Kindergartens’ project uses child-centered methodologies, including games, role-plays and group work to build first-aid, DRR and psychosocial-support skills. [17] UNICEF-supported board games and educational kits (e.g., Riskland / ‘Let’s learn to prevent disasters!’) are designed as interactive tools where children learn through play. However, there is limited evidence of systematic targeting of specific vulnerable groups (e.g., children with disabilities, minority groups) within these initiatives.

What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

UNICEF and UNDRR have played an important role in preparedness education by co-developing child-friendly educational kits and board games and partnering with the Civil Protection Directorate to adapt and distribute them in Croatia. The Croatian Red Cross' 'Safer Schools and Kindergartens' project was co-financed through EU/Erasmus+ and implemented with support from international Red Cross partners, providing DRR and first-aid training and materials for schools. [18]

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multisectoral partnerships exist, but they are project-based. For example, 'Safer Schools and Kindergartens' brought together the Croatian Red Cross, MSEY, ETTA and international Red Cross partners, combining education, health, disaster preparedness and psychosocial-support expertise. These partnerships demonstrate multi-sectoral and regional collaboration but have not yet evolved into permanent national mechanisms for preparedness education.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Croatian Red Cross Safer Schools and Kindergartens program: Over four years, this program engaged 292 kindergartens, 119 primary schools, more than 53,000 children and 4,162 educational workers, combining teacher training, online DRR and first-aid resources and school-level activities. It is formally supported by the MSEY and the ETTA, illustrating an institutionalised NGO–government partnership.
-  UNICEF/UNDRR educational kits and board games for children: The adaptation and dissemination of DRR educational kits and games (e.g., Riskland / 'Let's learn to prevent disasters!') through cooperation between UNICEF, UNDRR and Croatian civil-protection institutions provide schools with engaging, internationally recognised tools for child-centered preparedness education.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  The lack of a national framework that systematically embeds partnerships into school operations and curricula may lead to fragmented and project-based engagement.
-  Weak connection between civil protection offices and MSEY.
-  Insufficient focus on vulnerable groups.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

CZECHIA

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
FEP BE	Framework Educational Program for Basic Education
FEP PE	Framework Educational Program for Pre-School Education
HZSČ	Fire Rescue Service
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
MoI	Ministry of Interior
QA	quality assurance
WB	World Bank

Czechia, European Union (EU) Member State

Czechia illustrates a model in which preparedness education is guided by civil protection and mandated in the curriculum, but its quality largely depends on how it is implemented at the school level. Compared with more centralised systems, it demonstrates how strong technical leadership from emergency services can support preparedness education, while also revealing gaps in education-sector ownership and quality assurance.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Education in Czechia is centrally governed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS). Early childhood education (ISCED 0) is guided by the Framework Educational Program for Pre-School Education (FEP PE), which sets out the pedagogical foundations, aims, and educational areas for kindergartens.

Compulsory primary education is provided in single-structure primary schools, covering primary lower and secondary education (ISCED 1) and delivered across nine years of mandatory school attendance. [1] The Framework Educational Program for Basic Education (FEP BE) sets national learning objectives, educational areas and cross-curricular subjects for basic education, forming the basis for teaching and learning in primary and lower-secondary schools. [2]

Czechia faces significant disaster risks, particularly floods, which have caused repeated large-scale events (e.g., 1997, 2002, 2013). [3] The country's disaster risk governance is structured around the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and a Population Protection Concept that emphasize prevention, preparedness and public awareness. Czechia has formally integrated the topic of 'protection of people in emergencies' into primary education and has developed nationally coordinated teaching programs and materials in partnership with the Fire Rescue Service and civil-protection authorities. Czechia is one of the few European Union (EU) Member States that incorporate formal initial teacher education via Health Education, focusing on practical competencies and life-threatening scenarios. Yet, the system lacks mandatory quality assurance (QA) requirements for preparedness, therefore creating useful contrast to systems where mechanisms more strongly shape practice and offering insights relevant to EU-level discussions on future preparedness-education strategies.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

Early childhood education is regulated through FEP-PE, which sets broad developmental goals but does not include disaster-preparedness or safety components. As a result, preparedness education begins only at the primary level. Primary education (Grades 1–9) is regulated by FEP-BE, which defines national learning objectives across educational areas and cross-curricular subjects such as Personal and Social Education, Democratic Citizenship and Environmental Education. [4] Within FEP-BE, preparedness is a part of formal, mandatory curriculum through the inclusion of protection of people in common risks and emergencies but is integrated mainly through Health Education and reinforced through selected cross-curricular themes. Learning outcomes include following safety rules, acting appropriately in emergency situations. Cross-curricular subjects (e.g. Environmental and Civic Education) also provide space to address risks, safety, and responsible behavior.[6] The curriculum formally requires schools to address protection of people in emergencies, but in practice schools decide how to deliver the required content. Since the mandatory content is spread across the curriculum, MoESY and Fire Rescue

Service (Hasičský záchranný sbor České - HZSČ) provide support materials to help schools plan preparedness education teaching.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness is explicitly referenced in national curricula through the topic ‘protection of people in emergency situations’, required in primary education, and related outcomes are included in Health Education within FEP BE. In early childhood education, preparedness is not framed as a distinct or mandatory learning area.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Curricula mainly focus on the protection of people in emergencies (e.g., floods, fires, accidents), safety behavior, basic first aid, understanding of the Integrated Rescue System and civil-protection measures; partly linked to environmental and citizenship education. These topics are embedded primarily within Health Education outcomes and supported through Environmental and Citizenship Education cross-curricular themes rather than defined as comprehensive preparedness competency framework.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Inclusion of emergency-protection topics is mandatory in basic and secondary programs, but schools decide how to implement the required content (stand-alone lessons, integration into Health Education or cross-curricular projects), possibly resulting in variable depth and sequencing across schools. Evacuation drills and fire-safety exercises function as training and safety overlays rather than curriculum-embedded lessons.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 ‘Protection of People in Common Risks and Emergencies’ (‘Ochrana člověka za běžných rizik a mimořádných událostí’) – compulsory content within the FEP BE, ensuring that all primary schools incorporate safety behavior, emergency response, and first aid into their teaching.

 Nationally developed methodological guides, teaching units and lesson plans produced by the HZSČ to support implementation of emergency-protection topics in primary and lower-secondary education, including structured materials for teachers, that serve as recommended guidance.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 Insufficient depth and inconsistency in how emergency-protection topics are implemented across schools.

 Preparedness content is dispersed across cross-curricular themes, with no single preparedness learning strand or progression plan.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Responsibility for ensuring age-appropriateness and technical accuracy of disaster preparedness material in Czech primary schools is led mainly by the Czech FRS and the Ministry of Interior (MoI), rather than by the MoEYS alone. These materials focus on ‘protection of people in common risks and emergencies’ and are designed to help schools fulfil mandatory curriculum requirements under the FEP-BE and civil-protection obligations. [7] The HZSČ produces a wide range of teaching aids and methodological resources, including tools for preschool and primary levels, often in partnership with MoEYS and its educational portals. These materials are designed to align with the FEP-BEF and referenced by MoEYS as recommended supports, but there is no formal, centralised pedagogical approval process for preparedness materials comparable to the approval of core textbooks. Schools retain responsibility for selecting and adapting these materials to be age-appropriate and pedagogically suitable for their pupils.

A key resource includes methodological material for primary school teachers ‘Human protection during emergencies’ (**‘Metodický materiál pro učitele ZŠ „Ochrana člověka za mimořádných událostí’**). This consists of ten lessons in the field of human protection during emergencies, a proposal for the distribution of the curriculum into individual grades of primary school, including expected outcomes, recommended methods and forms of work, literature, aids, useful links, an outline of the inclusion of the issue in the current FEP BE, the results of rapid surveys on the issue of human protection during emergencies, but also a proposal for test questions for individual grades of primary school. Each lesson consists of a theoretical part and a didactic transformation of a sub-topic, and contains a set of basic objectives and competencies in the field of human protection during emergencies, a proposal for the distribution of curriculum into individual grades of basic education, including expected outcomes, recommended methods and forms of work, literature and useful links. [8]

The broader ‘Firefighters for Schools’ (**‘Hasiči pro školy’**) initiative sends trained firefighters into schools to work directly with pupils, especially in Grades 2 and 6, using structured materials, interactive demonstrations and other hands-on activities. Some HZSČ regional centers also run experiential learning facilities and road-safety parks for school groups.

In early childhood education, preparedness materials are delivered through age-appropriate, play-based, and visual tools developed in cooperation with child-education specialists.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

The use of specific HZSČ teaching resources is optional, but as schools must address protection of people in emergencies, these materials are widely promoted as the main tool to do so.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Resources are primarily developed by FRS and MoI, not by MoEYS alone, sometimes in partnership with schools and universities; selected materials are co-developed or piloted with educational experts.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Materials are disseminated via the HZSČ websites, dedicated portals such as ‘Firefighters for Schools’, direct outreach to schools and in-person visits by trained firefighters. Schools integrate them into Health Education, thematic days, project weeks or class meetings. Usage is widespread but uneven and more intensive where local HZSČ units are proactive.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Comprehensive materials for teaching topics on human protection during common risks and emergencies in primary schools (see [link](#)), that offer educators a set of basic concepts from the fields of human protection during common risks and emergencies.
-  Early childhood supplies in cooperation with Pastelka – a magazine for pre-school and younger school-age children whose content follows the framework educational programs mandatory for kindergartens and primary schools. In 2013, the MoI-General Directorate of the Czech HZSČ collaborated with the magazine Pastelka to create a series dedicated to the area of human protection during common risks and emergencies. The series presents several basic topics that introduce children to important principles of behaviour. [9]
-  ‘Knowing in Time is Knowing Forever’, a project intended for early childhood education that introduces didactic and methodological aids for kindergarten teachers and addresses education in the areas of common risks, personal safety, fires, emergencies, traffic and environmental education. A total of 33 completely new board games were created as part of the project, which are divided into the following 6 didactic areas: (i) common risk; (ii) personal safety; (iii) fires; (iv) emergency events; (v) traffic education; and (vi) ecological education (see [link](#)).

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  No single education-sector repository systematically catalogues preparedness teaching tools.
-  Uptake depends on local partnerships and school capacity, leading to variability.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness-related teacher competencies in Czechia are shaped by both national curriculum and sectoral initiatives from the MoI and HZSČ. Preparedness-related topics are formally included within initial teacher education through required components covering safety, first aid, and human protection. Nevertheless, a detailed review indicates that dedicated coverage of ‘human protection in emergency and crisis situations’ in undergraduate study plans is limited and frequently positioned as optional or supplementary content.

In 2019, ‘Module J – Civil Protection and Crisis Management for Teachers’ was issued for in-service teachers, covering the theory of human protection in emergencies and related guidance, but participation is not universal. [10] Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic up to 2030+ emphasises competence-based learning, active citizenship and cross-curricular themes but does not single out preparedness education as a core requirement for teachers’ professional development. [11] Empirical studies show that many teachers rate their knowledge on preparedness topics as insufficient and often rely on self-study or short courses organised by HZSČ.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Czechia is one of six EU Member states where preparedness is explicitly required in initial teacher education, mostly in Health-Education related courses and optional modules on human protection, civil defense and first aid. Professional development modules on civil protection exist but are not mandatory to all teachers.

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Topics include human protection in emergencies, civil protection systems, first aid, and safety issues. Most are not mandatory across all teacher profiles; they are obligatory only for specific specialisations (e.g., Health Education) or offered as elective. [12]

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

Preparedness education courses can count toward general continuing professional development requirements, but there is no distinct incentive (e.g., salary supplement) linked specifically to preparedness. Evidence of systematic linkage is lacking in available documentation.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Teacher surveys included in the Czech School Inspectorate thematic report ‘Education in Safety-Related Topics’ (‘Vzdělávání v bezpečnostních tématech’) indicates that only a minority of teachers reported receiving formal training related to safety, crisis management and emergency behavior.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Dedicated ‘Module J – Civil Protection and Crisis Management for Teachers’ for in-service teachers.
-  Faculties of Education integrating emergency protection themes into Health Education courses.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Preparedness training is not mandatory across teacher categories.
-  Future teachers report knowledge gaps and limited practical training in preparedness education.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

External evaluation of schools in Czechia is carried out by the Czech School Inspectorate, which conducts thematic inspections and publishes reports on selected topics, including safety and protection of people in emergencies. The national curriculum framework does not define specific preparedness learning indicators, but it does set expected outcomes for safety-related competencies in Health Education and other areas, including responsible behavior during situations which threaten students' health and personal safety and during emergencies.

A 2016 thematic report 'Education in Safety Related Topics' examined how schools implement the 'Protection of People in Common Risks and Emergencies' – compulsory content within the FEP BE – across pre-school, basic and secondary education. The report found that while schools usually have required documentation (emergency plans, evacuation procedures), the educational dimension (systematic teaching, regular practice and reflection with students) is less developed and varies widely between schools.[13] Recent empirical studies assessing students' knowledge of emergency protection show mixed results, indicating incomplete mastery of key concepts (e.g., understanding of the Integrated Rescue System). [14]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

The Czech School Inspectorate has conducted thematic evaluation of safety and emergency protection education, though routine inspections still focus strongly on documentation and compliance. There is no systematic assessment of student learning outcomes, classroom practices, or educational use of drills and simulations.

Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

There is no dedicated preparedness-related indicator framework, only indirectly via curriculum outcomes in Health Education and related areas.

Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

Research has identified gaps in pupils' knowledge and recommends strengthening teaching methods (e.g., simulations). However, there is limited evidence that these findings systematically inform curriculum or professional development revisions.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

The Czech School Inspectorate conducts both regular and thematic inspections under the Education

Act to monitor school quality. These inspections collect and analyse data on conditions, teaching processes, and outcomes, and thematic evaluations focus on specific issues such as safety or health protection. While not directly linked to preparedness education, this framework provides scope for incorporating preparedness-related indicators into future inspection and monitoring practices.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 Lack of explicit disaster preparedness indicator in the national QA framework.
- 🟡 Inspection findings and academic reviews highlight gaps in how safety and emergency-protection topics are taught in schools, but these findings are not systematically incorporated into national curriculum.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

Summary of Context:

Czechia's national disaster-risk governance is anchored in the Population Protection Concept, the Disaster Risk Management Summary Report and the National Platform for DRR, overseen by the MoI and HZSČ of Czechia. These documents stress prevention, preparedness and public awareness, and recognise schools as important venues for informing and training the population. The education-sector 'Strategy for Education Policy of the Czechia 2030+' focuses on competence-based education, reducing inequalities and supporting teachers. However, it does not define disaster preparedness as a stand-alone strategic priority but emphasises active citizenship, problem solving, and resilience, which can support preparedness.[15] Climate and environmental strategies (e.g., the State Program for Environmental Education and Awareness) include targets for climate-change education and awareness raising, but disaster-specific preparedness in schools remains mainly under civil-protection policy.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?**

Czechia does not have an education-specific disaster preparedness strategy. Preparedness education is addressed indirectly through disaster population-protection strategies and curriculum requirements on protection of people in emergencies.

- 🟡 **Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?**

Available national strategies emphasise modernisation of education and strengthening safety/health education, but no specific preparedness education curriculum reform with clear timelines is publicly documented.

- 🟡 **Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?**

Civil-protection legislation requires schools to have emergency and evacuation plans and to conduct regular drills, guided by population-protection guidelines.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 The Czech national education policy, formalised in Strategy for Education Policy of Czechia 2030+, provides a forward-looking framework that emphasises competence-based, inclusive and resilient education, setting the structural prerequisites for integrating disaster-risk education into curricula and school development plans. Its long-term roadmap (2023–2027) offers an opportunity to coordinate preparedness education content with broader reforms in teaching methods, teacher support and equity-oriented education reform.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 No integrated education-sector disaster preparedness roadmap linking curriculum, teacher education, QA and school planning.
- 🍌 Disaster preparedness in schools remains largely framed as civil-protection compliance, not as a comprehensive learning agenda.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education in Czechia involves strong engagement of civil-protection actors, especially FRS, which develops teaching materials, runs programs and coordinates the various educational initiatives. Local FRS units offer experiential programs for school groups. Municipalities play an important role through local civil protection planning and coordination of drills. Parents are usually involved indirectly through school communication on safety and emergency procedures. International organisations have supported broader risk-reduction, climate, and resilience initiatives. Czechia participates in EU civil-protection cooperation and hosts a National Platform for DRR, which connects governmental, scientific and sometimes educational stakeholders. [16]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Collaboration with FRS and local civil-protection units is well established; cooperation with municipalities and parents exists but is less systematically documented.

- 🍌 **Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

Some programs use interactive and experiential approaches (e.g., games, simulations), but systematic involvement of children and vulnerable groups in planning or evaluating preparedness activities is not well evidenced.

- 🍌 **What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?**

International organisations are mainly involved in broader education and climate/DRR policy dialogues and comparative studies; direct implementation of DRR curricula in basic schools appears limited in current documentation.

 Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multi-sectoral cooperation is present through the National Platform for DRR and participation in EU civil-protection mechanisms.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Long-term cooperation between HZSČ and schools via various programs, including Comprehensive materials for teaching topics on human protection during common risks and emergencies in primary schools and ‘Firefighters in Schools’, direct outreach to schools and in-person visits by trained firefighters

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Engagement is program-driven and locally uneven, without a unified national framework for school-stakeholder collaboration on disaster preparedness education. References and Data Sources (List format)

References and Data Sources

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

ESTONIA

Acronyms and abbreviations

CNTA	Cooperation Network of Teachers
CPRDC	Civil Protection Research and Development Centre
EDRA	Estonian Defence Resources Agency
ESLA	Estonian School Leaders' Association
MoER	Ministry of Education and Research
MoI	Ministry of the Interior

Estonia, EU Member

This case study showcases a highly structured, expert-led, but non-mandatory approach to integrating preparedness education. Estonia's model is characterised by the recent development of a comprehensive, multi-agency Civil Protection Competency Model, which provides a detailed, age-appropriate framework for schools. However, its success is entirely dependent on voluntary adoption by educators, highlighting a potential gap between the availability of high-quality, centralised resources and their actual implementation in the classroom.[5]

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Estonia's education system is structured into:

(i) Early Childhood Education (koolieelne haridus): For children up to age 7 (ISCED 0), provided in preschool child care institutions (lasteaeed);

(ii) Primary Education: A single structure covering grades 1-9 (ISCED 1).[2]

The country's risk profile includes potential disruptions from extreme weather, technological failures, and geopolitical instability. Historically, safety education has been integrated through broad, cross-curricular themes.[2] A significant development occurred in June 2025 with the introduction of a new national Civil Protection Competency Model.[1] This framework was developed by a multi-agency working group, led by the Estonian Rescue Services Agency and including key government bodies as well as the Estonian School Leaders' Association (ESLA) and the Cooperation Network of Teachers' Associations (CNTA), to systematically integrate crisis preparedness into the education system.[1]

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.)

The integration of preparedness education in Estonia is structured as follows:

(i) Formal, Mandatory Requirement: The national curriculum includes a broad, cross-curricular leading topic of 'Health and Safety,'[2] which is mandatory for all students from primary education onwards (ISCED 1-3), while early childhood education (ISCED 0) follows separate national guidelines that address safety through play-based developmental goals. However, its application to disaster preparedness is general and not prescribed in detail.

(ii) Recommended, Non-Binding Guidance: The new 'Civil Protection Competency Model' (June 2025) serves as the primary framework for preparedness education. It is explicitly defined as official "support material" for schools to integrate into their teaching plans, providing a detailed, structured approach that is strongly recommended but not compulsory. [1,3]

(iii) Voluntary Initiatives: The implementation of the Competency Model relies on voluntary adoption by individual schools and teachers.

The model itself is divided into five age-appropriate stages[3], including a dedicated stage for early childhood education, ensuring a differentiated pedagogical approach. In practice, the model recommends that preparedness

content be delivered through age-appropriate methods such as play-based learning and storytelling in early childhood, and through practical exercises, simulations, and cross-curricular project work in primary education, as detailed further in the following section on teaching materials and classroom tools.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Disaster preparedness is referenced in national curricula, but indirectly and through a new, non-mandatory framework.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

The national curriculum for primary schools (2024) does not explicitly mention disaster preparedness, civil protection, or crisis management. Instead, it contains a broad, cross-curricular leading topic of ‘Health and Safety’.[2] The newly introduced Civil Protection Competency Model provides the first explicit and detailed reference, but it is a supportive framework rather than a compulsory curriculum document. The Civil Protection Competency Model is comprehensive, covering six key dimensions of preparedness: understanding different risks and crises, hazard communication and crisis information, preparing for and acting during a crisis, sheltering, large-scale evacuation, and psychological first aid. [1,3]

Is integration mandatory or optional?

The integration of preparedness education is optional. The national curriculum’s “Health and Safety” topic is a mandatory cross-curricular theme, but its specific application to disaster preparedness is not prescribed. The new Civil Protection Competency Model is explicitly defined as ‘support material’ for educators, and its adoption is at the discretion of individual schools and teachers.[1]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The Civil Protection Competency Model is a notable practice, providing a clear, age-appropriate progression of knowledge, skills, and attitudes from early childhood through to the end of primary education.

 The model breaks down complex topics into manageable learning outcomes for each of the three basic school stages (Stages I–III), such as knowing emergency numbers (Stage I), understanding the need for home supplies (Stage II), and acting independently based on crisis instructions (Stage III).

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 The non-mandatory nature of the detailed framework means that its impact will depend entirely on voluntary adoption by schools and teachers, leading to inconsistent implementation across the country.

 There is a gap between the existence of a highly detailed competency model and its formal integration into the binding national curriculum, creating a reliance on teacher initiative.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

The provision of teaching materials is directly linked to the Civil Protection Competency Model. Estonian Rescue Services Agency, as the key stakeholder, led the development of official materials to support the model's implementation.[3] The pedagogy is designed to be interactive and competency-based, moving beyond simple knowledge transfer. For example, the 'illustrative supplementary material' provides practical, age-appropriate activities and scenarios for each of the five school stages.[3] For early childhood, the approach is play-based, focusing on foundational skills like recognising emergency numbers. For older students, the pedagogy becomes more scenario-based and analytical, requiring them to apply knowledge in simulated crisis situations. The use of these materials is optional, but they provide a clear pedagogical pathway for teachers who choose to adopt the model.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

All teaching materials related to the Civil Protection Competency Model are optional. They are provided as official support resources for teachers who choose to cover these topics. There are no mandatory textbooks or classroom tools for disaster preparedness in the national curriculum.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

The materials are developed centrally by Estonian Rescue Services Agency in collaboration with the multi-agency group that created the competency model, including the Ministry of Education and Research (MoER). [1] This ensures that the content is reliable and aligned with national civil protection strategies.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Materials are disseminated digitally through the official websites of Estonian Rescue Services Agency and other government channels.[3] The resources are available as printable documents, including the main competency model and an 'illustrative supplementary material' document, making them accessible to all educators nationwide.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The provision of supporting materials by the Estonian Rescue Services Agency is a good practice. While the document formally titled 'illustrative supplementary material' is a one-page visual summary of the framework, the same authority provides a rich repository of separate, age-appropriate practical resources, including downloadable worksheets, classroom activities, and videos for teachers.

 Centralising the development and dissemination of materials through ERB ensures that the information provided to schools is accurate, up-to-date, and consistent with national safety protocols.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 Use of these high-quality, centrally developed materials is entirely voluntary, which may limit their reach and impact.
- 🟡 As the initiative is new, information is not yet publicly available regarding the extent to which these new materials have been tested in real classroom environments or adapted based on teacher feedback.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teacher education and professional development in Estonia do not currently feature preparedness education as a systematic component. The national framework for initial teacher education is based on a set of professional qualification standards that detail compulsory and optional competencies for new teachers. These standards, last updated in December 2023, define a set of mandatory competencies, including learner support, lesson planning, teaching and reflection, cooperation, and professional development, as well as two optional competencies (supporting learners with special educational needs, and digital education).[7] Notably, none of these competencies include crisis management, civil protection, or safety education. The focus is on general pedagogical skills, learner support, and professional reflection. While continuing professional development opportunities exist within the Estonian education system, there is no evidence of a structured, nationwide program specifically designed to train teachers on how to teach disaster preparedness or use the new Civil Protection Competency Model. The Estonian Academy of Security Sciences provides degree-level and continuing training in crisis management through its Civil Protection Research and Development Centre (CPRDC), but this is aimed at civil protection professionals and emergency responders, not general education teachers.[4]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?**

Disaster preparedness is not a formal part of initial teacher training. The compulsory and optional competencies for new teachers do not include disaster preparedness. Information on whether specific continuous professional development courses are available for teachers following the launch of the new Civil Protection Competency Model was not publicly available, though the model itself is intended as a tool for educators.

- 🟡 **What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?**

There is no mandatory training for teachers in this area. Since the topic is not part of the initial teacher training curriculum and the new competency model is optional, there is no corresponding mandatory training requirement.

- 🟡 **Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?**

There is no evidence that completion of training leads to certification, points, or salary increase.

- 🟡 **What is the reach and uptake among teachers?**

Information on the reach or uptake of any related training is not available, particularly as the formal competency model was only introduced in June 2025.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🟡 The Estonian Academy of Security Sciences has a CPRDC which indicates a high level of national expertise in the field, even if it is not yet systematically transferred to general teacher education.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 The most significant gap is the absence of preparedness education from the initial teacher education framework. New teachers are not systematically equipped with the skills to teach this topic.
- 🟡 There is a lack of a clear, structured CPD pathway for in-service teachers to gain competence in using the new Civil Protection Competency Model.
- 🟡 Without dedicated training, the quality and confidence with which teachers implement the optional materials may vary significantly.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Estonia has a well-defined quality assurance system for education, which includes both state supervision and school-level internal evaluation. State supervision, conducted by MoER, checks for compliance with legal acts regulating teaching and education activities, and examines the overall teaching and upbringing environment through methods such as analysing statistical reports, examining school documents, and conducting conversations with staff and students. Schools are also required to conduct internal evaluations and produce a report at least once during their development plan period, which typically spans four to six years, using national performance indicators as a basis. As of November 2023, the official quality assurance framework does not include any specific indicators or inspection criteria related to the implementation of preparedness education. The focus of both external and internal evaluation is curriculum compliance, learning outcomes, and the general well-being and satisfaction of students and teachers, rather than specific crisis management competencies. This means that even with the introduction of the new Civil Protection Competency Model, there is currently no formal mechanism to monitor or evaluate its implementation in schools.[8]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Preparedness education is not specified as a distinct domain within the state supervision (inspection) framework. While inspectors may examine the general 'teaching and upbringing environment', there are no dedicated criteria for assessing the quality or presence of preparedness education.[8]

- Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

There are no national performance indicators or formal quality assurance frameworks specifically for preparedness education in schools. The existing indicators focus on metrics like student absence, use of digital tools, and satisfaction surveys.[8]

- Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective?

While there are feedback loops for general education quality, such as school-specific feedback on satisfaction surveys compared to the national average [8], there is no evidence of a feedback loop specifically for disaster preparedness education. It is unclear how the effectiveness of the new, optional Civil Protection Competency Model will be monitored or evaluated.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Estonia's system of regular internal evaluation, supported by national performance indicators and a public data portal (HaridusSilm), provides a strong existing structure that could potentially incorporate safety and preparedness indicators in the future.[8]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- The primary gap is the complete absence of disaster preparedness from the quality assurance framework. There is no mechanism to monitor whether or how schools are implementing the new optional competency model.
- Without inclusion in internal or external evaluations, there is little formal incentive for schools to prioritise this topic.
- There is no available information on how the impact of the new competency model will be assessed, making it difficult to gauge its effectiveness over time.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Estonia's national strategy for disaster preparedness in education is a very recent development, formally taking shape in 2025. The overarching national Education Strategy 2021-2035, which sets out key educational goals for the next fifteen years, mentions safety and crisis situations in broad terms and emphasises the importance of a safe learning environment and high-level professional preparedness for teachers, but does not specifically outline preparedness education as a strategic goal.[6] The key strategic document in this specific domain is the Civil Protection Competency Model, which was developed by a multi-agency task force and announced in June 2025 for implementation starting in the 2025/2026 academic year.[1] This represents the country's plan to move from a general concept of safety to a structured, competency-based educational approach that systematically builds resilience from early childhood through to the end of primary education. The strategy relies on providing high-

quality, optional support materials to schools rather than enforcing a top-down mandate, reflecting a trust in the professionalism and autonomy of educators. Separately, Estonian authorities provide guidelines for schools on creating emergency plans, which focus on institutional preparedness, including instructions for creating crisis teams and communicating in emergency situations. However, the relationship between these school-level emergency plans and the new educational competency model is not explicitly defined in the available documentation.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?**

There is a national strategy embodied by the new Civil Protection Competency Model. While not a binding policy in the legislative sense, it is an official, government-endorsed strategic framework developed by a multi-agency working group to guide the integration of civil protection into education.

- 🟡 **Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?**

The reform is the introduction of the competency model itself, with implementation beginning in the 2025/2026 academic year. Information on whether a pilot phase was conducted prior to the nationwide launch is not publicly available.

- 🟡 **Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?**

The existence of official guidelines for educational institutions' emergency plans is confirmed. These guidelines cover the creation of crisis teams and communication protocols. However, the available information does not specify whether the creation and regular updating of these plans are legally mandatory for all schools.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🟡 The development of the competency model through a collaborative, multi-agency approach (including ERB, ministries, and police) is a strong example of a coordinated national strategy.
- 🟡 The strategy to create a detailed, supportive framework rather than a rigid mandate allows for flexibility and adaptation at the school level.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 The national Education Strategy 2021-2035 lacks a specific focus on disaster preparedness, meaning the new initiative is not anchored in the country's long-term educational vision.
- 🟡 The success of the strategy is heavily dependent on the voluntary engagement of schools and teachers, with no clear alternative if uptake is low.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Stakeholder engagement is a cornerstone of Estonia's new strategy for civil protection education. The very development of the Civil Protection Competency Model was a broad collaborative effort, demonstrating a strong partnership-based approach from the outset. The initiative was led by ERB and co-developed with a wide range of key national stakeholders, including the Ministry of the Interior (MoI), MoER, the Police and Border Guard Board, the Social Insurance Board, the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences (EASS), the Estonian Defence Resources Agency (EDRA), the Cooperation Network of Teachers (CNTA) and ESLA.[1] This nine-agency partnership ensures that the educational framework is aligned with national security, social welfare, and educational policies, and that it reflects the practical realities of classroom teaching.[1] The model is designed to be a tool for schools to use, positioning teachers and school leaders as key partners in implementation. The involvement of teacher associations and the school leaders' association in the development process is particularly noteworthy, as it helps to ensure the framework is practical, relevant, and grounded in pedagogical expertise. While the development process was highly collaborative, the ongoing engagement strategy appears to focus on providing resources and support through official channels, relying on schools to actively participate.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Collaboration is central to the initiative. The competency model was developed in partnership with ERB, MoI, MoER, Police and Border Guard Board, the Social Insurance Board, EASS, EDRA and teacher associations.

Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

The competency model itself is designed to be participatory, with age-appropriate activities and skills-based learning outcomes. However, specific information on national programs like youth volunteer corps or clubs focused on disaster preparedness is not publicly available.

What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

While international organisations were not involved in the development of the national competency model, the Estonian Red Cross plays an active role in preparedness-related education by providing first aid training and prevention work in schools and kindergartens across the country.[9] No systematic involvement of UNICEF, UNESCO, or the OECD in school-based preparedness education was identified.

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

The initiative is primarily a national one, though it aligns with broader EU strategies for societal resilience. The partnership is explicitly multi-sectoral, involving security, social affairs, defense and education sectors.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The creation of a nine-agency working group to develop the competency model is an exemplary practice of a whole-of-government approach to building a national educational framework.
-  Involving teacher associations and SLA in the development process helps to ensure the framework is practical and relevant for educators.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  While development partnerships are strong, there is limited information on the strategy for ongoing, long-term engagement with schools to encourage and support the model's adoption.
-  There is a lack of evidence of partnerships with non-governmental or international organisations that could provide additional resources or expertise.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

FRANCE

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
DSDEN	Departmental Directorate of National Education Services
EU	European Union
IFFO RME	French Institute of Major Risk and Environmental Protection Trainers
MoET	Ministry of Ecological Transition
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MoI	Ministry of Interior
PPMS	Special Safety and Security Plan

France, European Union (EU) Member State

This case study illustrates a highly centralised, state-driven model for preparedness education. It is characterised by a dual strategy that combines mandatory, practical school-level safety plans and drills (PPMS) with formal, curriculum-embedded instruction on risk prevention, which becomes more explicit in later school stages. The French model highlights the strengths of a whole-of-government approach, with clear roles for multiple ministries, but also reveals challenges in ensuring consistent pedagogical integration in early education.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

France has a highly centralised education system, with a national curriculum established by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). Schooling is compulsory from age 3 to age 16. The country is exposed to a range of natural hazards, including major floods, storms, forest fires, and seismic risks. This risk profile has driven a two-decade evolution of school safety policy.

The country's approach to preparedness is characterised by a dual strategy: a formal, curriculum-based education on major risks, and a mandatory, practical preparedness plan for every school. The legal framework for preparedness education has evolved significantly over time. The mandatory Special Safety and Security Plan (Plan Particulier de Mise en Sûreté; PPMS) was first introduced in 2002, establishing mandatory safety plans for all schools.[2] The Law on the Modernisation of Civil Security (Loi n° 2004-811 du 13 août 2004 de modernisation de la sécurité civile) subsequently strengthened the broader framework for preparedness education.[2] The current framework is governed by the Circulaire of 8 June 2023, which unified previous separate plans into a single PPMS. [2] This is implemented through two complementary pillars: the integration of preparedness education into disciplinary teaching, and the mandatory implementation of the unified PPMS in every school, which includes regular exercises for major risks and security threats. France was selected for this study to examine a model that combines both theoretical curriculum integration and practical, mandatory school-level preparedness planning.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

In France, the integration of preparedness education is structured into three distinct tiers. This structure varies significantly between early childhood and primary education. For early childhood education (ages 3-6; ISCED 0), preparedness is addressed indirectly through general safety skills rather than explicit instruction.[1] For primary education (ages 6-11; ISCED 1), the approach is a mix of three tiers:

(i) Formal, Mandatory Curricular Requirements: While the legal framework mandates safety education, specific disaster risk content is introduced only in Cycle 4 (grades 7-9), beyond the primary education level. Therefore, mandatory curricular requirements remain limited.

(ii) Recommended, Non-Binding Guidance: MoE, through its Eduscol portal, provides official guidance for teachers.[1] This serves as a recommended framework but does not mandate specific content for primary school cycles.

(iii) Voluntary, Project-Based Initiatives: The most in-depth content for primary schools comes from high-quality, optional resources like the 'When the Earth Rumbles' (Quand la Terre gronde) project.[3] The use of these materials

depends entirely on individual teacher or school initiative.

This creates a distinction between the curriculum-embedded themes in later cycles and the practical, drill-based training overlays of the PPMS, which are mandatory for all school levels.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Disaster preparedness is referenced in the national curriculum, most explicitly in the Geography program for Cycle 4 (grades 7-9), which includes a mandatory theme on Preventing risks, adapting to global change'. [4]

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

The dimensions covered include natural hazards (via optional resources like 'When the Earth Rumbles'), industrial and technological risks, and the effects of global change. The mandatory PPMS exercises also cover security threats like intrusions.[2]

Is integration mandatory or optional?

The integration is a mix of mandatory and optional components. The theme on risk prevention in the Cycle 4 Geography curriculum is mandatory, while more comprehensive pedagogical resources for primary schools, such as the 'When the Earth Rumbles' project, are optional and their use depends on individual teacher or school initiative.[3]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The official curriculum for grades 7-9 Geography includes a dedicated, mandatory theme on risk prevention and adaptation to global change, ensuring all students receive a baseline level of instruction.

 The existence of high-quality, optional pedagogical resources like 'When the Earth Rumbles' provides a framework for in-depth, project-based learning on natural hazards for primary schools that choose to implement it.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 Systematic and mandatory integration of preparedness education is absent in the early primary school cycles (Cycles 1 and 2, and early Cycle 3), with the core mandatory component only appearing in grades 7-9.

 The reliance on optional resources for comprehensive natural hazard education in primary schools leads to inconsistent implementation and depends heavily on the initiative of individual teachers and the availability of local support.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

France provides a mix of official and non-governmental teaching materials. MoNE is the key stakeholder responsible for ensuring the overall consistency and accuracy of official guidance provided via its Eduscol platform.[1] However, for detailed pedagogical content, it relies on external partners. For early childhood education (ages 3-6), no specific, nationally-endorsed materials for preparedness education exist, with pedagogy focused on play-based learning of general safety rules.

For primary education (ages 6-11), the approach is twofold. First, the mandatory PPMS exercises represent a drill-based, procedural pedagogy, focused on practicing physical actions (e.g., evacuation, confinement) in response to a signal. Second, optional resources like 'When the Earth Rumbles', developed by the Fondation La main à la pâte; a science education foundation established in 1996 by Nobel laureate Georges Charpak under the auspices of the French Academy of Sciences (Académie des sciences), offer an experiential and inquiry-based pedagogy.[3] These materials are designed to be turnkey, providing teachers with structured lesson plans, scientific activities, role-playing, and simulations. As these are voluntary resources developed outside the official PPMS framework, their use depends entirely on teacher initiative. This dual-source model creates a situation where the pedagogy can vary from purely procedural drills to rich, project-based learning, depending on teacher initiative.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

The use of specific teaching materials is generally optional. While curriculum themes are mandatory, teachers have pedagogical freedom to choose their resources, and the comprehensive materials from La main à la pâte are explicitly optional.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Materials are developed by both governmental and non-governmental bodies. MoNE provides official guidance, while expert organisations like the La main à la pâte Foundation develop detailed pedagogical kits.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Dissemination is primarily digital, with the Ministry's resources on the Eduscol portal and the La main à la pâte materials available for free online, ensuring wide accessibility.[3]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The 'When the Earth Rumbles' project is an example of a high-quality, multidisciplinary resource that combines scientific inquiry with practical, action-oriented learning, and is available for free to all teachers.

- 🟡 The dual-source model allows for official, government-sanctioned frameworks to be complemented by innovative, in-depth resources from specialised educational foundations.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 The lack of a single, mandatory set of teaching materials for primary education leads to inconsistency in the quality and scope of preparedness education delivered across the country.
- 🟡 Teachers may lack the time or awareness to find and implement the high-quality optional resources, leading to a potential gap between the availability of materials and their actual use in the classroom.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education is not a systematic component of initial teacher education for either early childhood (ages 3-6) or primary education (ages 6-11) teachers. The main driver of this effort is the national network of trainers for Major Risks Education (RMé), managed by the French Institute of Major Risk and Environmental Protection Trainers (Institut Français des Formateurs Risques Majeurs et protection de l'Environnement; IFFO-RME) - a non-governmental organisation established in 1991 in partnership with the Ministry of Ecological Transition (MoET).[5] This network focuses on developing a cadre of expert trainers who then support the implementation of the mandatory school safety plans (PPMS) at the local level. The training sessions are intensive, lasting five days, and are open to both risk prevention professionals and National Education personnel. While National Education personnel can apply for these intensive training sessions, the limited number of places (around 50-75 per year, with 2-3 sessions of 25 participants each) means that direct, in-depth training does not reach most teachers. Existing training is highly specialised, focusing on risk management, crisis communication, and PPMS procedures, rather than on the pedagogical integration of preparedness education into the curriculum. The curriculum for these sessions includes theoretical knowledge on major risks (natural, technological, nuclear), risk management frameworks, PPMS implementation and exercises, operational devices, and the development of a trainer posture. Participants who complete the training become certified members of the national IFFO RME network.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?**
Disaster preparedness is not systematically part of initial teacher education. It is available as a highly specialised and optional form of continuous professional development through the IFFO-RME train-the-trainer program, which is highly selective.[5]
- 🟡 **What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?**

Training is optional, with teachers or other education personnel needing to proactively apply for the limited national training sessions.

- 🟡 **Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?**

Completion of the IFFO-RME five-day training program leads to certification as a member of the national RME network of trainers, but there is no evidence of direct links to salary increases or other universal incentives.[5]

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

The reach of this training is extremely limited, with a maximum of 75 individuals trained annually at the national level to become trainers.[5]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The train-the-trainer model, while limited in reach, creates a network of highly specialised experts who, upon certification, serve as regional multipliers providing training, guidance, and support on PPMS implementation to other teachers and school staff within their respective academies (académies).
-  The partnership between IFFO-RME and MoET ensures that the training content is aligned with national risk management policies and expertise.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  The lack of systematic integration into initial teacher education means that new teachers are not equipped with the foundational knowledge to teach preparedness education.
-  The extremely limited reach of the continuous professional development program means that the vast majority of in-service teachers do not receive any formal training on this topic.
-  The training focuses on the procedural aspects of PPMS rather than on the pedagogical skills needed to integrate preparedness education into the curriculum effectively.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance for preparedness education in France is adapted to the developmental stage of the children. The key stakeholders and their responsibilities differ by school level. For primary schools (écoles), the Departmental Directorate of National Education Services (Direction des Services Départementaux de l'Éducation Nationale; DSDEN) is responsible for elaborating the PPMS, in consultation with school directors, who have six weeks to provide observations and propose modifications. For secondary schools (collèges and lycées), the head of establishment (chef d'établissement) is responsible for elaborating and validating the PPMS. In both cases, the local municipality and emergency services collaborate on the plan's development to ensure alignment with local risk contexts. For both early childhood (ages 3-6) and primary education (ages 6-11), the framework is focused on the procedural compliance of the PPMS. However, the approach differs significantly in practice. In primary education, monitoring focuses on the correct execution of drills. In early childhood education (école maternelle), the focus is on ensuring that safety procedures are integrated in a play-based and reassuring manner,

acknowledging the specific emotional needs of young children. The emphasis is less on performance and more on creating a culture of safety through routines. The legal framework mandates a minimum of two PPMS exercises per school year, covering both major risk and security threat scenarios. A notable quality improvement was introduced by the Circulaire of 8 June 2023, which merged the previously separate plans for major risks and security threats into a single, unified PPMS, simplifying procedures and reducing the administrative burden on school directors.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Disaster preparedness is part of school inspections, but only in the context of verifying the existence and procedural compliance of the PPMS.[2]

Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

There are no specific indicators or frameworks to assess the quality of pedagogical integration of risk education.

Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

The primary evidence of feedback loops is the 2023 reform that merged the two PPMS plans into one, which was a direct response to feedback from school directors who found the dual-plan system too complex and burdensome.[2]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The mandate for two annual safety exercises, including one for security threats, ensures that all schools regularly practice and test their emergency procedures.
-  The 2023 simplification of the PPMS framework demonstrates a responsive governance system that adapts based on feedback from school-level practitioners.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  The quality assurance system is focused on procedural compliance (having a plan, running drills) rather than on educational outcomes (what students learn).
-  There is a lack of standardised tools or criteria to evaluate the quality of preparedness education being delivered in the classroom.
-  It is unclear how the effectiveness of the PPMS exercises in building student and staff preparedness is measured beyond simple participation.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

France's national strategy for preparedness education has evolved since the introduction of the PPMS in 2002, with the 2004 law on civil security modernisation strengthening the broader framework. However, its operationalisation through the dual approach of curriculum integration and the mandatory PPMS is tailored to different age groups. For primary education, the strategy relies on a combination of curriculum mandates in later cycles and the practical implementation of the PPMS. For early childhood education, where explicit instruction is not the focus, the strategy is primarily realised through the PPMS, which is designed to build foundational safety habits in a non-anxiety-provoking way. The strategy is driven by a multi-sectoral collaboration between the MoNE, the MoI, and the MoET. Future plans focus on refining existing mechanisms, such as the 2023 fusion of the PPMS plans, to improve practical usability.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or disaster risk management (DRM)-related strategies?

France has a well-established national policy for disaster preparedness in education, with the PPMS framework introduced in 2002 and strengthened by subsequent legislation including the 2004 law on civil security modernisation and the 2023 unified PPMS circulaire.[2]

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

The most significant recent reform is the 2023 fusion of the two PPMS plans (major risks and security threats) into a single, unified plan.[2] Implementation began in the 2023/2024 school year with a progressive rollout: for primary schools (écoles), the DSDEN renews PPMS at a rate of at least one-fifth per year, prioritising schools most exposed to hazards.[2] Secondary schools (collèges and lycées) must adopt the unified PPMS by the 2027/2028 school year at the latest. Full implementation across all schools is scheduled to be completed before September 2028.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Emergency preparedness plans are mandated for all schools, with a legal requirement to conduct two exercises per year.[2] The plans must be developed in collaboration with local municipalities and emergency services, and templates are provided by the Ministry to ensure consistency.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 The legal mandate for PPMS in all schools, established in 2002 and reinforced by subsequent legislation, provides a strong and consistent national framework for school-level preparedness.
- 🍌 The 2023 reform to merge the two PPMS plans demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to practitioner feedback.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 While the PPMS framework is strong, there is less clarity on the long-term strategy for systematically integrating preparedness education into the curriculum for younger children (Cycles 1-3).
- 🍌 Plans for scaling up teacher training beyond the limited train-the-trainer model are not evident in the available documentation.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Stakeholder engagement is characterised by strong multi-sectoral collaboration at the national level and practical partnerships at the local level. This engagement is relevant for both early childhood and primary education. The development and implementation of the PPMS framework involves coordination between the MoNE, the MoI (civil security), and the MoET (environmental risks). At the school level, the creation of the PPMS requires collaboration between the school director, the local municipality, and emergency services such as the fire department and police. This ensures that the plans are tailored to the specific local risk context and that schools have direct links to the operational emergency response system. Non-governmental organisations and foundations also play a significant role, particularly in the development of pedagogical resources. The La main à la pâte Foundation, for example, is a key partner in providing high-quality, free educational materials on natural hazards. The IFFO-RME institute, while working closely with the MoET, operates as a specialised training provider for the national network of trainers. This multi-level, multi-sectoral approach creates a robust ecosystem for disaster preparedness, though the effectiveness of these partnerships in reaching every classroom remains variable.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

There is strong collaboration with civil protection and emergency services at both the national policy level and the local implementation level. The PPMS framework mandates that school directors work with local fire departments, police, and municipalities to develop context-specific plans.[2]

- 🍌 **Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

Participatory methods for children and youth are embedded in pedagogical resources such as the 'When the Earth Rumbles' project, which uses role-playing, simulations, and practical exercises to engage students.

[3] However, information on structured national programs like youth volunteer corps specifically focused on disaster preparedness was not available.

 What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

International organisations are not prominently featured in the available documentation, with the approach being primarily national and driven by French ministries and foundations.

 Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multi-sectoral partnerships are a defining feature, with the MoNE, MoI, and MoET working together alongside foundations like La main à la pâte and specialised institutes like IFFO-RME. [5]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The mandatory collaboration between schools and local emergency services in developing the PPMS ensures that plans are realistic, context-specific, and operationally sound.
-  The partnership between MoNE, and the La main à la pâte Foundation exemplifies how government and non-governmental expertise can be combined to create high-quality educational resources.[3]
-  The multi-ministerial approach (Education, Interior, Ecological Transition) ensures a whole-of-government strategy for building societal resilience.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  While partnerships at the policy and local levels are strong, there is less evidence of systematic engagement with international organisations or participation in transnational knowledge exchange networks.
-  The effectiveness of local partnerships may vary depending on the capacity and resources of individual municipalities and emergency services.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

GERMANY

Acronyms and abbreviations

BKK	Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance
DRM	disaster risk management
EU	European Union
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoI	Ministry of Interior
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
THW	Federal Agency for Technical Relief
ZSL	Center for School Quality and Teacher Education

Germany, European Union (EU) Member State

This case study illustrates a highly decentralised approach where preparedness education is driven by federal state (Länder) initiatives rather than a binding federal mandate. The German model highlights the challenge of implementing a coherent national strategy within a federal structure, where the primary responsibility for education lies with individual states. It also underscores the structural separation between the formal school system and early childhood education, which operates under a different legal framework (child and youth welfare services), creating distinct challenges for systemic integration.

Brief Context (100–150 words):

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Germany's education system is federally structured, with the 16 states holding primary responsibility. The system is broadly divided into: (i) Early Childhood Education and Care which is provided in daycare centers (Kindertagesstätten or Kitas), part of the child and youth welfare services, not the formal school system; and (ii) Primary Education (Grundschule), typically grades 1-4.[6]

Germany's risk profile includes floods and extreme weather. While a national strategy (2022) recommends integrating preparedness education, its implementation is contingent on the state. [2] This case study examines this decentralised approach, focusing on emerging state-level initiatives and the ongoing national debate.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

In Germany, education is a prerogative of the 16 federal states, resulting in a decentralised and varied approach to preparedness education.[6] There is no uniform, nationwide mandate for its integration into school curricula. Instead, the approach is best understood through two key distinctions: the educational level (early childhood vs. primary) and the method of delivery (curriculum-embedded vs. training overlays).

In early childhood education (ages 3-6; ISCED 0), preparedness is not addressed through formal instruction. The focus is on foundational, play-based learning of personal safety, such as traffic awareness and basic first aid, often supported by local police or aid organisations. There is no curriculum-embedded content on disaster risks. Primary education (ages 6-10; ISCED 1) includes curriculum-embedded integration. The national 'German Strategy for Strengthening Resilience to Disasters' (2022) recommends integrating preparedness topics, while state-level curricula provide cross-curricular anchor points [1], for example in geography (weather hazards) and social studies (Sachunterricht).[2] However, implementation is largely left to teacher discretion.

The most common form of preparedness education occurs as practical, extra-curricular training. This includes voluntary first-aid programs run by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (e.g., the German Red Cross' 'Juniorhelfer' program) and mandatory, procedural safety drills (e.g., fire evacuation). Some states, like Baden-Württemberg, have created mandatory overlays, such as a compulsory civil protection action day for grade 6, which bridges the gap between voluntary and fully curriculum-embedded approaches.[4]

KEY QUESTIONS:



Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness education is not explicitly or uniformly referenced. The national resilience strategy (2022) provides recommendations, but implementation is a state matter.[2] For early childhood, the focus is on general safety skills within the framework of youth welfare services, not a formal curriculum.

- 🍌 **What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)**

Dimensions of preparedness education vary by state. For example, in Baden-Württemberg, topics include natural hazards, first aid, and civic resilience. [1]

- 🍌 **Is integration mandatory or optional?**

Integration is largely optional and dependent on state-level policies. A recent federal-level proposal (late October 2025) to introduce more structured crisis preparedness training remains a topic of debate and has not been implemented, as curriculum remains a state prerogative.[5]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 The state of Baden-Württemberg has implemented a comprehensive concept for anchoring disaster preparedness in school curricula since the 2023/2024 school year, developed jointly by its Ministry of the Interior (MoI) and Ministry of Education (MoE).[1] The concept covers primary education (Grundschule) and all secondary school types, providing teaching materials for each level and a mandatory annual civil protection action day for grade 6.[4] Early childhood education is not included in this framework.
- 🍌 Existing state curricula (e.g. the 2016 Bildungsplan in Baden-Württemberg) offer numerous cross-curricular anchor points for addressing preparedness within subjects like geography, social studies, and science.[1]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 The highly decentralised education system presents a significant challenge to the standardised, nationwide implementation of preparedness education.
- 🍌 A lack of binding federal mandates results in inconsistent integration and varying levels of emphasis on preparedness topics across the 16 states.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

The development and dissemination of teaching materials is decentralised, and pedagogy varies accordingly. For early childhood education, the approach is play-based, focusing on teaching basic safety rules and behaviors through daily routines and guided play. In primary schools, pedagogy is often experiential and project-based. For example, the ‘Juniorhelfer’ program uses hands-on first aid training. State-developed materials, like those from the Center for School Quality and Teacher Education (ZSL) in Baden-Württemberg, often use a mix of worksheets, multimedia content, and classroom discussion. [4]

For mandatory activities like the action day in Baden-Württemberg, the pedagogy is highly practical and simulation-based, involving direct interaction with emergency responders.[1]

Supplementary teaching materials on disaster preparedness, unlike textbooks, are not subject to a formal state approval procedure (Schulbuchzulassung). [6] However, materials developed by state institutions such as the ZSL in Baden-Württemberg undergo internal quality assurance as part of their institutional mandate. Materials produced by external organisations, such as NGO-led first aid programs, are not formally validated by education authorities, though they are widely endorsed through official partnerships.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

The use of specific teaching materials for disaster preparedness is generally optional and subject to the discretion of individual schools and teachers.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

In states with dedicated initiatives, such as Baden-Württemberg, materials are developed by state bodies in partnership with MoI. [1]

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

These resources are disseminated digitally via official education portals. They include age-appropriate handbooks, worksheets, and multimedia content (e.g. film clips, posters) covering topics like floods, storms, and appropriate emergency behaviors. Civil protection authorities, such as the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK), also provide informational materials for the public, which can be adapted for educational purposes.[2]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The ZSL in Baden-Württemberg provides a comprehensive suite of digital materials for primary and secondary schools, directly linked to the curriculum and designed for easy integration into subjects like geography and social studies. [4]

 The Junior Helper program equips primary schools with resources to teach age-appropriate first aid, fostering a foundational understanding of emergency response.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 The availability and quality of teaching materials vary significantly across the states, leading to inconsistencies in preparedness education.

 Without a federal mandate, the adoption of these optional resources depends heavily on the initiative of individual teachers and schools, making systematic nationwide implementation difficult.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In line with Germany's federal structure, both initial teacher education and continuous professional development are the responsibility of the individual state. Initial teacher training is typically conducted at higher education institutions, followed by a practical induction phase. Continuous professional development is offered through state-level institutions and other providers. There is no national, standardised requirement for disaster preparedness to be included in teacher education.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Preparedness is not systematically addressed in initial teacher training programs nationwide. Resilience to Disasters explicitly recommends developing educational approaches for teachers and early childhood professionals, indicating a recognised gap in this area. [2]

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Where the topic is addressed, it is typically through optional continuous professional development courses or state-specific initiatives rather than mandatory modules. The topics and skills covered vary by programme but generally fall into three categories: (i) first aid and resuscitation, such as the Lions Save Lives (Löwen retten Leben) initiative in Baden-Württemberg, which trains teachers to deliver CPR instruction to students [1]; (ii) psychosocial crisis management, through specialised training offered to members of school crisis teams on topics such as trauma response, communication in emergencies, and post-crisis support [1]; and (iii) disaster preparedness knowledge, through state-level programs linked to the implementation of civil protection action days, where participating teachers receive preparatory briefings on local hazards, emergency procedures, and cooperation with rescue services. [4] None of these courses are mandatory at the federal level.

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

There is no evidence to suggest that participation in such courses is formally linked to teacher certification, points systems, or salary progression.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Uptake is dependent on state priorities and individual teacher or school engagement.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The state-level initiative Lions Save Lives in Baden-Württemberg provides a model for practical, life-saving skills training for teachers. [1]

 The provision of dedicated training for school-internal crisis teams in Baden-Württemberg

demonstrates a structured approach to building capacity for emergency response within the school administration. [1]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 A lack of integration of disaster risk management as a core component within initial teacher training curricula across the States.
- 🟡 CPD offerings related to disaster preparedness are fragmented and not systematically available to all teachers nationwide.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance in the German school system is a function of the federal state and involves a combination of internal school self-evaluation and external school inspections. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs coordinates efforts to ensure comparability and quality development, but the operational responsibility remains with the states.[6] Monitoring frameworks focus on core academic competencies and overall school development.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?**

Preparedness education is not a distinct domain within standard school inspection frameworks.

- 🟡 **Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?**

While school safety and the existence of emergency plans may be reviewed, the systematic evaluation of student learning outcomes in preparedness education is not common practice.

- 🟡 **Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?**

There are no established national indicators or frameworks specifically designed to assess the impact of preparedness education on students' knowledge, skills, or behaviors. Feedback loops to inform curriculum development based on the effectiveness of these activities appear to be informal and localised.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🟡 The mandate for schools in Baden-Württemberg to create a detailed crisis plan and share it with local

police, fire departments, and school authorities represents a concrete quality assurance measure for operational readiness. [1]

- 🟡 The planned active monitoring of the implementation of the annual action day in Baden-Württemberg is a step towards systematic tracking of preparedness activities.[3]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 The absence of preparedness-related topics as a formal component of external school evaluations limits accountability and systematic improvement.
- 🟡 There is a lack of standardised indicators and assessment tools to measure the effectiveness of preparedness education at the student level.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Germany's approach to disaster resilience is guided by the 'German Strategy for Strengthening Resilience to Disasters', adopted in 2022.[2] This national strategy serves as the implementation plan for the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and promotes an integrated, whole-of-society approach.[2] While it provides a federal vision, its implementation in the education sector is contingent on the actions of the states.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or disaster risk management (DRM)-related strategies?**

The national strategy explicitly identifies the inclusion of disaster risk management in education and training as a key area for action. It calls for integrating preparedness and self-protection content in all educational settings, from daycare centers to adult education.[2] While this provides a strong policy signal, it does not constitute a binding mandate for the federal states.

- 🟡 **Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?**

At the state level, initiatives are emerging, most notably in Baden-Württemberg, which has established a comprehensive concept and a joint administrative regulation on the matter since 2023. [1]

- 🟡 **Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?**

All schools in this state are mandated to have emergency preparedness plans, which are shared with local emergency services.[1] Recent public discourse, including a proposal by the Federal Minister of the Interior in late October 2025, indicates a growing political will to enhance crisis preparedness in schools, though these discussions have not yet translated into concrete, nationwide reforms.[5]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🟡 The national strategy provides a clear federal endorsement for integrating disaster risk management into education, creating a supportive policy environment for state-level initiatives.
- 🟡 The joint administrative regulation in Baden-Württemberg, co-signed by MoI and MoE, exemplifies a robust, cross-sectoral policy framework at the state level. [1]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 The translation of national strategic goals into concrete and uniform educational reforms is hindered by the federal structure of the education system.
- 🟡 Future plans at the federal level remain at the proposal stage, with concrete implementation timelines and pilot programs primarily visible at the level of individual, proactive states.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Stakeholder engagement in preparedness education in Germany is characterised by collaboration between educational authorities and civil protection organisations, primarily at the state and local levels. The federal structure necessitates partnerships between schools and a variety of local actors, including municipalities, fire departments, and non-governmental aid organisations.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Schools are actively encouraged to collaborate with civil protection agencies.

- 🟡 **Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

In Baden-Württemberg, the mandatory annual action day for grade 6 students is explicitly designed to be implemented in cooperation with local aid organisations such as the German Red Cross, the Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW), and local fire departments.[1] These events provide students with direct, practical engagement with emergency responders and are also seen as a tool for recruiting future volunteers. Participatory methods are employed through programs like ‘Junior Helper’, which involves primary school children in first aid training.

- 🟡 **What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?**

The role of international organisations appears to be indirect, primarily through the influence of frameworks like the Sendai Framework on national strategy. [2]

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

There is strong evidence of multi-sectoral partnerships at the state level, particularly between education and interior ministries, which jointly develop policies and materials.[1]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The mandatory annual Action Day (Aktionstag) in Baden-Württemberg provides a structured and scalable model for partnership between schools and local civil protection organisations. [4]
-  The involvement of multiple aid organisations (DRK, THW, fire departments) in school activities ensures a comprehensive and practical learning experience for students. [1]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  The success and quality of partnerships are dependent on local capacities and the willingness of volunteer-based organisations to engage with schools, which can lead to regional disparities.
-  Systematic engagement with parents and the broader community as part of a whole-school approach to preparedness is not consistently documented.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

ITALY

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
INVALSI	National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoI	Ministry of Interior

Italy, European Union (EU) Member State

This case study examines a highly centralised model where preparedness education is systematically integrated nationwide through a mandatory, cross-curricular subject (Civic Education). The Italian approach is characterised by a strong, formal partnership between the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Department of Civil Protection, ensuring that content is both pedagogically structured and technically accurate. However, it also reveals a significant gap between the well-defined framework for primary education and the less structured, distinct approach required for early childhood education.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Italy's education system is centrally administered by the MoE and Merit. The system is structured into:

- (i) Early Childhood Education (scuola dell'infanzia): For children aged 3-6 (ISCED 0), this is a distinct pedagogical space with its own learning goals, separate from the formal Civic Education law.[2]
- (ii) First Cycle of Education: Comprising primary school (scuola primaria, grades 1-5; ISCED 1) and lower secondary school (scuola secondaria di primo grado, grades 6-8; ISCED 2).[2]

Italy's risk profile is among the most complex in Europe, encompassing significant seismic activity, volcanic hazards (Vesuvius, Etna, Campi Flegrei), hydrogeological risks such as floods and landslides, and increasing climate-related extreme weather events. This high exposure to multiple natural hazards makes the country a particularly relevant case study for preparedness education. The Law Introduction of civic education teaching in schools of 20 August 2019 (Legge 20 agosto 2019, n. 92 – Introduzione dell'insegnamento scolastico dell'educazione civica) marked a significant policy development by introducing the compulsory teaching of Civic Education (Educazione Civica) across the first and second cycles of education, creating a formal curricular pathway for integrating preparedness topics into school-based learning. [2] [5]

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

The integration of preparedness education in Italy is structured differently across educational levels. In early childhood education, preparedness is not part of a mandatory curriculum with a fixed hourly allocation. It is addressed through learning goals (traguardi) related to body awareness, safety, and well-being, implemented in a play-based, non-structured manner. In primary school, Law on Civic Education introduced Civic Education as a formal, mandatory curricular requirement, with a minimum of 33 hours annually. [2,5] Within this framework, civil protection is a recommended, but non-binding core theme, strongly supported by the MoE and Department of Civil Protection.[4] Voluntary initiatives complement this formal structure, most notably the 'I am civil protection too' ('Anch'io sono la protezione civile') school camps. Organised since 2010 by the Civil Protection Department in collaboration with regional and national volunteer organisations, these camps target young people aged 10 to 16 and have involved over 100,000 participants to date.[1] Through a play-based, experiential approach, participants learn about territorial risks such as earthquakes and forest fires, rules of conduct in emergencies, the functioning of the National Civil Protection System, and the importance of local civil protection plans.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness education is explicitly referenced for primary education onwards (from Grade 1), through Civic Education. For early childhood, it is referenced indirectly through general safety-related learning goals.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Preparedness dimensions include comprehensive knowledge of the National Civil Protection Service structure, risk awareness (seismic, volcanic, hydrogeological hazards), and self-protection behaviors.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

For the first and second cycles (primary onwards), teaching is mandatory with a minimum of 33 hours annually. The subject is cross-curricular in nature, coordinated by a designated teacher in each class. For early childhood education (scuola dell'infanzia), preparedness is not delivered as a subject with a fixed hourly allocation but is addressed through learning goals related to safety and well-being.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Law 92/2019 Introduction of civic education teaching in schools of 20 August 2019 provides a systemic, top-down model for nationwide integration, ensuring all students receive baseline instruction.
-  The official institutional textbook provides a standardised, authoritative resource for teachers.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  As a cross-curricular subject, instructional depth may vary depending on teacher expertise and engagement.
-  School autonomy in curriculum design could lead to variations in time and focus allocated to civil protection versus other Civic Education topics.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

The MoE and the Department of Civil Protection, as key stakeholders, have co-developed the primary resource, the institutional textbook ‘Civil Protection in Italy’, and oversee its accuracy and consistency.[4] The pedagogy for classroom integration is primarily knowledge-based, relying on traditional teaching methods (e.g., lectures, readings, class discussions) supported by the textbook. This contrasts with the experiential, hands-on pedagogy of extra-curricular initiatives like the ‘I am civil protection too’ camps, which involve practical simulations and direct engagement with volunteers.[1]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

The institutional textbook is positioned as the main institutional reference for teachers (‘testo istituzionale di riferimento’).[4] It is strongly recommended and widely disseminated through official channels, but its use is not formally mandated.

Who develops them (government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil protection authorities)?

The Department of Civil Protection and MoE are primary developers.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Dissemination occurs centrally via official government websites, ensuring wide and equitable accessibility nationwide.[4] Materials cover the National Civil Protection Service structure, risk types, and self-protection measures. The Department also promotes initiatives like ‘I am civil protection too’ school camps, generating supplementary materials and practical learning experiences.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The dedicated institutional textbook ensures quality and consistency nationwide.

 Digital availability on the Department’s website facilitates equitable access for all educators.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 A gap between resource availability and effective classroom use, depending on teacher training and confidence.

 Quality of supplementary regional or local materials may vary, potentially creating disparities in educational richness.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teacher education in Italy includes both initial teacher education at universities and continuous professional development throughout teachers' careers. With the introduction of compulsory Civic Education, a recognised need arose for specific, targeted training on civil protection topics. The national framework does not mandate preparedness in ITE. The focus has been on resources and specialized training for in-service teachers.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Preparedness is not systematically integrated into initial teacher education. However, Law No. 92/2019 allocates EUR 4 million per year to the MoE and Merit specifically for teachers' training initiatives on civic education, which includes civil protection topics. In addition, the Civil Protection Department published the institutional textbook 'Civil Protection in Italy' (La protezione civile in Italia), a comprehensive reference designed specifically for school teachers working with students aged 6 to 19.[4] The textbook covers historical, technical, scientific, operational, and policymaking aspects of the National Civil Protection Service and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

The institutional textbook serves as a primary self-education tool. Entities offer specialised courses, such as Civil Protection in Schools ('La Protezione Civile nelle scuole'), for teaching and non-teaching staff.[3]

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

Participation is optional and not linked to certification, career progression, or salary.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Uptake depends primarily on individual teacher motivation or specific school-level initiative. The Department of Civil Protection also provides valuable training opportunities through various projects and active collaborations with volunteer organisations.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The official textbook provides a foundational professional development tool from an authoritative source.
-  Specialised training courses, though optional, offer pathways for teachers to deepen expertise.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Lack of mandatory initial teacher education integration means new teachers may lack foundational knowledge.
-  Optional continuous professional development may lead to inconsistent teacher expertise and confidence across the country.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance in the Italian education system is managed through the National Evaluation System (Sistema nazionale di valutazione; SNV), established by Presidential Decree 80/2013. The SNV operates on a three-year cycle comprising four phases: (i) school self-evaluation through the Rapporto di autovalutazione, (ii) external evaluation by independent teams ('Nuclei esterni di valutazione'); (iii) implementation of improvement actions; and (iv) public dissemination of results. The National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System (INVALSI) oversees national standardised student testing at key stages of primary education, while INVALSI supports schools in their improvement processes. All school self-evaluation reports are published on the Ministry's 'School in the Spotlight' portal (Scuola in Chiaro), ensuring transparency and public accountability. With Civic Education introduced as a compulsory subject, it became formally subject to systematic assessment and grading on student report cards, providing a direct monitoring mechanism for student learning outcomes.

KEY QUESTIONS:

-  **Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?**

As a graded subject, Civic Education is inherently part of quality assurance.

-  **Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?**

Teachers assess student learning, and the subject has a specific grade contributing to academic records. This ensures serious engagement by students and schools. However, no specific national indicators or frameworks exist for assessing practical impact on student skills or behaviors.

-  **Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?**

Current monitoring efforts focus primarily on delivering the mandated 33-hour minimum and assessing theoretical knowledge. Feedback loops for curriculum development operate through the Ministry's standard review channels. Most recently, this process led to the publication of updated 'Guidelines for the teaching of civic education' (Linee guida per l'insegnamento dell'educazione civica, Ministerial Decree 183/2024) in

September 2024, which restructured the subject around three core areas: the Italian Constitution, economic development and sustainability, and digital citizenship.[5]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 Inclusion as a distinct, graded subject on report cards provides strong incentive for delivery and student engagement.
- 🍌 A designated coordinating teacher creates clear responsibility for implementation and evaluation.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 Assessment may emphasise theoretical knowledge over practical self-protection skills and behaviors.
- 🍌 Without specific national indicators, measuring effectiveness in building genuine resilience is difficult.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Italy's DRR framework is anchored in the Civil Protection Code (Codice della Protezione Civile, Legislative Decree No. 1/2018), which consolidates all provisions on risk forecasting, prevention, mitigation, and emergency management. The framework aligns with the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015–2030, coordinated nationally through the National Platform for DRR (Piattaforma nazionale per la riduzione del rischio da disastri) under the Department of Civil Protection. The country has a sophisticated legal and operational framework. Civic Education represents a cornerstone strategy to build resilience from a young age, shifting from reactive to proactive, knowledge-based approaches.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?**

The key policy is Law n. 92/2019, which systemically integrated preparedness education nationwide.

- 🍌 **Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?**

The integration of civil protection into Civic Education under Law No. 92/2019 is a permanent, nationwide reform, not a pilot programme. It is supported by continuous guidelines and material development, such as the 2022 textbook and 2024 Civic Education guidelines. Future plans focus on refining implementation rather than new initiatives.

- 🍌 **Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?**

Schools must have emergency plans, but the 2019 law mandates educating students on risks and self-protection principles, reflecting a strategic shift toward empowering students as active participants in civil protection.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 Law 92/2019 demonstrates high political commitment and provides a durable, long-term foundation.
- 🍌 The strategy is a joint effort between the MoE and Department of Civil Protection, ensuring educational policy is informed by technical expertise.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 Success depends on education system capacity and willingness for effective classroom implementation.
- 🍌 Future plans may need standardised methods for assessing practical student skills beyond theoretical knowledge.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Italy's civil protection model is built on multi-stakeholder collaboration, extending to education. The National Civil Protection Service is a network of institutions, including ministries, regions, prefectures, municipalities, and volunteers. This structure supports preparedness education in schools.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Collaboration with civil protection authorities is institutionalised. The Department of Civil Protection co-developed the institutional textbook with the Ministry of Education.[4]

- 🍌 **Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

Participatory methods are a defining feature of Italy's extra-curricular preparedness activities. The 'I am civil protection too' camps employ an experiential, play-based pedagogy in which young people aged 10 to 16 actively engage with civil protection volunteers, learning through hands-on simulations rather than passive instruction.[1] The Italian Red Cross further contributes through first aid training and prevention programmes in schools, with its 2018-2030 strategy explicitly prioritising the development of "a culture of prevention through education, starting from early school age." Within the formal curriculum, the cross-curricular design of Civic Education itself encourages participatory approaches, as preparedness topics are integrated across multiple subjects rather than confined to a single lecture-based course.

- 🍌 **What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?**

International organisations do not play a direct role in the design or delivery of Italy's school-based preparedness curriculum. However, UNESCO has engaged with Italy on the structural safety dimension of school resilience, hosting an Expert Regional Dialogue on Retrofitting and DRR Strategies at its Venice office in April 2025, focused on school building safety rather than curriculum content. The Council of Europe has documented Italy's Civic Education framework as a good practice example. No systematic involvement of UNICEF or the OECD in Italian school-based preparedness education was identified. Italy's approach relies primarily on domestic institutional partnerships, particularly between the Ministry of Education and Merit and the Department of Civil Protection.

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Locally, schools collaborate with municipal offices and volunteer organizations (e.g., Italian Red Cross) for practical activities. A prime example is the 'I am civil protection too' camp. Over its entire history, the project has engaged more than 100,000 young people [1], demonstrating a large-scale, multi-sectoral partnership for hands-on preparedness culture outside the formal curriculum.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The 'I am civil protection too' summer camps are large-scale, long-term good practice in youth engagement through experiential learning, fostering direct links between young citizens and volunteers.
-  Formal partnership between the MoE and the Department of Civil Protection ensures content is pedagogically sound and technically accurate.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  While strong partnerships exist for extra-curricular activities, school-level engagement with local civil protection actors for in-curriculum support may be inconsistent.
-  Ensuring volunteer-led activities align with official curriculum and meet quality standards requires ongoing coordination.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

JAPAN

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRR	disaster risk reduction
GSI	Geographical Survey Institute
HUG	Shelter Management Training
J-SHIS	Japan Seismic Hazard Information Station
MEXT	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
MLIT	Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
NIED	Geospatial Information Authority of Japan
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Action
PTA	Parent Teacher Association

Japan, Global Comparator

Japan illustrates a centrally mandated, whole-school integration model: disaster prevention is embedded in national Curriculum Guidelines across levels and implemented across subjects and school activities, reinforced by drills and school safety planning. It also shows a strong capacity and accountability loop, with mandatory school-safety content in pre-service training, structured in-service training, and monitoring tools that assess what students can do (not only whether plans exist). [1][2][3][5][11][13]

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

In Japan, school safety education aims to cultivate respect for life, the ability to live safely throughout one's life, and the qualities to contribute to a safe and secure society [1]. Preparedness education is positioned as a major component of safety education and focuses on understanding disaster risks and taking appropriate preparatory and response actions [2][3]. Lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake reinforced the importance of students' ability to predict danger, avoid risks, and act proactively [1][2][4]. Disaster prevention is integrated into Curriculum Guidelines for kindergartens, elementary, junior high, high schools and special needs schools and is to be implemented across subjects and school activities [2][5]. Japan is highly prone to earthquakes and other natural disasters, and this shapes school safety and disaster prevention education [2][4]. Japan was selected as a global comparator because, beyond high hazard exposure, it demonstrates how a nationally mandated, whole-school approach – embedded from kindergarten through primary and reinforced through teacher training and school manual/drill review cycles – can support more consistent delivery and quality assurance of preparedness education. [2][5][3][11][12]

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

Preparedness education in Japan seeks to help students respect their own and others' lives and build a safe and secure society [1]. Disaster preparedness education, treated as disaster safety education, is a core component of safety education and aims to ensure that students understand disaster dangers and can take correct preparatory and response actions [2][3]. It is specified in curriculum guidelines as content to be appropriately implemented throughout all school education activities from kindergarten to high school and special needs schools [2][5]. Implementation differs by level: in kindergarten (early childhood) it is addressed as part of age-appropriate daily life and safety learning, while in primary school and above it expands into subject learning (e.g., Social Studies/ Science/Health/PE) and inquiry-based activities in Integrated Studies. [2][5] MEXT sets the Curriculum Guidelines and reference materials for disaster prevention education; boards of education and schools design cross-curricular implementation across subjects and school activities; teachers deliver learning and organise drills as part of whole-school safety practice, often in coordination with local authorities and community partners. [2][5][11][12]

KEY QUESTIONS:



Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Disaster prevention and preparedness are mandatory curricular requirements, stipulated in general provisions of Curriculum Guidelines for kindergartens, elementary, junior high, high schools and special needs schools as content to be implemented throughout school activities [2][5].

What dimensions of preparedness are included?

- Natural hazards and associated risks in Social Studies and Science (earthquakes, weather, floods, landslides, tsunamis, etc.) [2][3][4][5][6].
- First aid and emergency response (CPR, AED) in Health and Physical Education [2][3][4][5].
- Civic resilience and cooperation with local authorities and communities in Social Studies and Integrated Studies (self-help, mutual aid, public assistance; roles of governments and communities) [2][3][6][7][9].

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) reference materials and guidance (e.g., ‘Life Skills’ disaster education resources and manual/guideline documents), provide recommended approaches, examples, and sequencing for preparedness education and school implementation. These guide practice but do not prescribe a single uniform lesson plan for all schools. [2][4][11][12] Within the system-level expectation to implement across activities, schools and local boards may develop project-based disaster learning (e.g., inquiry units such as community disaster prevention map-making and locally tailored sequences in Integrated Studies), with the specific design and emphasis determined locally. [2][3][6][7][9] Preparedness education is curriculum-embedded through subjects and Integrated Studies, while drills and crisis-response procedures operate as a practical training overlay that reinforces safe action through problem-solving, reflection and improvement. [1][2][4][11]

GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Cross-curricular positioning of disaster prevention in Curriculum Guidelines for all levels [2][5].
-  Social Studies themes linking national and local disaster measures and community cooperation for fires, floods and earthquakes [2][3][5].
-  Use of Integrated Studies to conduct inquiry learning such as ‘creating community disaster prevention maps’ and structured sequences around self-help, public assistance and mutual aid [2][3][6][7][9].
-  Evacuation drills (earthquake, fire, tsunami) positioned as problem-solving learning with reflection and improvement [1][2][10].
-  Technology and Home Economics guidance on securing furniture and home environments against earthquakes [2].

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

To effectively promote prevention education, Japan emphasises practical educational programs that lead to concrete actions and draw on disaster prevention science and technology [9]. Diverse materials are provided by MEXT and other organisations, including multimedia, portals and simulation tools, and are tailored by develop-

mental stage and regional characteristics [2][3][4][5][9]. National ministries and specialised agencies develop and host core materials and portals; prefectural/municipal boards of education curate and develop region-specific resources; schools and teachers select, combine and adapt tools to learner developmental stage and local hazard context, consistent with Curriculum Guidelines. [2][3][4][5][6]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Preparedness education are implemented throughout all school activities within the Curriculum Guidelines framework [2]. Use of specific teaching materials and readers (including MEXT-produced materials) is, in principle, voluntary and left to schools' judgment based on student development and local circumstances [2][4]. However, national guidance recommends active use of materials produced by national and local governments and disaster-related organisations [2].

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Materials are developed by national ministries (MEXT; Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism [MLIT]; Japan Meteorological Agency; Fire and Disaster Management Agency; Cabinet Office [2][3][4][5]), specialised agencies (NIED; Geospatial Information Authority of Japan [3][5]), local governments (prefectural and ordinance-designated city boards of education; municipalities and boards developing region-specific materials [2][4][5]), private/NGO sector (Cabinet Office Disaster Prevention Education Challenge Plan Executive Committee; Japanese Red Cross Society; Japan General Insurance Association [5]). National ministries and specialised agencies provide technically accurate hazard content and national portals/materials; prefectural/municipal boards of education curate or develop region-specific resources. [2]

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Materials are distributed to schools (CDs, DVDs, teacher training videos), and many are made available via the School Safety Portal Site and other national portals [2][3][4][5]. Regional boards of education curate and list recommended materials [5]. Table-top exercises such as the Disaster Imagination Game (DIG) and AR-based training are promoted as practical tools to ease teacher workload and support realistic training [5][11]. Delivery commonly uses a blended approach: inquiry learning (e.g., hazard maps and local risk investigation), experiential/simulation tools (e.g., table-top exercises, AR-based training), and practice and reflection linked to drills and manuals. Learning aims to lead to concrete action rather than knowledge only. [2][3][5][11] Schools select and adapt materials to learner developmental stage and local risk context consistent with Curriculum Guidelines. [2][4]

GOOD PRACTICES:

-  MEXT CDs 'To Protect Lives from Disasters' for elementary students and DVDs for junior and high school students, plus educator training videos [2][3][4].
-  School Safety Portal Site aggregating teaching materials from prefectural and city boards, searchable by disaster type [5].

- 🍌 Hazard Map Portal Site and GSI Map for integrating geographic risk information in classroom learning [2][3][5].
- 🍌 NIED tools such as J-SHIS, Disaster Chronology Map, E-Defense vibration videos, and experimental kits like ‘Ecky, Yurayura, Nadaranger’ to explain disaster mechanisms [1][3][5].
- 🍌 JMA portal with materials from multiple organisations and a full workshop/manual set for “What to do during unprecedented heavy rainfall?” [3][5].
- 🍌 AR tsunami/fire training by Kanagawa Prefectural Board of Education and promotion of table-top exercises to simulate crisis scenarios [5][11].

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education is framed as essential for faculty and staff to safeguard students and continuously promote disaster education, spanning pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development [1][2][4][12]. In-service training is embedded in School Safety Plans and must address crisis management before, during and after emergencies [2][4][12]. MEXT sets pre-service requirements and provides national training resources while universities deliver mandatory ‘Responding to School Safety’ content. External actors (e.g., police/fire/experts) support specialist training and drills. [2][3][4][12]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?**

The 2017 amendment to the Education Personnel Licensing Act made ‘Responding to School Safety’ a mandatory component of common subjects in teacher training programs. [3] In addition, in-service staff training on school safety, including disasters, must be implemented as part of each school’s School Safety Plan. [2][4][12]

- 🍌 **What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?**

Pre-service objectives include understanding school safety purposes, crisis management based on the School Health and Safety Act, and accident/disaster response. [3] Recommended content covers psychological aspects (normalcy bias, authority gradient) and emergency life-saving measures (BLS, AED), often taught by external instructors. [1] In-service training content includes crisis management drills, evacuation drills, emergency first aid, curriculum integration of disaster education, manual development and collaboration with experts. [2][4][11][12]

- 🍌 **Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?**

The national ‘School Safety e-Learning for School Staff’ provides level-specific courses and issues certificates upon passing tests. [3][6][13] Completion of disaster-related training is not described as directly linked to salary, promotion or formal point systems; only certification (e-learning, CPR, lifesaving skills) is mentioned.

GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 School-based staff training structured around three crisis stages (before, during, after) within School Safety Plans [2][4][12].
- 🍌 Diverse training content: drills, emergency first aid, manual development, use of safety materials and DVD resources [2][4][11][12].
- 🍌 Collaboration with universities, police, fire departments and disaster survivors in training and workshops [2][12].
- 🍌 National 'School Safety e-Learning' system with certification and differentiated courses by career stage [3][6][13].
- 🍌 'School Safety Leader Training' to develop core teachers and supervisors as regional safety leaders [2][3][12].
- 🍌 University practices in disaster-affected areas (e.g. Iwate University's school safety and disaster education courses, reconstruction education, and CPR practice) [3].

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In Japan, quality assurance for disaster preparedness education is embedded in Plan-Do-Check-Action (PDCA) cycle and places strong emphasis on what students actually learn and can do, not only on the existence of plans and drills [1][2][11]. Disaster prevention education is evaluated within school management with attention to changes in students' awareness, behaviour and practical response capacity [2][11]. Schools and local boards apply PDCA review; teachers assess learning through products, observation and reflection tools; prefectures may implement competency tests while national guidance supports review of manuals and use of accident/near-miss data for improvement. [2][5][11][12]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations? (e.g. student learning, classroom practice, and use of drills/simulations as learning opportunities—not only the existence of plans and procedures.)**

Evacuation drills are treated as opportunities to assess students' real-time response capacities and the practicality of plans, including scenario-based drills simulating aftershocks, power outages or bad weather. [1][11] Reflection sheets and questionnaires after drills are used to identify gaps in understanding and procedures. [11] Teachers also use observation of engagement, assessment of learning products and, in some cases, parent questionnaires and home-learning feedback to gauge how far disaster-related learning is

being internalised. [11]

- Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

Learning assessments for disaster education explicitly target whether students can predict dangers in daily life, take appropriate actions and improve hazardous environments, going beyond factual knowledge checks. [2][11] The Gifu Prefectural Board of Education uses a 'Disaster Mitigation Capability Test' to measure students' competencies in disaster prevention. [5]

- Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

Reflection sheets and questionnaires after drills are used to identify gaps in understanding and procedures, supporting follow-up improvements to practice and planning. [11] National guidance also promotes using accident and near-miss data — via the School Accident Case Search Database and school-specific statistics — to inform the improvement of disaster prevention education. [2][5][11][12]

GOOD PRACTICES:

- Behaviour-focused learning assessments that examine whether students can foresee risk and act safely [2][11].
- Use of structured reflection after drills to adjust both teaching content and school plans [11].
- Prefectural initiatives such as the Disaster Mitigation Capability Test as a replicable model for measuring disaster-related competencies [5].
- Systematic use of national and school-level accident data to target and refine preventive education [2][5][11][12].

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Japan's disaster prevention in school education is framed within national safety promotion plans and legal duties under the School Health and Safety Act. The Cabinet-approved "Plan for Promoting School Safety" (2012–2016) sets principles and measures for school safety, emphasising enhanced preparedness education, strengthened disaster damage mitigation based on the Great East Japan Earthquake, and scientific, evidence-based safety promotion [2]. The Third Plan for Promoting School Safety (2022) continues this trajectory [1]. Preparedness education that focuses on coexisting with nature in an earthquake-prone country has been recognised internationally, including in the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005–2015 [2][4]. Cabinet/MEXT set national direction through school safety plans and guidance; local boards and schools operationalise through safety plans/manuals and model projects; specialised agencies and local partners support scientific/technical tools

and implementation. [1][2][5][11][12]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?

School safety, including disaster prevention education, is integrated into national level “Plans for Promoting School Safety.” [1][2] Preparedness education is embedded within broader disaster risk reduction policies, legal obligations (School Health and Safety Act), and related guidelines. [1][2][4][11][12]

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

The government promotes systematisation of disaster prevention education content by age and region and provide sexamples through reference materials such as ‘Developing Disaster Prevention Education that Cultivates ‘Life Skills’ [2][9] Future tasks include securing instructional time for safety education, potentially via a dedicated subject or expanded time within Integrated Studies and Health/Physical Education. [2] Model projects (e.g. Comprehensive School Safety Support Project, Earthquake Early Warning-based programs, AR-based training) are used to develop and disseminate methods. [2][5]

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Schools must establish School Safety Plans and Crisis Management manuals, and some must develop evacuation assurance plans under other laws (Flood Control Act, Landslide Disaster Prevention Act). [1][2][11][12]

GOOD PRACTICES:

- Cabinet-approved Plan for Promoting School Safety providing strategic direction for school disaster prevention [2].
- Systematic curriculum development around “life skills” for disaster prevention [2][9].
- Comprehensive School Safety Support Project supporting disaster education with community and related organisations, high school disaster prevention schools and leader training [5].Use of science and technology (e.g. Earthquake Early Warning System, AR training) in model projects [2][5].Legal obligations for School Safety Plans, Crisis Management Manuals and evacuation assurance plans tailored to hazard exposure [1][2][11][12].

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Promoting disaster prevention in school education is seen as requiring collaboration among schools, families, communities and administrative/specialised agencies [1][2][12]. Schools must establish close cooperative systems with local communities for routine information sharing and clear emergency role division [2][11][12]. Partnerships apply across levels, but engagement is adapted by age: early childhood settings emphasise close coordination with families and inclusive routines, while primary schools more often use participatory activities (e.g., mapping, joint drills, shelter simulations) to build student agency and community cooperation. [1][2][4][8][14] In practice, this ecosystem brings together MEXT (national guidance, curriculum-linked resources, training and manuals), local boards of education and municipal disaster management departments (local coordination and implementation support), schools and school leadership/staff (whole-school planning, teaching and drills), emergency and specialised services (police, fire departments, public health centres and meteorological offices, providing technical inputs and joint exercises), and families/community partners (PTAs, neighbourhood associations, voluntary disaster organisations and local residents/businesses), alongside universities, experts and volunteers who support training, expertise and volunteer programmes. [1][2][4][6][9][11][12]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Collaborations include municipal disaster management departments, boards of education, police, fire departments, public health centers, meteorological offices, neighborhood associations, voluntary disaster organisations, PTAs, local residents, businesses, high-rise building managers, school doctors and medical associations. [2][4][6][9][11][12] Volunteers and experts include universities, disaster specialists, volunteer groups (e.g. Red Cross volunteer corps) and volunteer fire departments. [1][2][4][9]

Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

Participatory and experiential activities such as disaster prevention map-making, joint evacuation drills, shelter management exercises and volunteer programs aim to foster self-help, mutual aid and public assistance. [1][2][3][5][8][14] Specific emphasis is placed on guidance for students with disabilities in collaboration with parents and on joint drills with communities and high schools. [2][4] Special needs schools may function as welfare shelters for students with disabilities and their families during disasters. [1][2]

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multi-sectoral partnerships are evidenced through collaboration among municipal disaster management departments/boards of education and multiple services and community actors (e.g., police, fire, public health, meteorological offices, PTAs, businesses, medical associations, and volunteer organisations). [2][4][6][9][11][12]

GOOD PRACTICES:

- Community Schools (School Management Councils) and Regional School Support Headquarters supporting school safety and disaster prevention in school management; in Kumamoto, disaster prevention items are added to Council approval matters [1][2][6][12].
- Student-led disaster prevention and safety maps shared with younger students, parents and local residents [1][2][3][8][14].
- Joint community evacuation drills, such as the Hokkaido volcanic alert drill involving schools, residents and agencies [5].
- Shelter Management Training (HUG) where junior/high school students simulate shelter operations as future community members [2][5][14].
- High school volunteer activities and disaster prevention volunteer programs leading towards Disaster Prevention Specialist certification [2][3][4].
- Inclusive drills at special needs schools, mixed-age activities with community elders and planning for welfare shelter roles [1][2][4][11][14].

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

LATVIA

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoI	Ministry of Interior
VISC	National Centre for Education
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
VUGD	State Fire and Rescue Service

Latvia, European Union Member State

This case study illustrates a defence-driven model for preparedness education, where crisis management is framed within a comprehensive national defence context. The Latvian approach is characterised by a sharp contrast between the upper secondary level, which has a mandatory, well-resourced National Defence Education program, and the early childhood and primary education levels, where preparedness education is largely absent from the formal curriculum. This model highlights the potential of strong ministerial partnerships (Defence and Education) but also reveals the risk of leaving younger age groups without systematic instruction.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Education is centrally governed by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES). Compulsory education is organised as a nine-year single-structure basic school system, followed by non-compulsory secondary education. Teaching and learning are guided by the national curriculum, reformed between 2020 and 2023 through the 'Skola 2030' initiative to introduce a competence-based approach.[3] Within this framework, the cross-curricular module 'Human Security' (Cilvēkdrošība), part of the 'Health and Physical Activity' learning area, addresses a broad range of safety topics including, as one of six domains, civil protection (civilā aizsardzība) - covering disaster response, evacuation procedures, and warning systems.[7] In Latvia preparedness-relevant content is embedded within a broader safety and well-being framework in basic education, complemented by a dedicated mandatory National Defence Education program at the upper secondary level.

Latvia is exposed to multiple natural hazards. The National Risk Assessment highlights high flood risk, particularly from ice jams on the Daugava River (e.g., 2013, 2023), and frequent extreme weather events such as storms and blizzards.[8] Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is coordinated by the State Fire and Rescue Service (VUGD) under the Ministry of Interior (MoI), guided by the State Civil Protection Plan. [8]

Latvia was selected for its distinctive approach of embedding civil protection within a broader cross-curricular 'Human Security' module in a recently reformed competence-based curriculum, complemented by a mandatory National Defence Education program at the upper secondary level.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

The integration of preparedness education in Latvia is starkly divided by educational level, with a clear distinction between early childhood and basic education approaches:

I. Early Childhood Education: Preparedness is not a formal or mandatory topic. Safety is addressed indirectly through the 'Health and Physical Activity' learning area, focusing on developing everyday safety habits (e.g., road safety, use of protective equipment) in a play-based, integrated manner. There are no specific, timed lessons on disaster preparedness.[6]

II. Basic Education (Grades 1-9), which is an equivalent of primary and lower secondary education (ISCED 1 and 2): Preparedness-relevant content is integrated as a formal, mandatory requirement through the cross-curricular module 'Human Security' (Cilvēkdrošība). This module is part of the 'Health and Physical Activity' learning area and includes civil protection (civilā aizsardzība) as one of its six domains, covering topics like disaster response and evacuation.[7] Additionally, a weekly, non-graded 'class upbringing lesson' (klases stunda) provides a voluntary and discretionary entry point for teachers to discuss safety topics, including 'handling extreme situations'. [3]

The development and implementation of this module was overseen by the MoES and the National Centre for Education (VISC) as part of the broader 'Skola2030' curriculum reform.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

In early childhood education, preparedness is not explicitly referenced. Safety is addressed through general learning goals. However, primary education preparedness is explicitly referenced through the mandatory 'Human Security' module, which includes a civil protection domain.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

The 'Human Security' module covers disaster response, evacuation procedures, and warning systems. The voluntary 'class upbringing lesson' includes 'handling extreme situations'.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

In early childhood education, integration of preparedness education is optional and at the discretion of the institution. In primary education, integration is mandatory through the 'Human Security' module. The 'class upbringing lesson' is a mandatory weekly lesson, but the preparedness content within it is optional and at the teacher's discretion.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The mandatory integration of civil protection content within the broader 'Human Security' module in basic education provides a structured, nationwide framework for teaching foundational preparedness skills.
-  The weekly 'class upbringing lesson' offers a flexible, regular entry point for discussing safety and preparedness with students in basic education.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  While civil protection is a mandatory domain, its integration within the very broad 'Human Security' module (which also includes health, environment, and state security) may lead to varying degrees of emphasis in practice. There is a lack of formal, mandatory preparedness education in early childhood education, where learning is limited to general safety habits.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In early childhood education, safety-related learning is delivered in a play-based, integrated manner as part of the 'Health and Physical Activity' learning area, with no specific teaching materials for disaster preparedness provided centrally. In basic education (grades 1-9), the mandatory 'Human Security' module provides a curricular framework, but there are no centrally developed, dedicated teaching materials for its civil protection domain.[3] Teachers who choose to address preparedness topics beyond the module, such as 'handling extreme situations' in the weekly 'class upbringing lesson', must find or create their own resources, with no formal body responsible for ensuring age-appropriateness or content quality.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

For the National Defence Education program, the use of centrally developed materials is implicitly mandatory to ensure standardised delivery.

Who develops them (government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) civil protection authorities)?

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is the primary developer of materials for National Defence Education program.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Dissemination is managed through the Youth Guard Centre and its instructors. For basic education, there are no mandatory materials. Teachers must find or create their own resources, leading to significant variation. The content of the National Defence Education materials is comprehensive, covering topics from first aid to crisis management. Materials for younger students, if any, are not standardised.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The centralised development of materials for the National Defence Education program ensures a consistent standard of instruction for all upper secondary students.

 The public availability of the 'What to do in case of a crisis' brochure provides a basic, accessible resource for all citizens, including teachers and parents.[2]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 A lack of standardised, official teaching materials for disaster preparedness in primary and lower secondary education (grades 1-9) is a major gap.

 Teachers in basic education are left without guidance or official resources, potentially leading to inconsistent or non-existent instruction on this topic.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

There is no evidence of dedicated initial teacher education or continuous professional development for early childhood or primary education practitioners specifically focused on preparedness or safety education beyond general pedagogical training. Although preparedness education is mandatory through the ‘Human Security’ module at the primary level, there is no evidence of systematic initial teacher training or continuous professional development provision specifically addressing disaster preparedness or civil protection content. Teachers are therefore expected to deliver the module within their existing competencies.

KEY QUESTIONS:

 Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Preparedness education is not a documented component of initial teacher education or continuous professional development for regular teachers.

 What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

The training is concentrated on specialised instructors for the upper secondary defence program. Participation in this instructor role is a professional choice and not part of a standard teaching career path.

 Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

There are no indications of certifications, salary incentives, or career points for regular teachers who might independently seek training in this area.

 What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

The reach of formal training is limited to the cohort of defence education instructors.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The use of dedicated, specialised instructors for the National Defence Education program ensures that the subject is taught by personnel with specific expertise.

 The availability of a digitised ‘Civil Protection’ course at several universities provides an opportunity for higher education students, including future teachers, to gain knowledge in this area, albeit optionally.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 There is no systematic training or professional development in disaster preparedness for teachers in early childhood and primary education.

 The reliance on specialised external instructors means that regular classroom teachers are not being upskilled in this area, limiting the integration of preparedness education within the broader school staff.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance for the National Defence Education program is managed by the MoD and the Youth Guard Centre. The program's success is assessed based on feedback from schools, instructors, and students, with the first year being deemed a success overall.[1] For basic education (grades 1-9), there is no formal quality assurance or monitoring mechanism for the teaching of 'handling extreme situations', as it is part of a non-graded, discretionary class lesson. The national education system has general quality assurance frameworks, but these do not include specific indicators related to disaster preparedness.[3]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Preparedness education is not included in school inspections or national quality assurance frameworks for basic education.

Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

There are no specific indicators or assessment frameworks for preparedness-related learning in early childhood education. Safety-related development is assessed informally as part of the child's overall progress within the 'Health and Physical Activity' learning area. In primary education, even though preparedness education is mandatory, there are no publicly available, dedicated indicators or quality assurance frameworks to assess how effectively civil protection content is taught or how it builds students' preparedness knowledge and behaviours. Assessment is integrated into the broader 'Health and Physical Activity' learning area and is at the teacher's discretion.

Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

There is no evidence of systematic feedback loops from primary schools to inform national policy on preparedness education. Feedback for the defence program is channeled directly to the Youth Guard Centre and the MoD.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

The direct line of feedback and monitoring between schools and the Youth Guard Centre for the National Defence Education program allows for agile problem-solving and adaptation, as seen in the resolution of initial instructor shortages.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- There is a complete absence of a quality assurance and monitoring framework for preparedness education in primary education .
- It is not possible to assess the quality, consistency, or even the existence of instruction on ‘handling extreme situations’ in basic education, as it is not monitored.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Latvia's national strategy for crisis preparedness is framed within a concept of comprehensive national defence, with the State Civil Protection Plan (2020) providing the overarching framework for disaster management.[8] While the introduction of the mandatory National Defence Education programme at the upper secondary level represents a significant strategic commitment to building societal resilience, no comparable initiative has been identified for early childhood or primary education.[2] Preparedness-relevant content in basic education remains limited to the ‘Human Security’ module within the existing curriculum framework, without a dedicated national strategy or action plan to strengthen its delivery. This gap suggests that the strategic prioritisation of preparedness education has not yet extended to younger age groups.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?**

The primary national policy impacting preparedness education is the law mandating the National Defence Education program.

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?**

This is a long term reform for the upper secondary age group, but nothing similar has been identified for early childhood or primary education.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?**

There is no corresponding national policy or strategy for integrating disaster preparedness into primary or lower secondary education. Future plans mentioned in the available documentation relate to the potential expansion of the defence education program, such as exploring distance learning options, rather than developing new initiatives for younger students.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 The comprehensive national defence context provides a clear, high-level strategic framework that has successfully driven the implementation of a major educational reform (the National Defence Education program).

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 The national strategy for preparedness education is narrowly focused on the upper secondary level and is framed primarily through a national defence lens.
- 🍌 There is no apparent national strategy or plan to introduce or strengthen disaster preparedness education for natural and technological hazards in primary and lower secondary schools.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Stakeholder engagement in Latvia's preparedness education is highly structured and centralised within the comprehensive national defence framework. The key partnership is between MoD and the MoES for the implementation of the National Defence Education program.[2] The Youth Guard Centre, acts as the primary operational partner, providing instructors and managing the program's delivery in schools across the country.[1] There is no evidence of similar structured partnerships for preparedness education in primary education.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Collaboration is not institutionalised in early childhood and primary education.

- 🍌 **Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

The Youth Guard Centre is the main implementing partner, with its instructors working directly in schools.

- 🍌 **What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?**

There is no documented evidence of systematic collaboration with civil protection authorities or the Latvian Red Cross for the delivery of curriculum-based education in primary or lower secondary schools.

- 🍌 **Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?**

Engagement with municipalities occurs at the level of training for civil protection commissions, not in direct partnership for school education.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🟡 The formal, high-level partnership between the MoD and the MoES demonstrates a strong model for cross-sectoral collaboration in implementing a national program.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 There is a lack of partnerships between the education sector and traditional civil protection actors (e.g. fire service, Red Cross) for the purpose of educating primary and lower secondary students.
- 🟡 The engagement model is top-down, with limited evidence of grassroots or volunteer-led initiatives being integrated into the formal education system.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

MONTENEGRO

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
MoESI	Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
QA	quality assurance
PPMS	Special Safety and Security Plan

Montenegro

Montenegro illustrates a centralised, mandate-driven model of preparedness education, formally embedded across curricula, supported by state-approved materials, national digital platforms and accredited teacher training. Unlike systems that rely primarily on voluntary or NGO-led initiatives, Montenegro demonstrates how strong policy alignment between education and disaster-risk governance can enable system-wide integration, even though challenges remain in pedagogical specification and consistent implementation. In comparative terms, it represents a model of state-led integration rather than decentralisation or NGO dependence.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

The education system of Montenegro comprises non-mandatory early childhood education (ages 0-6; ISCED 0), single-structure nine-year compulsory primary education (ages 6-15; ISCED 1) and non-compulsory general and vocational secondary education and falls under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation (MoESI). [1]

The country is highly exposed to floods, earthquakes, landslides and wildfires; floods and earthquakes generate the largest expected annual losses and affect thousands of people each year. [2] Montenegro has progressively strengthened its disaster risk management (DRM) framework through a 'Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy (DRR) 2018–2023' [3] and a new 'Strategy for DRR of the Government of Montenegro with the Action Plan for the period 2025–2026' [4] and is participant in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. These strategies include implementation of school safety, teacher training, and resilient learning environments and introducing concrete preparedness activities for early childhood and primary education. This makes Montenegro a relevant example of how preparedness can be systematically embedded across an education system.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Montenegro's curriculum framework governs early childhood education (ISCED 0), nine-year primary education (ISCED 1) and secondary education (ISCED 2-3), incorporating subject syllabi and cross-curricular programs. Preparedness education is formally and mandatorily integrated into the education system through two national policy instruments: (i) the inter-subject program 'Education in the Field of DRR' (introduced in 2016), which embeds hazard awareness, safe behavior, emergency procedures and the role of the national rescue system across subjects such as Geography, Nature and Society, Biology, Chemistry, Informatics and class teacher periods [5]; and (ii) the DRR Strategy 2025–2030 which extends preparedness explicitly to early childhood and primary education, requiring preschool institutions and primary schools to implement preparedness activities, materials and tools [6] However, it is not certain to what extent the DRR strategy is being implemented.

A major innovation is the integration of preparedness content into Digital Classroom (Digionica), Montenegro's national digital learning platform. For preschool, Digital Classroom provides a variety of 71 courses and 340 lessons for ages 0–6, supporting continuity of learning in case of emergencies. Likewise, primary schools, Digital Classroom offers structured content across 21 subject areas per grade, with hundreds of lessons and a teacher-support section containing 98 courses and 796 lessons on instructional continuity and emergency teaching support. These measures align DRR content with national digital-education reforms and with the broader 'Education Reform Strategy 2025–2035', prioritising safe, resilient and digitally supported learning environments.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness education is explicitly embedded through the mandated inter-subject DRR program and through the DRR Strategy 2025–2030 for early childhood and primary education.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Preparedness education includes hazard awareness (earthquakes, floods, landslides, fires), safe behavior, emergency procedures, psychosocial support, understanding of protection and rescue systems, and digital learning for continuity during crises.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Both the inter-subject preparedness program and the DRR Strategy are mandatory and require implementation across pre-school and primary school, supported by Digital Classroom and teacher training.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 National preparedness inter-subject program integrated across multiple compulsory subjects.

 Use of Digital Classroom to deliver age-appropriate digital preparedness material.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 Limited explicit preparedness learning outcomes in curricula beyond drills and digital materials.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education in Montenegro is supported through a combination of formal curriculum materials, teacher guides, public-information tools, and digital learning resources delivered via the national Digital Classroom platform. The inter-subject preparedness program is accompanied by a methodological guide developed by the Institute for Education and the Directorate for Protection and Rescue, which outlines learning objectives, classroom activities, and links to subject curricula.

The Digital Classroom platform – a state-run online learning environment used for both regular and emergency teaching – serves as a key repository for teaching materials. The DRR Strategy 2025–2030 specifies that it hosts preparedness resources for early childhood and primary students. [7] In addition, UNICEF-supported projects have supplied visual tools, protection-and-rescue plans and adapted drills for preschool institutions, including centres for children with disabilities.

Responsibility for ensuring the age-appropriateness, accuracy and consistency of teaching materials in Montenegro is centralised for formal schooling materials through the National Council for Education, which approves textbooks and teaching materials via regulated expert review procedures; preparedness-specific methodological guidance is developed by the Institute of Education in cooperation with the Rescue and Protection Directorate; and digital content on the Digital Classroom is governed through the MoESI's platform management arrangements (developed with UNICEF), while schools and teachers decide how materials are used in classroom practice. [8]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Preparedness education curriculum documents and methodological guides are part of the national curriculum framework and therefore mandatory in early and primary education. Digital Classroom is an official national platform and is explicitly mandated for preparedness education in early childhood and primary education under the 'DRR Strategy 2025–2030'. Brochures and NGO-developed materials are optional supplements.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Teaching resources are developed by government institutions (Institute for Education and Directorate for Protection and Rescue, as well as NGOs and international organisations, such as UNICEF or Red Cross of Montenegro).

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Digital Classroom provides national scale, centralised digital access for teachers, students, and parents. Preparedness education guides are distributed through teacher seminars and school networks. Public awareness materials are shared via schools and community campaigns.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Digital Classroom's structured preparedness content, available for teachers, preschoolers and primary students, enabling continuity of learning during emergencies.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Variation in uptake across schools, as access to resources like Digital Classroom does not automatically translate into systematic preparedness education use.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teacher capacity for preparedness education in Montenegro has been strengthened through dedicated in-service training linked to the inter-subject preparedness program, in addition to broader competency-based reforms. Following the introduction of the interdisciplinary emergency-education program (2013) and its evolution into the preparedness inter-subject program (2016), the Institute for Education and Rescue and Protection Directorate developed and accredited a professional training program ‘Education in the Field of DRR’ for teachers. [9]

Between 2013 and 2026, approximately 2,200 teachers, professional associates and school principals from primary and secondary schools participated in around 78 preparedness seminars delivered across 25 municipalities. [10] Training focuses on understanding hazards, school-level risk assessment, integration of preparedness across subjects, active learning methods, and planning and evaluating evacuation exercises. The national DRR strategy and its implementation plan explicitly include the delivery of these seminars to support curriculum implementation. Preschool staff and personnel in centres for children with disabilities have also been involved in preparedness training, particularly in evacuation, inclusive drills and adaptation of materials. In addition, The DRR Strategy 2025–2030 explicitly foresees seminar materials for teachers in preparedness education and psychosocial support, reinforcing existing in-service preparedness training programs. Digital Classroom further supplements teacher development in various lessons and courses, strengthening educators’ capacity to maintain instruction and support students during emergencies. [11] However, DRR implementation remains uneven, and some institutions may not yet have fully developed emergency response plans, partly due to the resources required for the preparation.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Publicly available documentation does not show preparedness education as a prominent, compulsory component of initial teacher education programs.

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Topics include various hazard types, preparedness concepts, school risk assessments, integration of preparedness into multiple subjects, emergency behavior, and planning and implementing drills [12].

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

The preparedness education seminar is accredited, meaning it contributes to recognised continuous professional development, but available sources do not document specific salary or promotion incentives linked solely to preparedness training. [13]

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Approximately 1,500 staff across 24 municipalities have been trained, with plans to expand coverage to all primary-school teachers and further preschool and secondary-school staff.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🟡 Nationally accredited preparedness seminar linked directly to an inter-subject curriculum, delivered jointly by education and civil protection authorities.
- 🟡 Inclusion of preschool staff and staff in centres for children with disabilities in evacuation and preparedness training, supporting inclusive preparedness education

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 Preparedness training is not yet universal. Many teachers still rely on general safety knowledge rather than structured preparedness pedagogy.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance (QA) in early childhood and primary education is governed by the General Law on Education and related by-laws. Internal school self-evaluation is conducted every two years, and external evaluation by the Bureau for Educational Services and the Centre for Vocational Education occurs at least once every four years. [14] External evaluation focuses on pupil achievement, quality of teaching and learning, school climate, governance, support to students, staff and material conditions, safety of the school environment and cooperation with parents and the community. [15] DRR and preparedness are partly addressed through indicators related to safety conditions, documentation (e.g., protection and rescue plans) and implementation of fire or evacuation drills, but dedicated preparedness learning outcomes are not explicitly monitored at system level. [16]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations? (e.g. student learning, classroom practice, and use of drills/simulations as learning opportunities—not only the existence of plans and procedures.)**

External evaluations review school documentation, safety conditions and organisational aspects, which can include emergency plans and drills, but available guidance does not identify preparedness teaching or student preparedness competences as separate evaluation domains.

- 🟡 **Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?**

The national QA framework defines broad indicators on quality of teaching, student support and safety, but does not specify preparedness-related knowledge, skills or behaviors as explicit indicators.

- Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

A 2019 preparedness education study across 30 primary schools assessed pupils' preparedness knowledge, attitudes and skills and confirmed positive impacts of preparedness education while highlighting remaining gaps in awareness and practice. The study is referenced in national preparedness documentation, but systematic integration of its findings into QA tools is not yet documented. [17]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Regular external evaluation of schools with published reports, creating transparency on overall school quality, including safety-related conditions.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Absence of explicit preparedness indicators in QA frameworks limits systematic monitoring of preparedness teaching and student learning outcomes
- Limited evidence that inspection or evaluation findings on safety and preparedness systematically feed back into revisions of preparedness curricula or teacher training.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Montenegro has adopted a Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for the period 2025–2030 with an Action Plan for 2025–2026, prepared in line with the Sendai Framework and EU disaster resilience goals. The Government's webpage provides the official text and confirms the adoption and timeframe. [18] The Strategy sets out strategic and operational objectives, including public awareness, education, training, and specific preparedness activities in the education sector. It explicitly mentions preparedness education and foresees the development of seminar materials for teachers in preparedness education and psychosocial support, as well as the use of the Digital Classroom platform to host courses and lessons for preschool and primary pupils and teachers in emergency contexts. In addition, the Education Reform Strategy 2025–2035 was adopted in 2025 as the overarching framework for the sector – a 10-year strategy covering all levels of education, aiming to ensure that every child has access to quality, inclusive and modern education and to strengthen teacher support, digital learning, and safe school environments. [19] Together, these two strategies provide both sector-specific DRR direction and a broader education-reform framework linking curriculum development, digital platforms, teacher development, infrastructure investments and school-level preparedness planning.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?

Montenegro integrates preparedness education through the DRR Strategy 2025 – 2030 with Action Plan 2025 – 2026, which mentions preparedness education activities, digital tools (Digital Classroom) and teacher training.

 Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

The DRR Strategy Action Plan sets activities for 2025 – 2026. The education reform project ‘Quality Education for Every Child in Montenegro’, implemented with UNICEF and the EU, is explicitly focused on developing and rolling out the Education Reform Strategy 2025–2035, including digitalisation and inclusion components that support preparedness.

 Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Schools and preschools are required to prepare protection and rescue plans and conduct evacuation drills.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  An alignment between preparedness and education strategy. The DRR Strategy 2025 – 2030 and Education Reform Strategy 2025 – 2035 jointly provide framework that links preparedness education, teacher training, and school preparedness planning.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Implementation of strategy commitments still depends on continued inter-ministerial coordination and sustained financing, as highlighted in preparedness and education-reform project documentation.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education in Montenegro has been developed through strong partnerships between the Institute for Education, the Rescue and Protection Directorate (Ministry of Interior; MoI) and with involvement of other international and civil-society actors. The inter-subject preparedness program emerged from a joint project, ‘Preparedness for response to disasters and DRR’ implemented in 2012, which included teacher training, methodological guidance and school-level activities. The Montenegrin Red Cross plays a key role in emergencies and conducts first-aid training and awareness-raising in schools and communities.

KEY QUESTIONS:

 Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

The preparedness program was designed and implemented in close cooperation with the Rescue and Protection Directorate, with schools engaging local civil protection services and firefighters through visits, drills and presentations. Parents are involved in school preparedness surveys and consultations, and

municipalities support local drills and awareness campaigns.

 Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

Preparedness activities have been extended to centres for children with disabilities with adapted drills and guidance, indicating attention to inclusion.

 What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

UNICEF played a central role in initiating the preparedness education project, supporting curriculum development, teacher training and evacuation planning in education institutions. UNDRR and EU partners support broader national preparedness capacity, including risk assessment and participation in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

 Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Montenegro has multi-sectoral and cross-border partnerships relevant to preparedness education, especially via UN agencies, EU cooperation, and humanitarian networks. However, they are generally indirect or system-level, rather than embedded directly as sustained partnerships.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Tripartite partnership (Institute for Education – Rescue and Protection Directorate – UNICEF) that resulted in a national preparedness curriculum, teacher training and research on learning outcomes.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  A reliance on project-based, partner driven initiative which may affect sustainability once external support decreases.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

NORWAY

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	Disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
DSB	Directorate for Civil Protection
MoNR	Ministry of Education and Research
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
QA	quality assurance

Norway, Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) Participating States

Norway illustrates a regulation and governance driven preparedness model, where preparedness education is ensured primarily through legal obligations, supervision, and institutional safety requirements rather than explicit curriculum mandates. Preparedness education is embedded indirectly through interdisciplinary curriculum themes and strong duty-of-care frameworks, while pedagogical content, depth, and hazard focus remain locally determined. The case highlights how high-capacity public institutions can sustain preparedness through compliance and supervision, but also how the absence of explicit learning outcomes limits consistency in student preparedness education.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Education in Norway is centrally regulated by the Ministry of Education and Research (MoER) and organised as a 10-year compulsory school (Grunnskole); primary grades 1–7 (ISCED 1) and lower secondary grades 8–10 (ISCED 2) - followed by non-compulsory upper secondary education. Early childhood education and care are widely attended but not compulsory.[1] The 2020 curriculum renewal (LK20) introduced a core curriculum with three interdisciplinary topics – Health and life skills, Democracy and citizenship, Sustainable development – to be integrated across subjects at all levels. [2]

Norway faces a mix of natural and climate-related hazards, including floods, landslides, avalanches and storms, highlighted in national risk and scenario analyses by the Directorate for Civil Protection (DSB).[3] Although preparedness education is not explicitly framed as a curriculum subject, the education system demonstrates preparedness through governance, supervision, and institutional requirements. Municipalities are responsible for supervising school safety and emergency compliance, guided by the Steering Document for Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Preparedness is further reinforced through mandatory coverage of safety and emergency-related competencies in initial teacher education. This showcases how preparedness can be embedded in education systems through regulation and supervision rather than formal curricular mandates.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

Compulsory education in Norway is delivered through a single-structure 10-year primary (1–7; ISCED 1), lower secondary (8–10; ISCED 2), followed by upper secondary education (ISCED 3).[4] The LK20 curriculum consists of a core curriculum and subject curricula for primary and secondary education, emphasising competence-based learning and giving schools considerable autonomy in how to reach competence aims. [5] The core curriculum defines three interdisciplinary topics – Health and life skills, Democracy and citizenship, Sustainable development – which must be integrated across subjects and grade levels. [6]

Preparedness education is not established as a stand-alone subject with dedicated instructional hours in early childhood or primary education, nor is it explicitly named in the core curriculum, but is embedded within the general responsibility for safety, health and security, supported by national guidelines and regulatory requirements.

The approach differs by education levels. In early childhood education, pedagogy is governed by the national Framework Plan for Kindergartens and is organised around care, play, and holistic development rather than the

subject syllabi. Safety and care are therefore framed as duty of care and a safe environment, not as specified competence aims or assessed learning outcomes.

In primary schools, preparedness education can be addressed through mandatory curriculum structures, but the curriculum does not explicitly label preparedness as an education area, nor does it prescribe minimum hours or required progression for preparedness education.

Norway also has a separate, non-curricular layer of mandatory requirements. Specifically, educational institutions are required to maintain local emergency preparedness plans addressing serious incidents such as accidents, violence, threats, and other crises. These obligations function as an administrative safety compliance and training overlays, not curriculum-based teaching. Beyond mentioned, additional preparedness activities are voluntary and locally determined.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness education is not explicitly framed in the core curriculum; interdisciplinary topics provide space for addressing its elements.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Curricula do not explicitly include preparedness education as a stand-alone subject, but do include topics like everyday safety, life management, environmental and climate change issues and civic participation, rights and responsibilities in interdisciplinary topics.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Integration of the three interdisciplinary topics is mandatory, but the extent to which schools link them to concrete hazard- and emergency-related content is locally determined.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Preparedness-relevant content is most plausibly addressed through Natural Science and Social Studies, where pupils are required to examine natural processes, extreme weather, climate change, and how societies organise safety and emergency responses. In addition, Sustainable Development is a compulsory interdisciplinary theme across all grades, requiring schools to address environmental change, risks and long-term societal resilience. While the curriculum does not prescribe specific disaster-preparedness learning outcomes, these mandatory competences aim to create structured entry points for hazard awareness and risk discussions. Regular safety and evacuation drills, mandated through civil-protection legislation, are commonly linked to these subjects in practice, reinforcing preparedness through curriculum-aligned learning activities rather than stand-alone courses.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 Crisis and preparedness are not articulated as explicit learning outcomes in the core curriculum, making preparedness education teaching dependent on local priorities.
- 🟡 Limited national guidance on how to translate climate, sustainability and life-skills competences into concrete, age-appropriate preparedness education (e.g., drills as learning, local risk mapping).

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness-relevant teaching materials in Norway combine national digital resources, public information campaigns and locally developed tools. The DSB produces public self-preparedness materials, notably the brochure ‘How you can play your part in Norway’s emergency preparedness’, which explains household preparedness for one week without external support (water, food, heat, communication) and is disseminated via municipalities and online. Although mainly targeted at the general population, these materials can be used by schools in teaching about society’s emergency systems and individual responsibilities.

Responsibility for technical accuracy of these materials lies with DSB as the issuing authority. When such resources are used in educational contexts, responsibility for age-appropriateness and pedagogical adaptation rests with schools and teachers, as no curriculum-approved preparedness teaching package exists. Local authorities and schools also prepare emergency plans, evacuation procedures and information sheets; some schools integrate these into thematic days or project work. [8] These materials are mandatory for administrative preparedness and compliance purposes but are not designed as structured teaching resources.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Are these resources mandatory or optional?**

Preparedness education resources are optional.

- 🟡 **Who develops them (government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil protection authorities)?**

DSB develops emergency-preparedness information and campaigns. Municipalities and schools develop local emergency-response plans and information tools.

- 🟡 **How are they disseminated and used in practice?**

Preparedness materials are disseminated through municipal channels, online platforms and occasional campaigns; schools may use them in social studies, class councils or thematic days.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Use of DSB self-preparedness materials to introduce pupils to household preparedness, risk scenarios and shared responsibilities between citizens and authorities.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- The absence of a unified, curriculum-mapped preparedness resource package (covering natural hazards, local risks and emergency procedures) for primary schools; current tools focus more on general safety, self-preparedness or violence prevention.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teacher education in Norway is guided by national guidelines for programs such as early childhood teacher education (barnehagelærerutdanning) and primary/lower-secondary teacher education. These guidelines emphasise health promotion, preventive work and children's health and life skills, including knowledge of national guidelines for prevention and health-promoting measures.[9] The LK20 reform strengthened expectations that teachers support pupils' wellbeing, participation and competence in the three interdisciplinary topics, making Health and life skills a central frame for professional practice. [10]

Norway explicitly requires initial teacher training to cover preparedness education for ISCED 0 and ISCED 1. Their approach to preparedness as a mandatory requirement of their initial teacher training focuses on skills development. Explicit preparedness education training is not a separate pillar of initial teacher education, but teachers are expected to address safety, risk awareness and coping skills in everyday pedagogy. In-service professional development is shaped by local employer priorities (municipalities and schools) and national initiatives; evaluations of the curriculum renewal indicate that continuous professional development has focused primarily on competence-based assessment and interdisciplinary teaching, rather than hazard-specific preparedness. Research on Norwegian teacher education and Health and life skills shows that teachers are still developing shared understandings of what 'life skills' entail in practice. [11]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?**

Preparedness is a mandatory requirement of initial teacher training, focused on skills development.

- What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?**

Topics covered include safety, risk awareness and coping skills in everyday pedagogy.

- Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?**

Teacher qualifications and continuous professional development points affect salary and promotion in general, but there is no separate incentive tied specifically to preparedness education training.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

National evaluations indicate broad participation in LK20-related continuous professional development, but do not disaggregate participation by preparedness-related content.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Systematic integration of health promotion and preventive work (including safety and life skills) in national teacher-education guidelines.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Lack of preparedness education modules in initial teacher education and continuous professional development, despite broader societal emphasis on ‘total preparedness’.
-  Limited evidence that research on school preparedness is feeding back into teacher-training curricula.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance (QA) in Norwegian schooling is primarily governed by the Education Act and associated regulations, which guarantee pupils’ right to a safe and good school environment and regulate schools’ responsibilities for health, safety and learning outcomes. National QA focuses on learning results, inclusion, wellbeing, and implementation of curriculum reforms. Evaluations of LK20 examine how schools work with interdisciplinary topics, including Health and Life Skills and Sustainable Development, and how this affects teaching practices and student experiences.

Preparedness education in schools is governed mainly by civil-protection and municipal preparedness regulations, which require institutions such as schools and kindergartens to have emergency plans and conduct drills; these are overseen through municipal and fire-safety inspections rather than curriculum-led school evaluation. Recent studies of preparedness work in Norwegian schools show that staff are generally familiar with local emergency plans, but there is variation in how systematically plans are practiced and in how far students are involved beyond participation in drills.

KEY QUESTIONS:

-  **Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations? (e.g. student learning, classroom practice, and use of drills/simulations as learning opportunities—not only the existence of plans and procedures.)**

Inspections and QA processes primarily review safety conditions, plans and drills, not the pedagogical quality of preparedness education (e.g., student learning about risk, disaster risk reduction (DRR) concepts).

- 🟡 **Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?**

There are no national indicators specifically tracking DRR learning; related aspects are monitored indirectly through surveys and evaluations on wellbeing, Health and life skills and school environment.

- 🟡 **Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?**

Emerging research on school preparedness and student roles in crisis planning highlights areas for improvement, but there is limited evidence of systematic feedback into curriculum or teacher-education reforms.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🟡 Strong legal guarantees for a safe and good school environment, providing a basis for integrating safety and wellbeing into school QA.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 Preparedness is treated largely as operational compliance (plans, drills) rather than a learning area monitored through educational QA tools.
- 🟡 A lack of specific national indicators on students' preparedness knowledge and skills.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Norway's approach to preparedness is framed by a set of national civil-protection and preparedness laws and policies, including the Act on Municipal Emergency Preparedness, Civil Protection Measures and the Civil Defense and successive white papers on civil protection and 'total preparedness'. The 2024–25 white paper 'Total preparedness – Prepared for crisis and war' and related communications emphasises civilian resilience, coordinated prevention and preparedness across sectors, and strong local communities as the backbone of Norway's security.

Education is not the focus of these documents, but schools and kindergartens are recognised as critical institutions responsible for safety and emergency preparedness for children and staff. Norway's Sendai Framework midterm and earlier Hyogo progress reports note that school curricula, education material and trainings include preparedness education concepts and practices, confirming a policy commitment to integrating preparedness into education, albeit without a dedicated preparedness education strategy.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or disaster risk management (DRM)-related strategies?

Preparedness in education is embedded within broader civil-protection and ‘total preparedness’ strategies, not via a separate education-sector preparedness strategy.

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

Ongoing implementation of LK20 and the total-preparedness white paper provides opportunities for closer alignment between curriculum work on interdisciplinary topics and national resilience objectives.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Municipalities and educational institutions are required by civil protection and fire-safety regulations to maintain emergency plans and conduct regular drills.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Strong, up-to-date national civil protection framework with explicit emphasis on ‘total preparedness’ and resilient local communities, within which schools are recognised actors.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- No explicit national strategy specifies how preparedness education should be translated into curriculum content, teacher training or school-level pedagogy.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Norway’s preparedness model is strongly municipal and multi-actor. Municipalities have broad responsibilities for preparedness, including risk and vulnerability analysis and planning, and they commonly coordinate with public agencies and the voluntary sector. In the school sector, collaboration tends to happen through school owners/municipalities and local emergency actors (e.g., fire services, police and health services), and through structured school safety and preparedness planning guided by Udir. Voluntary organisations, especially the Red Cross, contribute educational and practical preparedness capacity including learning activities that build first aid and resilience-related competencies.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Municipal coordination and partnerships with voluntary preparedness actors are a defined feature of Norway's preparedness ecosystem.

- Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

Participatory approaches exist (e.g., pupil involvement in drills and first-aid learning), but there is evidence of systematic co-design with vulnerable groups in school preparedness.

- What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

Role is usually indirect through operational partnerships and dominated by local/national actors.

- Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multi-sectoral cooperation is common at the local level.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Red Cross Norway provides a structured early years first-aid learning package (ages 3–8), supporting practical life-saving skills and age-appropriate safety learning.
- UDIR preparedness planning guidance offers schools a concrete, nationally hosted tool for clarifying roles, planning measures, and strengthening preparedness work in schools and kindergartens.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Limited publicly available evidence on whether partnership activities translate into consistent student-level preparedness learning outcomes.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

NEW ZEALAND

Acronyms and abbreviations

CDEM	Civil Defence Emergency Management
CPD	continuing professional development
DRR	disaster risk reduction
ECE	early childhood education
ERO	Education Review Office
MoE	Ministry of Education
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NDRS	New Zealand's National Disaster Resilience Strategy
NZC	New Zealand Curriculum
PGC	Professional Growth Cycle
WTPS	What's the Plan, Stan? educational resource

New Zealand, Global Comparator

New Zealand illustrates a resource- and compliance-led model of preparedness education where operational preparedness is mandatory. Schools and kindergartens must have emergency plans and procedures, while classroom preparedness education is locally decided and supported through national, curriculum-linked resources (e.g., “What’s the Plan, Stan?”). The case highlights how a decentralised curriculum can still achieve nationwide consistency via a strong national brand, common templates, and multi-level partnerships (National Emergency Management Agency [NEMA], Ministry of Education [MoE], local Civil Defence Emergency Management [CDEM] groups, schools, communities and families).

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

New Zealand faces high seismic, volcanic, tsunami, flood and severe weather risk due to its position on the Pacific “Ring of Fire” and exposure to oceanic and alpine hazards, as recognised in its national strategy framing [9]. NEMA leads emergency management nationally, working with local authorities, Māori society, schools and communities under the CDEM system. Education is governed by the MoE with a national curriculum for Years 1–13 (The New Zealand Curriculum) and a distinct early childhood curriculum (Te Whāriki). Both emphasise key competencies, wellbeing and localised curriculum design. In primary education, preparedness learning is typically supported through curriculum-linked classroom resources that teachers can integrate into learning areas, while in early childhood education (Te Whāriki) preparedness is approached as part of a distinct pedagogical space focused on wellbeing, relationships, routines, and family (whānau) partnership rather than “hazard lessons” as such. [2] [3] New Zealand was selected as a comparator because it has long-standing, widely disseminated preparedness-education resources for schools (‘What’s the Plan, Stan?’) [10] and whole-of-society strategies that explicitly recognise the role of education in resilience [9].

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) provides a competency-based, locally adaptable framework for primary schooling. Te Whāriki is mandated for licensed early childhood services and emphasises holistic wellbeing, relationships, and strong links with family and community [2] [3]. Preparedness is not a standalone learning area but is supported through curriculum-aligned resources and school-level obligations. In primary, curriculum integration tends to occur through learning activities aligned to NZC competencies (supported by optional resources like WTPS), whereas in early childhood education integration is framed through Te Whāriki’s emphasis on holistic wellbeing, relationships, and continuity with families, with preparedness embedded into everyday routines and service-level practice. [2] [3] [10] The Ministry of Education sets curriculum parameters and requires school emergency planning; NEMA provides curriculum-linked preparedness resources (WTPS); schools/teachers/boards decide classroom integration and implement plans/drills locally (with support from local CDEM where relevant). [7] [10] [9]

KEY QUESTIONS:



Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

NZC/Te Whāriki does not prescribe DRR as a standalone subject; preparedness is mainly supported through curriculum-linked resources (WTPS) and local curriculum design rather than explicit mandated DRR content. [2][3][10]

- What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Preparedness learning via WTPS covers key hazards (earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, volcanoes, severe weather), safety behaviors (drop-cover-hold, evacuation), household/school planning, and community engagement. [10]

- Is integration mandatory or optional?

Core curriculum outcomes do not mandate a discrete DRR subject; however, every school must maintain an emergency plan and prepare for emergencies and traumatic incidents (operational preparedness is compulsory even if classroom integration remains locally determined). [7] Ministry guidance and templates support schools and early learning services to plan for emergencies, run drills, and manage incidents; these provide recommended approaches rather than mandated classroom content. [6][7][8] WTPS is a voluntary, curriculum-linked resource that schools can choose to use for classroom learning. [10] In practice, DRR learning is curriculum-embedded when teachers use WTPS activities, while emergency planning and drills operate as an operational preparedness overlay (mandated through planning expectations). [10][7]

GOOD PRACTICES:

- National, free, curriculum-linked resource ‘What’s the Plan, Stan?’ widely available to primary schools [10].
- Ministry guidance and templates for school and early learning emergency planning, drills and incident response [6] [7] [8].
- Annual ShakeOut-style national drills promoted by NEMA, reinforcing protective actions and evacuation practice and referenced in WTPS and wider readiness messaging [10].

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

New Zealand provides national, no-cost teaching materials and operational guidance for emergencies in schools and early learning services [6] [7] [10]. WTPS offers curriculum-linked classroom resources, while the Ministry of Education issues templates and guidance to support planning and drills. The materials emphasis differs by level: in primary, WTPS functions as a classroom-facing set of curriculum-linked teaching tools, while in ECE the main tools are Ministry emergency planning and incident-preparedness guidance/templates used to shape routines, communication with families/caregivers, and staff practice in age-appropriate ways consistent with Te Whāriki. [10] [6] [7] [8] [3] NEMA provides national readiness education resources (Get Ready/WTPS); the Ministry of Education provides operational guidance and templates for schools/ECE; school leaders/teachers select resources and adapt delivery to learners and local hazards. [10] [6] [7] [8]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Classroom use of specific resources such as WTPS is optional, but having an emergency plan, practicing procedures, and preparing for incidents is required for all schools. [7] Ministry guidance/templates are recommended (non-binding) supports for implementation rather than mandated classroom content. [6] [7] [8]

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

NEMA develops WTPS and national readiness content in partnership with education agencies; the Ministry of Education develops operational guidance and templates for schools and ECE services. [6] [7] [8] [10] National content providers (e.g., NEMA for Get Ready/WTPS) are responsible for technical accuracy and consistency of hazard messaging, while the Ministry of Education is responsible for education-sector guidance/templates; schools/services adapt delivery for learner age, needs and local context. [10] [6] [7] [8]

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Materials are disseminated via NEMA's Get Ready website and Ministry portals, including downloadable PDFs/templates for planning, drills, communication and wellbeing support. [6] [7] [8] [10] Delivery commonly blends procedural practice (planning, drills, evacuation routines) with interactive classroom learning (scenario discussions, quizzes, take-home planning tasks), using WTPS classroom activities alongside Ministry templates for operational preparedness. [10] [7] [8] In practice, schools commonly combine classroom learning (WTPS activities) with whole-school routines such as evacuation route practice and family/whānau take-home planning prompts, linking school preparedness with household readiness messaging. [10] [7]

GOOD PRACTICES:

-  'What's the Plan, Stan?' provides lesson ideas, fact sheets, quizzes, and guidance for school leadership, aligned to NZC competencies and key hazards [10].
-  Schools can use WTPS to run scenario-based discussions and local hazard activities (e.g., mapping tsunami/flood evacuation routes or identifying safe assembly areas) alongside practice drills and family/home planning prompts. [10]
-  The Ministry's Planning and Preparing for Emergencies guidance and the School Emergency Management Plan template offer structured, practical tools for school and ECE planning [7] [8].

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teacher capability in preparedness is largely built through school-level planning duties and national guidance, rather than through a dedicated DRR strand in initial teacher education. Preparedness is embedded through policies, plans and resources, with expectations on staff participation in drills and incident response [2] [3] [7]. Primary staff capability focuses on leading drills and facilitating classroom learning using curriculum-linked resources, while ECE capability is more strongly oriented toward maintaining safe routines, supporting children's wellbeing during disruption, and engaging families as partners in preparedness and reunification. [7] [10] [3] [6] The Teaching Council sets the Professional Growth Cycle expectations; the Ministry of Education provides emergency/incident guidance used in staff induction and planning; school/ECE leadership ensures staff are trained and familiar with procedures through drills and planning routines. [11] [12] [6] [7]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

There is no nationwide requirement for a dedicated DRR module in initial teacher education; preparedness-related practice is primarily advanced via in-service guidance on emergency planning, drills, traumatic incident response and wellbeing. [7] The Teaching Council's Professional Growth Cycle (PGC) emphasises ongoing, standards-based professional learning tailored to local needs, rather than specifying particular content areas such as DRR. Schools and services decide how risk and emergency topics feature within their PGC processes. [11] [12]

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Emergency planning, evacuation, communication protocols, psychosocial response, pandemic planning and coordination with authorities are covered through Ministry guidance and templates. Schools and early learning services must maintain plans and procedures and ensure staff familiarity, making operational preparedness expectations mandatory even where DRR pedagogy is not prescribed. [6] [7] Professional development requirements are framed broadly (performance, standards, professional growth), and licensing guidance for home-based ECE services aligns appraisal/PD for certificated teachers with the PGC without prescribing DRR-specific content. [4] [11] [12]

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

CPD recognition for DRR-related content is not centrally specified, and DRR training is not described as linked to a national points system or salary progression. External review processes can provide improvement signals, but they do not create DRR-specific certification pathways. [1] [11]

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Uptake depends on school priorities, regional support and leadership decisions, since DRR-specific CPD is not centrally prescribed. [1] [11] Available sources do not provide a single national metric on teacher

participation in DRR-focused CPD; as a result, reach is best understood through local implementation and review evidence rather than national participation statistics. [1] [11]

GOOD PRACTICES:

- Ministry incident and pandemic planning guidance (for schools and ECE) is often used as the basis for staff workshops, induction and drills [6] [7].
- Whole-school drills and child-centered learning activities from WTPS support both staff and student readiness and can be integrated into regular school routines [10].

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance in New Zealand is led by school boards (governance) and the Education Review Office (ERO), supported by Ministry of Education guidance and licensing criteria [1] [5] [7]. Emergency planning is a compliance expectation, but resilience/preparedness education is not a distinct evaluation domain. Instead, it sits implicitly within broader reviews of curriculum, student wellbeing and safety [1] [2] [3]. Schools sit within ERO's evaluation approach and board governance, while ECE preparedness expectations are primarily reinforced through licensing/health and safety criteria and associated Ministry guidance. [1] [5] [6] [7] School boards and leadership are accountable for plans/procedures and internal evaluation; ERO conducts external reviews of school systems for safety/wellbeing; the Ministry of Education provides the baseline emergency planning guidance/templates used as reference points. [1] [7] [8]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations? (e.g. student learning, classroom practice, and use of drills/simulations as learning opportunities—not only the existence of plans and procedures.)**

ERO's external evaluations consider how schools provide a safe environment and promote student wellbeing and may check that emergency plans and procedures are in place, but they do not systematically assess hazard education or students' DRR-related knowledge and skills as a separate focus. [1] [7]

- Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?**

National indicator and evaluation frameworks emphasise effective teaching, internal evaluation, and learner wellbeing; these could be used to look at how drills, simulations and WTPS-type activities are used as learning opportunities, but there are no DRR-specific indicators on student competencies or behaviors. [1] [2] [3]

- Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

Evidence on the impact of preparedness education is largely indirect. ERO's thematic work on Covid-19, attendance and wellbeing shows how crises affect learning and school systems, but it does not separately track outcomes from DRR-focused teaching or drills. [1] Where issues are identified (typically around safety, wellbeing, and procedures), feedback is more likely to feed into school-level improvement planning and internal evaluation rather than into DRR-specific curriculum standards or national teacher PD requirements. [1] [7]

GOOD PRACTICES:

- Strong culture of internal and external evaluation, with boards and ERO expected to use evidence about wellbeing and learning to drive improvement [1].
- Regularly updated Ministry guidance and templates provide a common benchmark for what schools and ECE services should have in place for emergencies [5] [6] [7] [8].

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

New Zealand's National Disaster Resilience Strategy 2019–2029 (NDRS) sets the vision and long-term goals for a resilient, all-hazards system and explicitly frames resilience as a shared responsibility across society, including education providers [9]. The Sendai Framework has influenced its principles and priorities [13]. While the national strategy frames education providers broadly, implementation occurs through two distinct education pathways rather than a single shared delivery model: school planning and classroom supports for primary, and licensing-supported service routines and family partnership for ECE. [9] [7] [5] [3] NEMA leads the National Disaster Resilience Strategy and national readiness messaging; the Ministry of Education translates expectations into education-sector planning requirements and tools; local CDEM groups/local authorities support local readiness activities and coordination. [9] [10] [7]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?

New Zealand's National Disaster Resilience Strategy (NDRS) and the wider CDEM arrangements encourage risk awareness, community participation and capability development, positioning schools and ECE services as key partners in the national resilience system. [9]

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

The NDRS provides a 2019–2029 strategic timeframe for resilience outcomes, alongside ongoing work to

strengthen consistent public messaging and readiness actions through Get Ready and local CDEM activity. [9] [10] In addition, the Natural Hazards Commission's Public Education Strategy 2024–2029 includes a schools program within a five-year work program aimed at growing hazard awareness and preparedness (including participatory approaches and curriculum-focused messaging). [14] At system level, the Government has also introduced an Emergency Management Bill (Dec 2025) to replace the CDEM Act 2002, intended to clarify roles and raise minimum standards across emergency management; while not education-specific, it may shape the broader operating environment for local planning and coordination. [15]

 Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

All schools must have an emergency management plan; ECE services have parallel requirements and templates embedded in licensing and health and safety expectations. [5] [6] [7] [8] These plans and templates typically cover roles/responsibilities, procedures and drills, communication arrangements and incident response actions (including considerations for wellbeing). [6] [7] [8]

GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Alignment between the national strategy (NDRS) and operational guidance through Ministry templates and NEMA resources (including WTPS), supporting a whole-of-society approach [7] [8] [9] [10].
-  Use of a common national brand and messaging (Get Ready/WTPS) to connect households, schools and communities [10].

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness in schools is delivered through multi-level partnerships – NEMA and CDEM groups, the Ministry of Education, school boards and leadership, local authorities, iwi and community organisations – using common messaging and shared resources. The approach reflects New Zealand's emphasis on community-based resilience and partnership with Māori and local communities [6] [9] [10]. In primary, partnerships often support curriculum-linked learning activities and school-wide planning/drills using resources such as WTPS. In ECE, partnerships are shaped by Te Whāriki's emphasis on relationships and family engagement, with preparedness embedded through everyday routines and service practices designed for younger children. [10] [3] [9] [6] NEMA (national strategy/resources), Ministry of Education (education-sector guidance), local CDEM groups/local authorities (local hazard context/support), schools/ECE and boards (implementation), families/community partners (community-based resilience and participation). [9] [10] [3] [7]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Schools use national Get Ready/WTPS materials and can coordinate with local CDEM groups for planning, drills and community readiness activities, including participation in ShakeOut and local hazard awareness events. [10] Ministry guidance on emergencies sets out expectations for coordination with health, police and emergency services, supporting a multi-agency response during incidents. [6] [7]

Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

Te Whāriki emphasises partnerships with families and communities and inclusive learning; these principles can be leveraged for preparedness activities in ECE settings, promoting continuity between home and centre. [3] Participation is typically enabled through school/community activities linked to WTPS and local CDEM engagement (e.g., drills and readiness activities that involve children and school communities). [10] Ministry guidance also addresses inclusion explicitly: it recommends an ‘additional needs liaison’ function, needs assessments and safety care plans developed with families/whānau, involving children/students with additional or high health needs in planning, and adding disability-specific procedures into emergency plans. [7]

What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

National strategy and reporting align with the Sendai Framework, with New Zealand’s mid-term review highlighting strategy alignment and community-centered resilience approaches. [13] In this case study, the international role is primarily through framework alignment and reporting, rather than direct delivery of school preparedness programs. [13]

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multi-sectoral coordination is reflected in Ministry expectations for collaboration with health, police and emergency services and in school coordination with local CDEM groups for planning and drills. [6] [7] [10] Beyond emergency services, Ministry guidance encourages schools/ECE services to establish relationships with local CDEM, Police, Fire and Emergency NZ, relevant health services, and child/welfare and support agencies (e.g., Oranga Tamariki, Victim Support, Lifeline), and to build links with local iwi and community support/mental health agencies for culturally appropriate support. [7]

GOOD PRACTICES:

 Co-branded national resources (Get Ready/WTPS) and local CDEM support for planning, drills and community engagement provide a common platform for schools and communities [7] [8] [10].

 Emphasis on family and community partnerships in Te Whāriki offers a strong normative basis for involving parents/family/caregivers in preparedness learning from early childhood [3].

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

POLAND

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MoSHE	Ministry of Science and Higher Education
QA	quality assurance

Poland, EU Member State

Poland illustrates a strongly mandated, curriculum-driven approach to preparedness education, through the Reform 26: Compass for Tomorrow agenda. While the earlier framework already included safety and emergency-response content, the new core curricula for pre-school and primary education place stronger emphasis practical competences, children's wellbeing, agency, health, safety, first aid, and project-based learning. Preparedness is not treated only as a standalone area but is developed through a combination of integrated pre-school learning, health education, education for safety, interdisciplinary thematic modules, and cooperation with public emergency services and civil-society organisations. In comparative terms, Poland is moving from a predominantly legal and subject-based model towards a broader competence-based and whole-of-society approach to preparedness education.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Poland's national core curriculum covers one year of compulsory pre-primary education (ISECED 0) followed by an eight-year primary school (grades 1–3 integrated 'early school education'; grades 4–8 subject-based) (ISCED 1), after which students progress to general or vocational upper secondary school. [1] Poland is exposed to storms, heatwaves and industrial accidents, and recent flood events in Central Europe have resulted in temporary school closures and disruption of learning, highlighting the vulnerability of the education system to hydrometeorological hazards. [2]

The Ministry of National Education has initiated a broad curriculum reform, including new core curricula for pre-school education and primary education. These will enter into force from 1 September 2026, starting with pre-schools and Grades 1 and 4 of primary school, while the revised Education for Safety curriculum will apply in Grade 8 from 1 September 2027. [3] These reforms make Poland a relevant example of a system seeking to strengthen preparedness through practical competences, health education, safety education, interdisciplinary modules and teacher support

The national disaster risk management framework is relatively mature, underpinned by a strong civil protection and firefighting system. Poland combines a strong legal and institutional framework for preparedness education with external quality assurance and formal teacher training requirements.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Poland's preparedness education framework is undergoing substantial reform. The previous core curriculum, established in 2017 and later amended, already included safety, first aid and emergency-response elements. However, the new core curricula for pre-school and primary education, adopted in 2026, introduce a stronger emphasis on practical competences, wellbeing, children's agency, interdisciplinary learning, and other preparedness-relevant skills. [4]

In early childhood education, preparedness is implemented in integrated manner rather than as a standalone subject. The focus is on developing basic preparedness skills such as establishing safe habits, recognising simple hazards, seeking assistance, and caring for one's own health and the health of others through everyday experiences, play, and social interaction. Particular attention is given to strengthening social competences, children's sense of agency, and preventive approaches, including digital hygiene. This early, experience-based approach lays the foundations for more structured preparedness-oriented learning at the primary school level. [5]

At the primary school level, preparedness-related content is delivered through health education and safety education, implemented in a complementary manner. Health education, taught in Grades 4–8, focuses on health preparedness in everyday life, including physical and mental health, basic first aid, digital safety, and addiction

prevention. Education for safety, implemented in Grade 8, adds a broader civic, emergency, and crisis-preparedness dimension, equipping learners with the competences needed to respond effectively to risks and extraordinary situations. [6]

The reform also represents a shift away from encyclopaedic knowledge and narrow defence-oriented content towards skills-based preparedness education. Greater emphasis is placed on practical exercises, simulations, first aid, crisis response, evacuation, environmental orientation, and pro-social and pro-defence attitudes. The central objective is to strengthen students' preparedness to act effectively in situations of risk and crisis.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness is explicitly referenced in the early childhood and primary school curricula, but its form differs by age group. In pre-school education, it is integrated into everyday learning and child development, while in primary education it is addressed through Health Education, Education for Safety, interdisciplinary modules and practical school-based activities.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

The main dimensions include everyday safety, health protection, digital hygiene, mental and physical health, first aid, evacuation procedures, crisis response, environmental orientation, safe behaviour in school and public spaces, and civic responsibility in risk situations.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Integration is mandatory through the national core curriculum, although some practical and partnership-based activities remain dependent on school-level implementation and cooperation with external actors.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Integrated early childhood preparedness activities through play, social interaction and everyday safety habits.
-  Compulsory Health Education in Grades 4–8, covering safety, digital hygiene, first aid and health preparedness.
-  Strong emphasis on practical preparedness, first aid, evacuation, and crisis response in Grade 8.
-  Interdisciplinary Safety and Defence module, supporting project-based learning across subjects.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  As the new curricula are being introduced gradually from September 2026 onwards, evidence on implementation quality and student outcomes is not yet available.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teaching materials in Poland are being updated in line with the new core curricula and the broader shift towards practical, competence-based learning. Core textbooks and classroom materials must align with the national curriculum and approval procedures set by the Ministry of National Education. In addition, the reform places stronger emphasis on methodological guidance, digital resources and practical learning activities that support teachers in implementing new subjects and modules. [7]

Preparedness education is also supported by a wide range of supplementary materials developed by public institutions, emergency services and civil-society organisations. The Centre for Civic Education provides educational resources used by schools in areas such as citizenship, safety, environmental responsibility and social engagement. [8] Cooperation with the State Fire Service remains particularly important for practical preparedness, including fire safety, evacuation procedures, emergency response and demonstrations. [9] Existing initiatives such as Puchatka Safe Academy continue to provide age-appropriate safety resources for younger pupils, while police, fire services and the Polish Red Cross support schools through materials, workshops and practical demonstrations. [10]

These resources contribute to a whole-of-society approach to preparedness education by extending learning beyond textbooks and formal classroom instruction. However, the gradual implementation of the new curricula creates a need to ensure that materials are coherent, age-appropriate and aligned with the revised learning expectations across pre-school, early primary and upper primary education.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Core textbooks and teaching materials used for formal classroom instruction must align with the national curriculum. The use of other resources, such as NGO materials or emergency service visits, depends on the discretion of teachers and schools.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Resources are developed by MoNE-approved publishers, police, fire services, Polish Red Cross and other NGOs. Responsibility for accuracy and age-appropriateness lies with the approving authority for textbooks, and with the producing institutions for supplementary materials.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Materials are disseminated through regular classroom instruction, school projects, thematic days, workshops, drills, demonstrations and cooperation with emergency services or NGOs. Their use in practice depends on curriculum requirements, teacher preparation, school leadership and local partnerships.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Centre for Civic Education (Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej – CEO) produces educational resources which are broadly used to support schools in areas including safety, citizenship, and environmental responsibility.
- The State Fire Service plays an important role in strengthening pupils' practical preparedness, especially through educational materials and activities related to fire safety, emergency response, and evacuation procedures.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Supplementary materials are useful and widely available, but their use may vary across schools depending on teacher initiative, local partnerships and available support.
- As the new curricula is being introduced, teaching materials will need to be updated and aligned with revised learning expectations.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

The MoNE is implementing systemic measures to ensure adequate teacher preparedness for the new curricula. These include free postgraduate programmes for teachers of health education, continuing professional development, updated qualification requirements, and the provision of teaching materials and methodological guidance. [11] In the area of education for safety, particular emphasis is placed on strengthening teachers' practical preparedness competences, notably in first aid, evacuation procedures, and crisis response. Collectively, these measures aim to ensure a coherent, modern, and preparedness-oriented framework for health education and safety education across all stages of schooling. [12] These measures mark an important shift from preparedness being treated mainly as a safety obligation towards a more coherent professional development framework linked to curriculum reform.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?**

Preparedness is addressed through free postgraduate programmes for teachers of health education, continuing professional development, updated qualification requirements, and the provision of teaching materials and methodological guidance.

- What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?**

Emphasis is placed on strengthening teachers' practical preparedness competences, notably in first aid, evacuation procedures, and crisis response.

- Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?**

Available information does not indicate a separate salary incentive, points mechanism, or certification linked to preparedness related training.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Expected reach and uptake is potentially broad given that Health Education will be introduced as a compulsory subject, and Education for Safety remains part of the primary curricula. However, because the new curricula are being introduced gradually from 2026/2027, evidence on actual uptake is not yet available.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Free postgraduate programmes for Health Education teachers provide a system-level measure to prepare staff for the new curriculum.
-  Updated qualification requirements and methodological guidance support more coherent implementation of Health Education and Education for Safety.
-  The reform links teacher preparation more closely to practical, skills-based and learner-centred approaches, rather than relying only on legal safety obligations.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Implementation quality will depend on whether enough teachers complete the required preparation and receive sustained support.
-  There is not yet evidence on the reach or effectiveness of teacher training under the new curricula.
-  Teachers may need additional practical support to deliver simulations, first aid, evacuation exercises and crisis-response learning in age-appropriate ways.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Poland's quality assurance system combines external supervision by regional education authorities (Kuratorzy oświaty), acting on behalf of the MoNE, with internal evaluation conducted by school heads. Under the Law on School Education, the regional education authority is responsible for monitoring the implementation of statutory tasks of schools, including the assurance of safe and hygienic learning conditions.

Pedagogical supervision is regulated by a separate ministerial regulation, which obliges school heads to conduct internal evaluation and to prepare an annual pedagogical supervision plan defining priority areas for monitoring. Preparedness-related aspects are assessed primarily through monitoring of compliance with safety and welfare obligations, including the existence of evacuation plans, fire-safety documentation and records of drills, which are planned and executed by school heads. While inspectors may verify whether drills and safety procedures are in place, preparedness education has traditionally not been explicitly framed as a pedagogical learning domain, and there are no standardised indicators assessing students' preparedness-related knowledge,

skills or behaviors. Evidence on the effectiveness of preparedness activities is therefore largely administrative and compliance oriented, rather than focused on curriculum-based learning. Inspection findings may trigger corrective actions at school level, but are not systematically aggregated to inform curriculum development, teacher training or national DRR policy.

The new core curricula create an opportunity to strengthen this approach. As preparedness-related competences are more clearly reflected through pre-school education, Health Education, Education for Safety and interdisciplinary thematic modules, quality assurance could increasingly monitor not only whether schools have safety procedures in place, but also whether students develop relevant preparedness knowledge, skills and behaviours. This includes first aid, evacuation behaviour, safe responses to risks, digital safety, health preparedness and crisis response.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Preparedness education topics are indirectly included through supervision of safety measures and documentation (e.g. evacuation plans, drills). There is no evidence of systematic evaluation of classroom practice or student learning related to preparedness. However, the revised curricula provide a stronger basis for future monitoring of preparedness-related teaching and learning, particularly through Health Education, Education for Safety and interdisciplinary modules.

Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

As per available data, no dedicated or comprehensive national indicator framework exists. External school inspections conducted by regional education authorities systematically verify compliance with health and safety regulations, including the existence of evacuation plans, documentation of drills and adherence to fire-safety and emergency procedures. However, these inspections are primarily procedural and administrative and do not include standardised indicators on student learning outcomes related to disaster preparedness.

Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?

Evidence on effectiveness is limited, with no systematic feedback loop informing curriculum development, teacher training or national disaster risk management policy.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🟡 Clear legal assignment of responsibility to school heads for planning and implementing safety measures.
- 🟡 Mandatory internal evaluation provides an entry point for monitoring preparedness practices.
- 🟡 Regular inspections ensure basic compliance with evacuation and safety requirements.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 No evidence is yet available on the quality or consistency of implementation of the new preparedness-related curriculum elements.
- 🟡 Future QA frameworks will need to capture practical preparedness skills, including first aid, evacuation behaviour, crisis response, health preparedness and digital safety.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Poland's disaster risk management framework is governed by legislation on crisis management, civil protection and states of emergency, complemented by the National Security Strategy (2020), which highlights societal resilience and preparedness of the population. [13] In addition, national curriculum reform (Reform 26/Compass for Tomorrow) introduces new core curricula for pre-school and primary education from 1 September 2026, starting with pre-schools and Grades 1 and 4, with further gradual implementation across primary grades. The revised Education for Safety curriculum will apply in Grade 8 from 1 September 2027. [14] The reform strengthens the education-sector basis for preparedness by embedding relevant competences across pre-school education, Health Education, Education for Safety, interdisciplinary thematic modules and project-based learning. It also introduces stronger emphasis on learner wellbeing, agency, practical competences, digital hygiene, first aid, safety and crisis response. This represents an important shift from a predominantly procedural or defence-oriented approach towards a more holistic preparedness framework.

At the same time, civil protection, emergency services and local authorities remain essential implementation partners. Schools continue to be required to maintain safety procedures, conduct evacuation drills and cooperate with local emergency actors. The main future challenge will be to align curriculum reform, teacher training, teaching materials and operational school preparedness so that students develop both knowledge and practical skills for preventing, preparing for and responding to risks.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?

Preparedness is integrated through both civil protection and education-sector reforms. While Poland does not have a stand-alone preparedness education strategy, the new core curricula for pre-school and primary education provide a clearer education-sector framework for preparedness-related learning.

 Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

New core curricula for pre-school and primary education will be implemented gradually from 1 September 2026, starting with pre-schools and Grades 1 and 4 of primary school. Health Education will be introduced in Grades 4–8, while Education for Safety will continue to provide a dedicated space for emergency and crisis-preparedness learning in Grade 8. The revised curriculum also introduces interdisciplinary thematic modules, including the Safety and Defence module, which can support project-based preparedness learning.

 Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Schools must have evacuation plans, conduct drills, and ensure safety procedures are in place.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The new core curricula provide a system-wide opportunity to embed preparedness more clearly across pre-school education, Health Education, Education for Safety and interdisciplinary modules.
-  The Safety and Defence module offers a practical, project-based route for connecting classroom learning with evacuation procedures, safe behaviour, road safety and responses to emergency signals.
-  Health Education strengthens the link between everyday health preparedness, digital safety, mental and physical wellbeing, first aid and prevention.
-  The continued role of civil protection, emergency services and school safety procedures helps connect curriculum reform with practical preparedness at school level.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Limited emphasis on climate-related risks.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness in Polish schools is heavily supported by cooperation with local civil-protection actors, notably the State Fire Service and Volunteer Fire Brigades, which form a dense national network integrated into the National Rescue and Firefighting System. [15] Schools also collaborate with the police, emergency medical services and the Polish Red Cross, particularly for first aid training, evacuation drills and safety awareness activities. Municipalities, as school maintainers, play a key role in facilitating partnerships between schools and emergency services, often coordinating drills and local safety campaigns. National initiatives such as Puchatka Safe

Academy rely on public–private partnerships, combining corporate funding with police expertise to reach a large share of first grade students. [16]

These partnerships extend preparedness education beyond the classroom and contribute to a whole-of-society model. Under the new curriculum reform, they may become even more relevant, particularly for project-based learning, interdisciplinary modules and practical exercises. However, their contribution will need to be better aligned with the new curriculum expectations to ensure consistency, quality and equitable access across schools and regions.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Collaboration with civil protection, Polish Red Cross, police and municipalities is widespread.

Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

No public data indicate that preparedness activities are co-designed with children or vulnerable groups. Existing documentation and program descriptions focus primarily on participation in awareness-raising activities, drills and demonstrations delivered to students.

What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

Limited support through EU civil protection.

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Primarily local and project-based; limited cross-border cooperation in education.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 Puchatka Safe Academy represents a notable public–private partnership model for delivering nationwide safety-related education to early-primary students in Poland. The program is implemented by a private foundation (Maspex Group) in cooperation with the Polish Police and with the endorsement of education authorities, enabling it to operate at scale while remaining aligned with national curriculum requirements.

 The State Fire Service and Volunteer Fire Brigades provide practical support to schools through fire-safety education, evacuation drills, demonstrations and emergency-response activities.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 Partnerships depend heavily on local capacity and initiative.

 Access to partnerships and practical activities may vary by locality, depending on school leadership, municipal support and availability of emergency-service partners.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

PORTUGAL

Acronyms and abbreviations

ANEPC	National Authority for Emergency and Civil Protection
DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
IGEC	General Inspectorate for Education and Science
MoE	Ministry of Education
QA	quality assurance

Portugal, EU Member State

Portugal demonstrates how flexible, framework-based curriculum integration supports preparedness education without prescriptive content or stand-alone subjects. The case exemplifies a co-creation-oriented and locally adaptive model, where preparedness education is embedded across early childhood and primary education through participatory pedagogy and reinforced by inspectorate oversight rather than centralised teaching mandates.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Portugal has a centralised education framework with national curricula implemented across all public and private schools, alongside a strong tradition of school autonomy in pedagogical approaches.[1] Early childhood education (ISCED 0) covers children aged 3–5. Compulsory basic education then extends for nine years and is organised into three cycles: the first and second cycles correspond to primary education (grades 1-6; ISCED 1), while third cycle corresponds to lower secondary education (ISCED 2)

Disaster risk in Portugal is significant and multi-hazard in nature, with recurring wildfires, earthquakes, floods, heatwaves and coastal risks, expected to intensify under climate change.[2] Preparedness education is explicitly embedded in both early childhood and primary education curricula, supported by child-centered, participatory pedagogical approaches and locally co-created materials.[3] Preparedness education implementation is indirectly reinforced through inspectorate-led quality assurance, as the General Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC) evaluates prevention, self-protection and emergency procedures as part of external school evaluation.[4] The Portuguese case therefore illustrates how inspectorate-driven quality assurance can reinforce preparedness implementation, even where curricula rely on flexible rather than mandatory stand-alone requirements.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

Portugal's national curriculum framework covers early childhood education (ISCED 0) and primary education (ISCED 1). In early childhood education, preparedness education is addressed through the Curricular Guidelines for Preschool Education (Orientações Curriculares para a Educação Pré-Escolar - OCEPE), adopted in 2016.[5]. These guidelines are mandatory at framework level but intentionally non-prescriptive, situating preparedness under the broader domain of risk, encouraging children to recognise different types of risks (natural, technological and mixed) and to adopt appropriate self-protection behaviors.[6] Preparedness education is embedded in play-based, experiential learning, including discussions of emergency situations, safety rules, and the role of civil protection agents.

At primary school, preparedness education is integrated through mandatory curriculum framework, notably Decree-Law No. 55/2018, which introduces curricular flexibility and cross-curricular learning, and through the National Strategy for Citizenship Education, where safety, risk awareness, resilience and civic responsibility are addressed across different subjects, compulsory for all schools.[7] Preparedness education includes core themes, such as disaster awareness, self-protection measures, and critical evaluation of information during emergencies.

While schools are formally required to address these topics, implementation is not regulated through subject-specific learning outcomes, minimum hours, or assessment criteria.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness is explicitly referenced at the framework level in both early childhood and primary education. In early childhood education, it appears as developmental guidance on risk awareness, while in primary education it is embedded within cross-curricular citizenship and safety objectives.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Dimensions of preparedness include natural and technological hazards, risk recognition, self-protection, role of civil-protection agents, civic responsibility and media literacy.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Curriculum integration is required on the framework level, but pedagogical implementation is flexible rather than prescriptive. In practice, that means that Portuguese schools are expected to incorporate preparedness education within compulsory subjects, but how deeply and systematically they do so depend on school-level choice, teachers planning, and local implementation rather than mandatory, curriculum requirements.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 Explicit inclusion of risk and preparedness learning outcomes in early childhood education guidelines.

 Cross-curricular embedding of preparedness in primary education through Citizenship Education.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 Absence of clearly defined progressive preparedness competencies across education stages.

 Reliance on school initiative to translate transversal objectives into systematic classroom practice.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Portugal does not rely on a single national preparedness education package. Instead, teaching materials development involves national authorities, local civil protection bodies, and schools themselves. Responsibility for ensuring age-appropriateness, technical accuracy and content consistency is distributed rather than centralised. In early childhood education, the guidelines encourage the development of non-standardised, context-specific

materials, such as leaflets, posters, videos and visual tools, often co-created by children and teachers with the support of local authorities.[8] These materials help children learn about risks, safety plans, and emergency behavior in age-appropriate ways. In primary education, schools similarly produce preparedness materials aligned with the curriculum flexibility framework introduced by Decree-Law 55/2018. Examples include leaflets such as ‘**Fires at School – Do You Know What to Do?**’ (INCÊNDIOS na ESCOLA - Sabes o que fazer?) and ‘**Earthquakes – Are You Prepared?**’ (SISMOS – Estás preparado?), as well as videos and manuals developed collaboratively with civil protection authorities. The National Authority for Emergency and Civil Protection (ANEPC) provides pedagogical resources on prevention, self-protection and risk awareness for schools and communities.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Preparedness education materials are optional and locally selected. Administrative safety materials, such as evacuation maps or emergency plans are mandatory under civil protection legislation.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Materials are developed through a multi-actor model involving national civil protection authorities, local governments, and schools. National bodies provide guidance and exemplar resources, while teachers adapt and co-create materials in cooperation with municipal civil-protection services and, in some cases, NGOs.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Preparedness education materials are disseminated through project-based learning, drills, classroom activities, and community engagement.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The Risk Education Framework (Referencial de Educação para o Risco –RERisco) by ANEPC offers a national, cross-age reference framework for preparedness education, covering natural and technological hazards, self-protection, risk awareness, civil-protection, and safety planning. This guidance enables co-creation of preparedness materials (leaflets, activity sheets, safety plans, videos) by schools, teachers, children and local authorities, adapted to local hazard profiles and community context.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  A lack of standardised national preparedness teaching packages or progression across grades. Reliance on local capacity and initiative, resulting in uneven quality, depth and continuity of preparedness education.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness is not a mandatory component of initial teacher education. Teacher training programs do not include compulsory modules on disaster preparedness or risk education. However, preparedness concepts are indirectly addressed through training on citizenship education, school safety, and wellbeing, depending on institutional focus. Continuous professional development opportunities related to preparedness are available through optional training courses, projects and collaborations with civil protection authorities, but participation is voluntary and not standardised nationally. The absence of mandatory preparedness training results in uneven teacher capacity across schools and regions.

KEY QUESTIONS:

 Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Preparedness is not systematically addressed in initial teacher education and is optional in continuous professional development.

 What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Where preparedness-related training is offered, it typically covers recognition of common hazards (e.g. wildfires, earthquakes and floods), basic emergency response procedures (e.g. evacuation, sheltering and safe behavior during incidents), and school safety management (e.g. understanding evacuation routes, assembly points and safety plans). Training may also address communication and responsibility during emergencies, including coordination with civil-protection services and supporting pupils during crisis situations. These topics are not mandatory at national level and are generally delivered through optional continuous professional development activities linked to school safety, citizenship education or local civil-protection initiatives.

 Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

No links to certification, promotion, or salary progression.

 What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Varies widely depending on school initiative and local partnerships.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The Risk Education Framework, a national, cross-age reference framework for risk and disaster-preparedness education, developed jointly by the national education authorities and ANEPC, intended for pre-school, primary and secondary schools. The framework aims not only at theoretical knowledge but at practical skills and behaviors, such as risk identification, self-protection measures, understanding of civil-protection structures and roles, adoption of safe behavior and emergency response, development of internal safety and evacuation plans within schools.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Inconsistent access to training opportunities.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Portugal's General Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC) plays a central role in quality assurance. As part of external school evaluation, the IGEC analyses, among other things, school leadership and management practices, including prevention and emergency plans, self-protection measures, staff training, and procedures related to risks and accidents. This assessment follows the Reference Framework for External School Evaluation. [9] Preparedness is therefore assessed indirectly through leadership and management criteria rather than as a distinct learning outcome. The IGEC evaluates whether schools have effective safety arrangements and emergency procedures in place but does not systematically assess students' preparedness knowledge or behaviours. In the area of leadership and management, the IGEC assesses the quality of prevention and emergency plans, self-protection measures, training and procedures in the event of risks and accidents. Furthermore, the IGEC's analysis aims to ensure that teaching and management are effective according to the Reference Framework for External School Evaluation.

KEY QUESTIONS:

-  **Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations? (e.g. student learning, classroom practice, and use of drills/simulations as learning opportunities—not only the existence of plans and procedures.)**

The IGEC assesses the quality of prevention and emergency plans, self-protection measures, training and procedures in the event of risks and accidents. However, these assessments focus primarily on organisational and management dimensions rather than pedagogical implementation.

-  **Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?**

IGEC assesses school-level safety, prevention and emergency-planning practices, but there is no consistent, dedicated indicator framework for measuring student level preparedness.

-  **Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective (e.g. inspection findings, assessments, evaluations), and are results fed back into curriculum, teaching materials, teacher education/PD, or school improvement plans?**

The evidence is limited; there is no consistent, national-level evidence on effectiveness of preparedness education.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 The 2023 external evaluation framework includes explicit indicators on risk-prevention, protection and resilience within the 'personal development and well-being' domain, and inspection teams systematically review schools' prevention, self-protection and emergency measures, with findings feeding into school improvement plans.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 Lack of pedagogical preparedness indicators.
- 🍌 Limited feedback into curriculum or teacher training reform.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Portugal integrates preparedness into education primarily through curriculum frameworks and civil protection policy. Preparedness education is supported by citizenship education policies and by national civil protection priorities promoted by ANEPC in cooperation with MoE. A central reference document is Risk Education Framework, jointly developed by the Directorate-General for Education ANEPC and other education bodies. While not legally binding, this document functions as a national strategic framework supporting the integration of risk awareness, self-protection and preparedness across all levels of education, including early childhood and primary education. It aligns preparedness education with the national civil-protection policy objective of promoting a culture of prevention and resilience. [10] Preparedness education is further grounded in national civil-protection policy, notably the objectives promoted by ANEPC to strengthen a culture of prevention and self-protection at community level. In terms of operationalisation, Portuguese schools are legally required to maintain self-protection and emergency plans, covering evacuation procedures, risk prevention measures and coordination with emergency services. While these requirements do not constitute a strategy in themselves, they form part of a national safety governance framework and are reinforced through external evaluation by the IGEC. [11]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?**

Preparedness is addressed through Risk Education Framework and national civil-protection policy, rather than a stand-alone education strategy.

- 🍌 **Are any reforms, pilot program or timelines planned?**

No time-bound national reform or roll-out plan has been announced. Policy direction points to incremental strengthening through guidance and local implementation.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Schools must maintain self-protection and emergency plans, subject to inspectorate review.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- National-level policy coherence between civil-protection strategy and education guidance (Risk Education Framework).

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Absence of a binding national preparedness education strategy with clear objectives, indicators and timelines.
- Limited articulation of future reforms linking preparedness education to curriculum development or teacher training.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness education in Portugal is highly collaborative. Schools work closely with local civil protection authorities, municipalities, firefighters, and emergency services. NGOs and national authorities provide additional materials and expertise. A distinctive feature is the active involvement of children in producing preparedness materials, fostering ownership, and understanding. While participatory approaches are common, particularly in ISCED 0 and ISCED 1, there is limited evidence of systematic inclusion of children with disabilities as active contributors. International organisations contribute resources and guidance, but engagement remains project-based rather than systemic.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Collaboration with municipalities and local civil protection services is widespread, often institutionalised through ongoing support for drills, school safety planning and classroom activities. NGOs, including the Portuguese Red Cross, contribute to specific initiatives and awareness campaigns, while parental involvement is generally indirect.

- Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

Participatory methods are common, particularly child-led activities and peer learning. However, inclusive co-design involving children with disabilities remains limited and largely undocumented.

- What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDRR contribute resources, guidance and occasional capacity-building initiatives, but do not play a structural coordination role in Portugal's preparedness education system.

 Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multi-sectoral partnerships are well established at national and local levels, particularly between education authorities and civil-protection actions. International and cross-border engagement exists largely through project-based collaboration with organisations such as UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDRR, but these initiatives are not embedded in a permanent national framework for preparedness education.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Within the Risk Education Framework, schools are encouraged to develop project-based risk-education activities and to engage with external stakeholders. In practice, this has enabled collaboration between schools and municipal civil-protection services in developing leaflets, posters and videos on risks such as wildfires and earthquakes (e.g. 'Fires at School – Do You Know What to Do?'). This approach strengthens ownership, reinforces learning through practice, and connects schools with community safety systems.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Limited evidence of inclusive participation of vulnerable groups in preparedness education initiatives.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

ROMANIA

Acronyms and abbreviations

DES	Department of Emergency Situations
DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EOP	(School) Emergency Operations Plan
EU	European Union
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NIEP	National Institute for Earth Physics
NSDRR	National Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction
NSRRS	National Seismic Risk Reduction Strategy
SVSU	Voluntary Emergency Services
QA	quality assurance
WB	World Bank

Romania, European Union (EU) Member States

The Romania case shows a clear gap between strong national mandates for school disaster preparedness and uneven implementation across regions and education levels. Heavy reliance on emergency authorities and NGOs results in inconsistent practices and limited curriculum integration.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Romania's education system spans early childhood to higher education and operates within a high-risk disaster environment, exposed to earthquakes, floods, storms, and extreme temperatures. Nearly 10,000 school buildings predate the 1977 seismic code, with over 1,200 classified as high risk, and many schools lack fire safety, accessibility for students with disabilities, sanitation, ventilation, and digital resources, exacerbating educational inequalities. Preparedness education is formally mandated across all education levels through a binding Ministry of Education (MoE) – Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) protocol, covering curricula, extra-curricular activities, and practical drills. However, integration into national curricula is limited; implementation uneven, and monitoring fragmented, focusing mainly on building safety and legislative and procedural compliance rather than on preparedness education. Preparedness activities for students usually occur outside regular class time during the extracurricular activities week [34], with mandatory drills held during school hours, while teachers and staff receive training during this period or outside teaching hours, often after school or on weekends. Romania is selected as a case study for its contrast between strong legal frameworks, high disaster risk, and fragmented execution, offering lessons for inclusive, resilient school preparedness. Emergency authorities demonstrate strong leadership, while NGOs provide complementary innovative initiatives (e.g., first-aid and disaster training caravans, mobile exhibitions, guided tours, community information points, and accessible online resources), highlighting the potential for better coordination with education representatives and scaling effective, inclusive, unitary and integrated practices.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Romania's education system spans all levels, with a protocol between the MoIA and MoE mandating preparedness education at all levels, from early childhood education to university, across curricular and extra-curricular plans, with the annex section of protocol including information, organised by education level, on the indicative topics, the learning objectives, and the methods for achieving them (e.g., discussions with specialists, competitions, round-table meetings, training sessions) [19]. In Romania, primary education includes the preparatory grade and grades I–IV, lasts five years, and generally covers children aged 6–11 in mainstream education, with flexible enrollment starting from age 8 in special education based on age and psychosomatic development (ISCED 1) [7]. However, preparedness education is not yet formally integrated into national curricula. Schools conduct drills, safety exercises, and collaborate with emergency services, but implementation remains uneven and dependent on school initiative. Preparedness activities for students usually take place outside regular class time (e.g., during Green Week [34]), except for mandatory drills which are also held during school hours when classes are briefly suspended. Some schools also use available periods such as the weekly class meeting hour for NGO-led sessions, while teachers and staff receive training either during this extracurricular week or outside teaching hours, often after the school day, in summer, or on weekends. Romania plans to integrate preparedness education more systematically by aligning the upcoming National Strategy for State Defense with EU resilience priorities, with reforms extending beyond curricula to include procedural and emergency planning frameworks [1].

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness education is not yet explicitly referenced in national curricula for early childhood or primary education [1][13], and consultations so far have not identified any core or optional curriculum explicitly or even partially covering preparedness. However, a protocol between the MoE and MoIA mandates its inclusion through curricula and extra-curricular plans. [19]

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)?

Preparedness education in Romanian schools, although not yet officially integrated into national curricula, covers (i) multihazard protective actions and behavior for emergencies such as earthquakes, fires, floods, and explosions; (ii) risk understanding and recognition of early warning signs; (iii) practical competencies through mandatory simulation exercises (typically two per semester per hazard); (iv) civic resilience and community engagement via national contests, optional student clubs [16], teacher training, and partnerships with emergency services; (v) and first-aid training delivered through local emergency services, NGOs and firefighter-led activities. [19]

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Integration of core preparedness education in Romania is mandatory under the MoIA–MoE Protocol, requiring coverage across curricula and extra-curricular plans [19]; however, it is not yet fully embedded in national curricula, so implementation largely depends on individual schools and local school inspectorates. [1]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Strong but uneven partnerships between schools and emergency services—including Emergency Situations Inspectorates at local level (IES), Voluntary Emergency Services (SVSU), police, NGOs, and other local institutions, support delivery of practical preparedness activities.
-  Coordinated efforts by IES, municipalities, and SVSU bolster school-based preparedness through joint public alert exercises, expanded hands-on training in rural areas with limited ISU capacity, and reinforced student skills via extracurricular initiatives such as national contests and technical clubs (e.g., Friends of the Firefighters).
-  Local risk-based planning is integrated into school routines, with institutions conducting two fire-focused evacuation drills per semester, during which they also address additional hazards—earthquakes, floods, and other locally relevant risks, through complementary exercises and information sessions.
-  A structured inspection system led by emergency services reviews school infrastructure, safety measures, legal compliance, preparedness plans, and practical exercises; prioritisation is based on risk, formal requests, and rotation, helping compensate for limited capacity to develop preparedness activities in all schools annually, especially in the Bucharest–Ilfov area [i].

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Ownership of preparedness education sits mainly with emergency inspectorates and NGOs rather than schools, with practical content delivered through extracurricular activities—exercises, campaigns, contests, rather than through formal curricular integration.
- National curriculum integration is still absent. Schools must submit annual preparedness plans to the local school inspectorate, which coordinates with IES for approval; these plans include four mandatory drills per year (two per semester) on different hazards, but the content, methods, and depth remain at each school's discretion.
- Implementation quality is inconsistent across the country: with differences between rural and urban areas, Bucharest-Ilfov and the rest of the country, as well as variations in school leadership, staff engagement, local capacity, and NGO partnerships shape how preparedness is delivered.
- Urban schools often demonstrate lower participation in IES-led preparedness activities compared to rural schools, reflecting disparities in local support and community involvement.
- Current preparedness activities and inspections prioritise infrastructure and safety obligations, while education-oriented components (e.g., knowledge, skills, teacher preparedness, and curricular embedding), remain underdeveloped or inconsistently implemented.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teaching materials for preparedness education are regulated by protocol, which requires age-appropriate, locally risk-adapted resources jointly developed by the MoIA and MoE [19]—though current official materials remain largely outdated and not inclusive [i]. NGOs and scientific institutes fill these gaps with more updated and accessible resources. The national platform Be Prepared (fiipregatit.ro), relaunched in 2024 under the Department of Emergency Situations (DES), provides the most coherent, standardised, and disability-inclusive guidance and must be visibly linked on all public institutions' websites, including schools [23][2]. In practice, schools combine mandatory materials with optional tools shaped by NGO initiatives and partnerships in an ad-hoc manner, without clear guidance on selection or use, and no unified national repository of teaching materials, resources, or good-practice examples exists.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Core materials developed under the MoIA–MoE Protocol are mandatory reference tools but not part of a standardised curriculum (based on desk research and initial consultations) [i][ii]. All other resources — from NGOs, scientific institutes, or local partnerships— are optional and selected freely by schools, with no national guidance on how they should be combined. As a result, complementary tools (e.g., coloring books, NGO modules, mobile exhibitions) are used inconsistently based on local projects and partnerships.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Official resources are produced by MoIA through the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (GIES) and territorial emergency structures, and MoE. Complementary materials are developed by scientific institutions (e.g., National Institute for Earth Physics, NIEP), national NGOs (e.g., Red Cross, Save the Children), and local organisations (e.g., ARCEN, Re:Rise, E.D.I.T.).

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Official materials are posted on MoIA/GIES and MoE websites and distributed through school county inspectorates and local emergency structures for use in mandatory preparedness activities such as safety instruction and drills. Optional resources circulate through NGO platforms, partnerships, community events, and mobile units, and are mainly used in workshops, campaigns, and other extracurricular formats. In practice, schools mix these resources informally, with no national guidance or unified repository to steer or standardise their use.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Preparedness education developed under the MoE–MoIA partnership combines age-appropriate, locally risk-adapted instruction, [19] with practical, nationally coordinated activities—for example (storytelling, simulations, workshops, mobile exhibitions; the School Evacuation Procedures Guide [4]; ‘Friends of the Firefighters’ and ‘With My Life I Protect Life’ competitions [16]) to build student risk awareness, practical skills, and civic engagement.
-  Be Prepared (fiipregatit.ro), Romania’s national preparedness platform, provides internationally aligned, disability-inclusive hazard guides, including a Guide for Children and Parents that supports school-based and home-based preparedness activities [23]; while civil-society platforms complement Be Prepared with specialised resources, including e-cutremur.ro for earthquake-risk information [37], the After the Earthquake map showing building and road hazards [38], and the ‘How to Survive an Earthquake’ guide offering practical community-level survival instructions [40].
-  The national awareness campaign on earthquake risk, ‘I Don’t Shake During the Quake’, provides animated videos and printed materials that teach children correct behavior during earthquakes in a simple, accessible format [27].
-  Emergency institutions (DES and GIES) deliver hands-on preparedness education through mobile units that simulate disasters and teach first aid (Mobile Population Training Center; SMURD ‘Be Prepared’ Caravan) [30][31].
-  Meanwhile, NIEP enhances earthquake learning through ROEDUSEIS manuals and guides, work plans, practical activities, worksheets, and evaluation sheets for three different levels of education (primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary), as well as through school-based tools and interactive exhibits such as seismometers with data dashboards and the MOBEE mobile earthquake exhibition [29][28].
-  NGOs complement official efforts with practical, child-friendly tools (Romanian Red Cross—coloring book, survival kits) [35][48], community-based risk education (ARCEN & Re:Rise — Earthquake Info Point, preparedness events, and guides) [40][41], interactive digital and offline learning (NIEP — Digital Tour ‘Bucharest and the Earthquakes’) [49], and participatory student-led projects with accredited teacher training (Save the Children—Child-Led DRR) [42].

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Core preparedness resources from MoE and MoIA are outdated and insufficiently inclusive, while NGO-developed tools, though more interactive and accessible, are inconsistently integrated into formal instruction, limiting their overall impact.
- Schools' use of optional and complementary resources depends on local leadership, staff initiative, partnerships, and infrastructure, creating disparities between central and local, urban and rural areas and across socio-economic contexts.
- Many educators lack sufficient training to deliver experiential methods, effectively use available resources, or teach updated hazard and risk information, constraining the quality and consistency of preparedness education.
- Mobile exhibitions, training caravans, and other hands-on interventions remain limited; although efforts are underway to expand them, they face logistical challenges, including travel, staffing, and equipment maintenance, and are often inaccessible to children with disabilities.
- There is no centralised repository of teaching materials, best-practice examples, or accessibility standards, and adaptations for vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities and minority populations, are inconsistently applied, reducing coherence and coverage.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Teacher training in emergency preparedness in Romania is fragmented and largely driven by Emergency Situations Inspectorates (GIES/ISU) under MoIA rather than MoE. Continuous professional development includes mandatory first aid training for pre-university teachers [8], but limited national capacity constrains access, and broader preparedness education training depends heavily on NGO initiatives, revealing gaps in formal provision, with teachers and staff receiving training during this extracurricular week [34] or outside teaching hours, often after school or on weekends. Local inspectorates organise two annual sessions for school staff — a 4–6 hour session for directors on infrastructure and safety, and a 2–4 hour session for technical staff on legislation, evacuation plans, equipment and other safety measures [7][6][5]. School-level evacuation drills and informational activities occur twice per semester [8], conducted by appointed teachers or technical staff under directors' oversight [5]. Systematic preparedness education training beyond first aid is not yet integrated into initial teacher education. Policy action is needed to standardise and integrate teacher and educational staff training on preparedness education and build sustainable capacity for continuous professional development.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?**

Preparedness is included in continuous professional development for teachers through mandatory first aid training [8]. Its inclusion in initial teacher education or other preparedness education topics is unclear and requires further consultation. Beyond first aid, systematic preparedness education training is not standardised, and school staff, including teachers, rely on local emergency inspectorates for annual training sessions

on infrastructure and safety, as well as on legislation, evacuation plans, equipment and other related safety measures [7][6][5]. Schools are legally obliged to ensure personnel are trained in first aid under relevant education, occupational health, and ministerial regulations [3][9][17][14].

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Preparedness teacher training in Romania covers first aid through certified programs (e.g., Romanian Red Cross or providers [43][46][47]), ensuring teachers gain recognised competencies, while preparedness skills—including earthquake response, evacuation, using equipment, and hazard-specific interventions and emergency/ infrastructure-related safety measures; are delivered primarily through county-level emergency inspectorates and civil-society initiatives [8][7][6][5]. First aid is mandatory and formally embedded in continuous professional development, but broader preparedness content is not standardised, integrated into initial teacher education, or consistently required for all staff.

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

First aid and other professional development courses for pre-university teachers are reflected in the certification and credit system, with at least five ECTS assigned to priority competencies such as first aid [8]. Additional courses offered by civil society or private providers provide transferable credits (e.g., 15 ECTS for Road Safety and First Aid) [45]. Annual training on emergency themes for school leaders and designated technical staff counts toward professional development requirements, though there is no direct link to salary increases or promotions.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

There is no national data on teacher uptake of preparedness training. However, within the Safer, Inclusive, and Sustainable Schools Project - SISS (World Bank and Ministry of Education) [20], a baseline survey gauged teacher preparedness in disaster risk management and first aid, receiving 2,689 responses (2,163 from primary/secondary schools, 526 from high schools). Though not fully nationally representative, this dataset provides the most systematic measure of teacher preparedness and informs the RI8 indicator (share of schools with teachers trained in first aid) and future policy and capacity-building efforts.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Mandatory certification of pre-university teachers in first aid, delivered through multiple modalities (e.g., e-learning, internationally aligned face-to-face courses, and hybrid thematic programs) ensures standardised competencies, flexible access across diverse school contexts, and formal recognition through ECTS credits, establishing a consistent baseline of emergency preparedness nationwide [8][43][45][46].
-  The Romanian Red Cross has implemented a 3-year hybrid program blending internationally recognised first aid with earthquake-preparedness modules for teachers, administrative staff, and students from kindergarten to university [39][46][47][36], while the 2023–2024 World Bank–Red Cross partnership applied a similar ecosystem approach in five special education schools in Bucharest and formalised collaboration with emergency authorities to strengthen school emergency protocols and plans—together creating inclusive, whole-school preparedness models which could constitute a basis for national scaling.

- County-level emergency inspectorates' sessions for headmasters (4–6 hours) and technical staff (2–4 hours) on infrastructure, legislation, evacuation planning, hazard-specific interventions, and practical exercises, combined with coordinated school-level drills involving headmasters, teachers, technical staff, inspectorates, and NGOs held twice per semester with the participation of emergency personnel at least once per year, provide a comprehensive model for sustaining competencies and embedding preparedness into daily school operations [7][6][5].

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Preparedness training remains heavily dependent on Emergency Situations Inspectorates and NGOs rather than being systematically integrated into teacher education, resulting in uneven access and coverage shaped by local capacity and available initiatives.
- Beyond first aid, preparedness topics are largely absent from initial teacher education, leaving most staff without foundational competencies; additionally, compulsory first aid training under national law [8] applies only to teachers, despite the need for whole-school readiness.
- Course offerings are highly variable, ranging from short 4–6-hour first aid sessions (with potential skill attrition) to 2–6-hour earthquake/disaster modules and lengthy 30–35-hour programs — without harmonised national standards, sufficient trainer capacity, or structured refresher training, undermining continuous nationwide delivery [42][43][45][46][47].
- Participation and compliance monitoring is limited; enforcement mechanisms for mandatory training are unclear, and links to career progression or salary incentives are weak or not present.
- School-level drills vary in frequency, quality, and content, with implementation dependent on local leadership and emergency inspectorate support, leading to inconsistent preparedness between urban and rural settings.
- Data on teacher participation, learning outcomes, and the impact of preparedness training are fragmented, restricting evidence-based policymaking and the ability to prioritise resources effectively.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Romania lacks a standardised national framework to monitor and evaluate preparedness education in schools. ARACIP reports may mention preparedness [21][ii], while Emergency Situations Inspectorates focus on infrastructure, equipment, drills, and contests and workshops, but no unified checklist or systematic indicators exist [i]. Evidence of effectiveness comes mainly from inspectorate activity reports [i] and anecdotal feedback from NGO or pilot programs [36][39][41]. Reporting is limited, fragmented, with weak enforcement, highlighting the need for an integrated M&E framework connected to inspections and teacher professional development.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are preparedness-related topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Preparedness may be referenced in external evaluation reports by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education (ARACIP) [21] [ii], but further consultations with the Ministry of Education are needed to clarify the extent to which emergency preparedness, disaster drills, or first aid training are embedded in inspection criteria, and whether quality standards apply strictly to building safety and equipment or also to the preparedness of students and teachers. From the perspective of the emergency situations inspectorates, school-related inspections typically cover [i]:

- Prevention: infrastructure safety, documentation and legal compliance, and emergency equipment.
- Preventive information: information, exercises, training, interactive workshops (e.g., checking children's knowledge of emergency backpacks or how to call emergency numbers).
- Community activities: information points and interactive sessions outside schools to test and reinforce preparedness knowledge.

Are there indicators or frameworks used to assess impact of such curriculum/teaching materials/teacher education?

No standardised national indicators or frameworks currently exist to assess the effectiveness of preparedness training or materials in schools; further consultation with the Ministry of Education is needed to confirm. The baseline survey conducted under the Safer, Inclusive, and Sustainable Schools Project under the World Bank provides preliminary insights on teacher preparedness but is not nationally representative [20].

Is there evidence of effectiveness or feedback loops?

Evidence comes primarily from the emergency services activity reports [i] and anecdotal insights from NGO-led or pilot projects [36] [39] [41], providing qualitative feedback but no systematic, national-level assessment.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Pilot surveys and project-based monitoring (e.g., SISS Project baseline, Red Cross and World Bank school programs) provide localised feedback, help identify gaps, and inform iterative improvements in school-level preparedness and training [39][46][47][36].
-  No additional examples or good practices have been identified at this stage, though further consultations may reveal more.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Monitoring and evaluation of preparedness exercises and outcomes are limited, with no standardised reporting, indicators, or enforcement mechanisms, hindering evidence-based policy development and national replication.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Romania incorporates disaster, emergency, and climate preparedness into education through a broad legal and strategic framework, though implementation remains fragmented and largely depends on local schools and Emergency Situations Inspectorates. Operational guidance, such as the National School Evacuation Guide, exists but is outdated, narrowly focused, and not fully inclusive [4]. National strategies on DRR (2024–2035) [11], seismic risk (2022–2050) [10], and climate/environment education (2023–2030) [12] outline systematic curriculum integration, teacher training, inclusive risk communication, experiential learning, and targeted preparedness for high-risk infrastructure, promoting eco-social competencies and action-oriented education. Future reforms, pilot projects, and timelines will be refined through stakeholder consultations.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?

Romania integrates preparedness in education through national DRM and climate frameworks. The 2013 MoIA–MoE Protocol mandates disaster risk reduction, first aid, and emergency preparedness in curricula and joint school activities [19]. Law No. 198/2023 requires schools to ensure fire and seismic safety, train staff, and conduct drills, while Civil Protection and Fire Protection legislation embeds preventive education across all school levels [8][6][5].

- Are any reforms, pilot programmes or timelines planned?

Further consultation with DES and GIES is required to clarify whether any reforms, pilot programmes, or implementation timelines for school preparedness education are currently planned.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

In Romania, schools are legally required to have evacuation plans under fire laws [5][18], typically prepared by technical staff with support from certified fire safety companies or local Emergency Situations Inspectorates, covering equipment, evacuation routes, signage, and alarms. Comprehensive emergency preparedness plans for broader disasters and inclusive practices do not exist; the current GIES evacuation guide for schools and other related guidelines are limited, outdated, and non-inclusive [4][33], highlighting the need for standardised, inclusive plans nationwide.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Romania combines a multi-layered legal framework mandating DRM topics, safety norms, and practical exercises for schools, staff, and students [19][16][8][6][5] with national strategies (NSDRR 2024–2035, NSRRS 2022–2050, Climate/Education Strategy 2023–2030) that align infrastructure risk, eco-social competencies, and climate resilience with learning outcomes and teacher development [11][12][10].

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🟡 National strategies, although proposing comprehensive measures, have not yet been fully implemented and require stronger collaboration between ministries, clear ownership, and dedicated budgets for effective execution.
- 🟡 Operational guidance such as the National School Evacuation Guide is outdated, narrowly focused, and not fully inclusive, highlighting the need for comprehensive, hazard-specific Emergency Operations Plans.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

School preparedness education in Romania relies on partnerships among civil protection agencies, NGOs, local authorities, and the education sector, although collaboration is largely project-based. Civil society organisations—including the Romanian Red Cross, Save the Children, and others [36][39][41][42]—provide local first aid and earthquake preparedness training. Inclusive approaches are emerging, particularly in special education, as seen in the World Bank Pilot in Bucharest (2023–2024), which trained 200 staff and 90 students while coordinating with emergency authorities. The Safer, Inclusive, and Sustainable Schools Project strengthens 55 high-seismic schools with teacher training, e-learning modules, and equipment [20]. Historical cross-border initiatives, such as SAFE QUAKE (2010–2011), involved Croatia and Bulgaria to enhance preparedness for school children and vulnerable groups [32]. Nonetheless, systematic multi-sectoral and cross-border partnerships remain limited and will be refined through stakeholder consultations.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Preparedness education in Romania is supported through partnerships with local Emergency Situations Inspectorates [19][16], civil society organisations such as the Romanian Red Cross and Save the Children, and local authorities [36][39][41][42]. At the national level, the MoIA–MoE Protocol provides overarching guidance, while local IES units often have complementary agreements with County School Inspectorates. Parents are typically engaged through information points or activities such as ‘Green Week’, and municipal authorities coordinate public alert exercises and school evacuation drills (e.g., once every 1–2 years in rural areas, 1–3 years in cities), selecting hazard scenarios and overseeing exercises. These arrangements represent good practice by compensating for limited local IES capacity, supporting schools as integral parts of broader community preparedness. [i]

- 🟡 **Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

Emerging approaches engage students, parents, teachers, and staff with disabilities—especially in special education—through adapted workshops, inclusive emergency plans, and hands-on drills (e.g., World Bank Pilot in Bucharest, 2023–2024), and extend to participatory community activities under the Seismic Info Point, including interactive drawing sessions, working-dog demonstrations (ARCEN, Re:RIse, Red Cross, Be

Prepared Fund, Bucharest Community Foundation), and seismic preparedness workshops for schools (NIEP) [36][39][41].

What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

International actors such as the World Bank and UNICEF provide expertise and guidance, technical support, and frameworks for inclusive DRM education, though direct programmatic involvement in schools is limited and often mediated through national authorities or pilot projects. More details are expected during future consultations.

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

While national and local partnerships are common, systematic multi-sectoral and cross-border initiatives are rare; historical examples include the SAFE QUAKE project (2010–2011) with Bulgaria and Croatia targeting school children and vulnerable groups [32].

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  The World Bank Pilot on Inclusive DRM Education in Special Schools, Bucharest (2023–2024) trained 200 staff and 90 students, delivered earthquake preparedness workshops, certified first aid training, established school preparedness committees, inclusive emergency plans, and coordinated with emergency authorities.
-  The Romania Safer, Inclusive, and Sustainable Schools Project supports 55 high-seismic schools with teacher first-aid training, e-learning modules, equipment, and universal access, promoting resilience for students with disabilities and marginalised communities [20].
-  Civil society-led initiatives (Save the Children, Be Prepared Fund of the Bucharest Community Foundation) providing local first-aid and earthquake preparedness training and participatory community activities, including interactive workshops for children, teachers and parents [36][39][41].
-  Historical cross-border project SAFE QUAKE (2010–2011) in collaboration with Bulgaria and Croatia enhanced preparedness for school children and vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities [32].
-  More details are expected during future consultations.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Collaboration between schools, civil protection, and municipalities is often project-based, uneven, and dependent on local capacities and initiatives.
-  Inclusive approaches remain limited to pilot or special education projects; broader implementation is inconsistent.
-  Multi-sectoral and cross-border partnerships are rare and not systematically institutionalised.
-  Parental engagement is mostly limited to information points or occasional community events.
-  Program sustainability and scale-up depend on intermittent external funding and NGO capacity rather than formalised national frameworks.

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[44] Micul Erou: First Aid Courses for Children – “We Learn to Be Rescuers, Not Doctors” (Școala 9), <https://scoala9.ro/micul-erou-cursuri-de-prim-ajutor-pentru-copii-noi-invata-sa-fim-salvatori-nu-medici/2137>.

[45] Road Safety and First Aid (Association for Education, Development and Youth Engagement – EDIT), <https://asociatia-edit.ro/formare-continua-curs-acreditat>.

[46] Basic First Aid Course (Romanian Red Cross), <https://crucearosie.ro/ce-facem/cursuri-de-instruire/curs-de-prim-ajutor>.

[47] Disaster Preparedness Training (Romanian Red Cross – Sector 6 Branch), <https://crucearosie6.ro/portfolio/pregatire-in-caz-de-dezastre>.

[48] “Rucsac de Bine” – Disaster Survival Kit, BineBoutique, Romanian Red Cross – Sector 6 Branch. <https://shop.bineboutique.ro/rucsac-dezastre-1.html>.

[49] Digital Tour “Bucharest and the Earthquakes” (National Institute for Earth Physics – NIEP). <https://infp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=b14fb7c496204dd2b72946ca5e1f2722>.

[50] “Earthquake Simulation in Romania” – educational 3D project (RE:Rise & EarthquakeSim). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtdcTSly0h4>.

Annex 1. Consultations

Stakeholder	Representative(s)	Date, Chanel	Key Insights Shared
MAI, Bucharest-Ilfov Emergency Inspectorate	Mr. Petruța Precup, Head of the Public Training and Education Service	Dec. 10, 2025 (<i>face-to-face</i>)	See Consultation Notes for details. Confirmed and clarified legislation; explained how emergency preparedness is integrated in schools from the inspectorate's perspective, focusing on drills, competitions, community information points, mobile training centers, and preventive activities related to school infrastructure and equipment. Highlighted that teacher training covers only administrative and safety themes for headmasters and technical staff. Noted scarcity and lack of centralisation of training materials which are also outdated and not inclusive, being mostly produced by emergency services rather than schools.
MOE, Directorate-General for Equity and Performance in Pre-University Education	Cristina Mangiurea, Early Childhood Education Lead	Dec. 10, 2025 (<i>via Teams</i>)	Emphasised the need for formal interinstitutional communication to receive the information requested. Explained that she could not provide concrete answers because the topics fall outside her area of responsibility, and any official response would require superior approval. Confirmed the findings from the earlier ISUBIF consultation. Advised against independently scanning the online list of school curricula to avoid omissions and recommended waiting for the Ministry's formal reply.

Annex 2. Legislation table on Preparedness Education in Romania

Document	Scope / Relevance	Key Provisions	DRM-Education Provisions (new column)
Protocol MoIA-MoE (2013)	Cooperation between Interior and Education Ministries on emergency preparedness in schools	Established joint responsibilities for risk communication and preparedness activities in education institutions.	Requires integration of disaster-risk and emergency-preparedness knowledge into national curricula; mandates development of protocols for risk communication and education by MoE and GEIS; enforces implementation across all education levels under Law No. 481/2004. Mandates disaster and emergency knowledge in the national curriculum. Initially valid only 5 years; then automatically renewable unless otherwise decided. Required MoIA–MoE protocols for risk communication and education, aligned with Law 481/2004. Obligated all education levels to apply risk-related protocols established with GIES.
Law No. 198/2023 on Pre-University Education linked with Order No. 3825/2013 approving the Regulations of the National Student Competitions “Friends of the Firefighters” (“Prietenii pompierilor”) and “With My Life I Protect Life” (“Cu viața mea apăr viața”)	Governs duties of schools for safety and emergency behavior	Obligations on fire safety, seismic safety, staff training, and joint activities with emergency situations inspectorates at local level; requires annual exercises.	Obligates MoE to include fire safety, earthquake behavior, and civil protection topics in curricula; mandates at least 2 Preparedness education activities per year (one with local emergency situations inspectorates); requires applied lessons, drills, preventive information, and technical clubs (Friends of the Firefighters/ “Prietenii pompierilor”). The mayor has responsibilities to facilitate and support the preparedness activities of student clubs. Obligates maintaining fire and seismic safety conditions of school buildings. Mandates compliance with national fire and seismic safety norms. Requires staff training and student education on emergency behavior. Ministry must include fire, earthquake, and civil protection topics in curriculum. Minimum two emergency-education sessions/semester, at least one with GIES. Joint activities include preventive briefings, drills, open lessons and technical clubs. Regulation for these activities approved via joint MoIA–MoE Protocol. Mobile GIES centers may be used during joint actions. Mandates that teachers should take a first aid course.

Document	Scope / Relevance	Key Provisions	DRM-Education Provisions (new column)
Law No. 481/2004 on Civil Protection (republished 2023)	National civil-protection education and preparedness	Establishes compulsory public information and preventive education mechanisms.	Makes preventive civil-protection education mandatory across all education levels; MoE & GIES must jointly set curriculum topics and practical activities; includes extra-curricular plans; NGOs may support educational activities; media required to broadcast risk information and guidance.
Law No. 307/2006 on Fire Protection (republished 2009) Order No. 163/2007 for the Approval of the General Fire Protection Norms	National fire-protection framework	Defines the obligations of public authorities and the education sector regarding fire safety. While Law No. 307/2006 assigns fire prevention and fire safety responsibilities to school headmasters/directors, it does not specify these duties in detail; Order No. 163/2007 complements the law by clearly detailing the specific roles, responsibilities, and measures that school leadership must implement.	Requires fire-protection education in curricula and extra-curricular activities, but does not detail it; mandates practical/applied fire-safety exercises; regulates national student competitions Friends of the Firefighters/“Prietenii pompierilor” and With My Life I Protect Life/ “Cu viața mea apăr viața” (Order No. 3825/2013). Ministries along with GIES must define fire-safety education themes for all educational forms and adult training.
National Guide on School Evacuation	Operational guide for school evacuation in earthquakes and fires	Provides evacuation procedures for both earthquakes and fires, but outdated and not truly inclusive; narrowly focused on evacuation only.	Needs redesign into a full Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) : before/during/after actions, functional annexes, hazard annexes; draft should integrate basic plan + functional annexes + 2 hazard annexes (earthquake, fire); must become inclusive and aligned with international models. Recommendation: Developing a full School Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) with: basic plan, functional annexes, and hazard-specific annexes. First step: revise existing guide to introduce preparedness concepts + retain only earthquake and fire hazard annexes for now.

Document	Scope / Relevance	Key Provisions	DRM-Education Provisions (new column)
GD No. 557/2016 on the Management of Risk Types	It mandates a national baseline for how risk communication is done and on public information access, ensuring every citizen can easily reach official preparedness guidance through institutional websites (fiipregatit.ro).	Chapter II, Art. 5, obligates all responsible authorities, central and local, to display prominently on their official websites a direct link to the national preparedness platform fiipregatit.ro. This includes all subordinate or coordinated structures and institutions (including institutions related to education).	The article creates a nationwide requirement to facilitate public access to verified preparedness information. By mandating the visibility of the fiipregatit.ro link across all institutional websites, it supports public education on prevention measures and appropriate behaviors during major emergencies or disasters.
National Strategy for DRR (SNRRD) 2024–2035	Romania’s primary DRR strategy for 2024–2035	Highlights vulnerability of education infrastructure; promotes public awareness, risk communication, and community preparedness.	Explicitly calls for integrating DRR in national curricula; prioritises DRM teacher training; emphasises child/youth awareness; promotes participatory, accessible communication; calls for tailored inclusive education for vulnerable groups and alignment of platforms to accessibility standards. Promotes participatory/volunteer initiatives and stronger school–authority–CSO cooperation. Objective 6.1, Action 4: increase risk awareness among students; embed preventive education in routine school programs. 9,744 schools built before 1977 without seismic reinforcement. 2+ million students (50%) and 6,500 buildings (45%) in medium seismic hazard areas. 274,000 students (7%) and 1,600 buildings (11%) in high seismic hazard areas. 4,000+ schools not meeting fire codes; 25% use high-risk heating systems; many lack alarms, suppression, and safe exits.

Document	Scope / Relevance	Key Provisions	DRM-Education Provisions (new column)
National Seismic Risk Reduction Strategy 2022-2050 (NSRRS)	National seismic-risk reduction strategy	Provides detailed seismic exposure data for education buildings; uses the MoE's data information system for risk profiling.	Reinforces need for Preparedness education in high-exposure regions; supports using school seismic-risk data to tailor preparedness programs; encourages integrating seismic-risk awareness and preparedness into local school planning and drills. ~50% of students and 45% of education buildings in medium hazard; ~7% of students and 11% of buildings in high hazard. Uses the data in the information system under MoE for exposure: number of students, number of buildings, construction year, height, area, energy efficiency, hygiene status. Enables systematic initial seismic-risk assessment for education infrastructure and provides a strong baseline for prioritising seismic retrofitting of schools.
National Strategy on Education for Environment and Climate Change 2023–2030	Framework for expanding climate and environmental education across formal and nonformal learning; addresses urban–rural inequalities and leverages local environmental opportunities	Promotes eco-social competencies, systemic thinking, sustainability awareness, practical climate action, biodiversity protection, circular-resource use, whole-school engagement, outdoor and experiential learning, digital tools, partnerships, and teacher development.	The strategy integrates climate and environmental education across all learning levels, fostering eco-social competencies, sustainability awareness, practical action on climate and biodiversity, systemic thinking, and student capacity to respond to extreme weather and potential disasters, through the following proposed measures: Implement a national climate and environment program with formal, nonformal, and outdoor learning. Build a digital ecosystem and partnerships to support experiential and locally adapted education. Develop human resources: teacher training, mentoring networks, and sustainability culture in schools. Recognise and incentivise educators and school leaders for climate engagement. Enable students to apply knowledge in real-world actions and influence local and national policy.

COUNTRY CASE STUDY

SPAIN

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
GEDES	Group for Education, Disability, Emergency and Security
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INEE	National Institute for Educational Evaluation
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoEFD	Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

Spain, European Union (EU) Member State

Spain's case study illustrates a decentralised approach to preparedness education, with significant involvement of regional authorities and external partners. As education governance is organised across Autonomous Communities, each with its own curriculum and civil protection authority, the inclusion and content of preparedness-related activities in schools varies across regions. External partners, including non-governmental organisations such as the Red Cross, play an important supporting role in developing materials and delivering practical activities, but the public education and civil protection authorities remain responsible for ensuring that preparedness education is pedagogically appropriate, equitable and consistently implemented. The recent development of a National Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan for Schools reflects Spain's commitment to strengthening preparedness education within its broader disaster resilience framework. At the same time, the decentralised governance structure and reliance on external partners highlight the importance of continued coordination to support consistent implementation and instructional depth across regions.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Spain's risk profile is moderate, with floods being the most damaging type of event, exacerbated by climate change and the increase in frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall, and urban development in flood-prone areas. Other significant risks include high-risk areas for landslides, wildfires, and volcanic activity, alongside medium-risk areas for earthquakes and tsunamis. [1] Disaster risk management and disaster recovery are governed by civil protection authorities, which are divided into regions (Autonomous Communities) due to Spain's decentralised model of governance. The civil protection units of each region are the exclusive responsibility of the regional governments. Education is governed by the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports (MoEFD), but managed by the Autonomous Communities (19 slightly different educational curriculums). The central education administration executes the general guidelines of the Government on education policy and regulates the basic elements or aspects of the system, while the regional education authorities develop the State regulations and have executive and administrative competences for managing the education system in their own territory. Early childhood education (up to 6 years) is not compulsory. Primary education comprises ten compulsory years of schooling, provided free of charge in publicly funded institutions. After finishing primary school, children start their compulsory secondary education journey, which is provided in secondary schools between the ages of 12 and 16. Upper secondary education (16 to 18), usually provided in secondary schools, is not compulsory. [2]

Spain was selected as a case study due to its development of a new compulsory civil protection training plan for schools (the Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan), which aims to equip non-university students with the knowledge and skills to respond to floods, wildfires, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, reflecting the growing recognition of education's role in disaster resilience. This plan has been jointly developed by the MoEFD and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), in collaboration with the governments of the Autonomous Communities.[3] [4] The Plan positions Spain as an important example of national-level ambition in preparedness education. However, its success will depend on whether implementation is accompanied by sufficient resources, teacher support, inclusive planning and safeguards to ensure that regional autonomy does not translate into unequal provision across territories.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

The Spanish non-university education curriculum consists of different stages, starting from early-childhood education (0-6 years; ISCED0), continuing with primary education (6-12 years; ISCED 1), compulsory secondary education (12-16 years), and upper non-compulsory secondary education (16-18 years). Following the new compulsory training plan, preparedness education will be integrated in the school curriculum from early childhood to compulsory secondary education. In early childhood, the curricula will focus on anticipating disasters by

learning how to recognise alarms and how to spot the first signs of danger. These lessons will take a minimum of two hours. In primary school, training will be focused on responding to disasters by seeking safe ground and shelter. Primary school children will also receive two hours of preparedness lessons. [5] All students will be taught the difference between information and misinformation in emergency situations.[6] Autonomous Communities and schools may supplement the minimum training contained in this plan with specific materials on the risks associated with the characteristics of each territory, which will be specified in relation to the priorities determined by the risk maps of each geographical area. Although the implementation of this plan is compulsory for the whole Spanish territory, it will be up to the autonomous regions to plan how and when this training is provided. Training will be given by members of the Civil Protection, emergency intervention and assistance services of the autonomous communities and local authorities, as well as volunteers from the national Civil Protection system, and teachers from schools. The role of teachers will be clearly defined as providing pedagogical facilitation and coordination with emergency professionals, rather than substituting for specialised emergency, psychosocial or cybersecurity personnel.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness has started to be included in the national curricula from September 2025, when the new Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan for schools started its implementation.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

This new training plan for schools integrates preparedness and prevention against climate (such as floods, earthquakes, tidal waves and tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, adverse weather phenomena, forest fires), technological, and social hazards. It also includes training on how to identify and differentiate real information from misinformation in emergency situations for early childhood, primary and secondary school children. [6] This could be understood as a preparedness and media-literacy component that supports critical thinking, trust in reliable public information and solidarity-oriented responses during emergencies.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

The integration of Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan is mandatory for all compulsory school levels (non-university educational institutions). Nevertheless, regional education authorities and individual schools have the flexibility to adapt and expand the core content of the plan in line with their specific natural, social, or economic contexts. [3] This flexibility can strengthen local relevance, but it also requires adequate resources, guidance and coordination to prevent territorial differences in implementation.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  'Educate to Prevent' (2018) was a six-day school self-protection program organised by civil protection authorities that provided training to approximately 1,500 primary school teachers across the Autonomous Community of Madrid. Children engaged in practical workshops, activities and games on emergency landing, road safety and vehicle rollover simulators, fire extinguishing and evacuation of

school premises. [7] This illustrates strong regional practice, while also highlighting that preparedness activities may be more developed in some Autonomous Communities than others.

-  ‘The Pillow Project’ is an American educational initiative created after Hurricane Katrina by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) that aims to prepare children to respond to disaster and emergencies. This project has been implemented in the flood-prone region of Valencia. Primary school children engaged in climate adaptation and preparedness practical activities, and four schools created so-called ‘climate brigades’, where a group of students are trained to act as role models in the prevention of and response to climate emergencies; and finally, conduct workshops led by 6th-grade students (11-12 years old), who share what they have learned with their classmates to promote awareness throughout the school. [8] This provides an example of participatory, peer-led preparedness education, but also shows the importance of ensuring that such initiatives are accessible beyond selected schools or regions.
-  ‘The SPITEC Project’ aims to address the needs and proposals of children and teens in the educational field to create spaces or tools for school participation that can be used in emergency contexts. The project has been carried out in eight schools in different territories of Catalonia. The project highlights how involving pupils in planning can make schools more resilient. When young people take part in decisions, they feel responsible and capable of helping others. The project paid special attention to gender equality and the most vulnerable groups. [9]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  As implementation depends on the Autonomous Communities, there is a risk of uneven instructional depth.
-  There is a risk of non-compliance or slow compliance with the new Plan due to the potential lack of resources in some schools.
-  Regional flexibility may generate unequal access to preparedness education if less-resourced Autonomous Communities or schools are not supported with additional funding, guidance and training.
-  There is an opportunity for preparedness-related teaching on misinformation to be implemented through rights-based and pedagogically appropriate approaches that strengthen critical thinking, solidarity and trust in reliable public information, rather than fear-based or surveillance-oriented classroom practices.
-  Mandatory curriculum integration may also increase workload pressures unless schools receive sufficient staffing, training, time and implementation support.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness-related teaching materials are developed by the Civil Protection Directorate, as well as NGOs, such as the Red Cross. Spain does not have a unified national package of preparedness education materials applicable across all school. Instead, a general overarching plan provides guidance on core topics in which schools can adapt to their curriculum, geographical context, and resources, placing greater emphasis on locally relevant

hazards. Civil protection authorities also develop child-friendly brochures and infographics, videos and other materials that schools may use as guides. However, these are not officially integrated into preparedness curriculum. Some Autonomous Communities such as Catalonia have developed their own teaching materials, including dedicated websites which provide age-appropriate preparedness guidance. These remain complementary materials and are not embedded within the formal curriculum. External partners can add practical value, but may risk external provision becoming a substitute for public responsibility or resulting in isolated one-off activities disconnected from classroom practice. A more sustainable alternative might be for materials and workshops to remain publicly coordinated, pedagogically quality-assured and aligned with school needs.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

The mentioned resources are optional. Schools do not have the obligation to use these materials and resources when teaching about preparedness. This may allow schools to adapt resources to their context, but it also increases the risk of variability in quality, coverage and continuity unless there is clear public guidance and quality assurance.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

These materials are developed by civil protection authorities (both the national directorate and the regional authorities) and NGOs such as the Red Cross. These stakeholders, following already-existing general teaching guidelines, are responsible for ensuring that the designed materials are age-appropriate and accurate. Since the materials can be adapted to each Spanish region, it is difficult to regulate their consistency. This makes public oversight and pedagogical quality assurance particularly important, especially when materials or training are provided by external partners.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Materials are disseminated through school's emergency planning processes, workshops, school visits, and demonstrations by the civil protection services, NGOs and local authorities, either in person or via their websites. However, the use of these materials remains inconsistent. To strengthen effectiveness, external workshops could be integrated into school plans and delivered in coordination with teachers and public emergency professionals, rather than functioning as sporadic activities disconnected from classroom practice.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 The Civil Protection Authority's website for children (for children aged 9 and above) aims to contribute to the development of a preventative social culture regarding various risks. It includes useful publications, games (fire test, volcano test, and memory game), activities (drawing maps and interpreting the weather), and links of interest. [10]

 Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan (2025) website that includes videos, guidelines and infographics on different hazards. These resources are adapted to different learning stages (e.g. early

childhood, teenagers, etc.), child-friendly and can help both schools and families to prepare young children to face unprecedented situations. [11]

- 🍌 Civil Protection Materials for Children (Cataloni), the website generated by the Generalitat de Catalunya (Autonomous Community), provides children with interactive learning opportunities, including games (e.g. ‘La Oca’, a traditional Spanish board game turned into a preparedness activity titled ‘From Earthquake to Earthquake’) and activities like drawing, crafting, reading comics, guided by ‘Risquet’, the website’s mascot. [12]
- 🍌 Civil protection authority workshops and school visits (Madrid). Schools can request civil protection authorities, firefighting authorities and the police to organise a visit and a workshop for children, where they can show them how to effectively evacuate, protect themselves in case of an emergency, assist others, etc. [13]
- 🍌 The Spanish association GEDES (Group for Education, Disability, Emergency and Security in English) has created an Inclusive evacuation plan for schools, ensuring that pupils requiring additional support are protected and considered in all safety procedures. The plan supports teachers and staff in planning and coordinating their response during emergency. [14]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 Risk of uneven practices across schools due to the absence of standardised national plans. Autonomous Communities vary in their resources and initiatives and implement national plans in a different way. Additionally, no standardised methodology exists to guide school-level implementation. Scarcity of national products, plans and resources to implement in schools; therefore, schools rely on external materials and regional initiatives.
- 🍌 Risk of uneven implementation of the Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan since teaching materials are optional, leading to variability in the content delivered to students depending on teachers’ choice.
- 🍌 Strong use of external partners can enrich preparedness education, but it also requires clear public coordination, pedagogical standards and safeguards to ensure quality, continuity and equity.
- 🍌 The absence of a unified national teaching package may increase territorial differences unless all schools receive sufficient materials, guidance and implementation support.
- 🍌 Materials can be reviewed for accessibility and inclusion, including their suitability for students with disabilities and special educational needs.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In Spain, the initial teacher education program (both at the University and at the College levels) does not include specific courses and/or trainings on hazard awareness, preparedness, and emergency response. In 2018, following EU recommendations on teacher training in new areas, Spain began regularly training teachers in various subjects, including ‘personal competencies,’ covering health and school-based prevention. However, none of these courses and/or trainings are directly related to resilience or hazard awareness/preparedness. Due to the

new Civil Protection Plan, teachers have the opportunity to learn basic civil protection skills and receive training on these topics (according to the Spanish government, approximately 800,000 teachers will have access to these trainings). However, implementation depends on school-level practices and individual teacher engagement, which can lead to uneven preparedness among teachers. The mandatory nature of centre-level implementation also raises workload concerns if training is not accompanied by protected time, recognised professional development, clear role boundaries and sufficient staffing. It may be preferable for teacher preparedness to focus on facilitating learning, basic safety awareness and coordination with trained emergency professionals.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Disaster risk preparedness is neither addressed in the initial teacher's education nor in their continuous professional development. School health (e.g. wellbeing and stress management) and preparedness (e.g. first aid) are included in the national plan for continuous professional development, but they are not specifically related to disasters. The new Plan may expand access to civil protection-related training, but this does not yet amount to a structured national teacher competence framework for preparedness education.

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Teachers receive training in wellbeing and classroom management, but these courses do not include any specific preparedness education materials or resources. Under the Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan, teachers may access training on civil protection and emergency preparedness, but the extent to which this training is mandatory for individual teachers, and how it is organised within working time, remains unclear.

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

Preparedness education training is not recognised within the national career progression, points system, or salary progression.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Uptake among teachers depends on their own willingness to learn and schools' preparedness curriculum. They can access courses and trainings, but these are not compulsory. Under the Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan, teachers may access training on civil protection and emergency preparedness, but the extent to which this training is mandatory for individual teachers, and how it is organised within working time, remains unclear.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  'Valencia + Segura'. Developed after the deadly floods that occurred in the Community of Valencia in 2024, this plan is being implemented in the city of Valencia. It includes a learning program to give teachers the necessary resources and materials to teach their students how to prepare and protect themselves if a disaster happens. [15] Although the Plan aims to reach approximately 800,000 teachers,

actual uptake and completion will depend on time availability, school-level organisation, regional support and whether training is recognised within professional development systems.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- ✦ No nationwide framework for preparedness skills and/or standardised preparedness modules within teacher training programs.
- ✦ Preparedness-related training varies considerably across regions and largely relies on the initiative of local authorities.
- ✦ Safety drills and training sessions are often sporadic and not consistently maintained over long periods.
- ✦ Preparedness training is not embedded in initial teacher education and is not clearly linked to professional recognition, salary progression or reduced workload.
- ✦ There is a risk that mandatory centre-level implementation increases teacher workload and administrative burden unless additional time, staffing, training and support are provided.
- ✦ Teachers require clear guidance on their role in preparedness education so that they support learning and coordination without being expected to perform specialist emergency, psychosocial or cybersecurity functions.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In Spain, the quality assurance in early childhood and primary school education is the responsibility of the State Education Inspectorate, the National Institute for Educational Evaluation (INEE) of the MoEFD, the Educational Inspection of the Autonomous Communities, and regional bodies responsible for evaluating the education system within the Autonomous Communities. Early childhood education and primary education are subject to two different quality assessment mechanisms: (i) educational evaluation; and (ii) educational inspection. [16] The National System of Education Indicators comprises 21 indicators, none of which address preparedness, safety or emergency response. Given the introduction of the Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan, future monitoring could play an important role in assessing not only formal compliance, but also territorial equity, teacher workload, inclusion, quality of external provision and whether preparedness education is age-appropriate and rights-based.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- ✦ Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Preparedness education topics are not included in school inspections or external evaluations. These inspections focus on schools' compliance with the national curriculum and the general safety regulations. As the Plan is implemented, inspection and evaluation mechanisms could be expanded to assess whether pre-

paredness education is delivered consistently and whether schools receive adequate support to implement it.

- Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

Quality assurance metrics do not include preparedness education indicators.

- Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective?

Given their recent introduction, there is no evidence of the effectiveness of existing protocols and activities on the national level.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- There is no evidence of good practice in this matter.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Lack of a national and consistent/standardised quality assessment indicator that measures schools' compliance with preparedness and emergency standards.
- No indicators currently assess whether preparedness education is implemented equitably across Autonomous Communities.
- No monitoring framework currently captures teacher workload, inclusion of students with disabilities, or the quality and continuity of external provision.
- There is limited evidence on whether preparedness activities strengthen students' practical skills, critical thinking, solidarity and resilience.
- Without monitoring, the mandatory Plan may be implemented unevenly and without sufficient evidence on what works in schools.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In 2025, Spain developed a civil protection training plan for all compulsory education schools (the Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan) with a goal of teaching early childhood and primary school children how to respond to floods, wildfires, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, recognising the role of education in disaster resilience. This plan has been jointly developed by the MoEFD and MoHA in collaboration with the governments of the Autonomous Communities, and is currently in the first year of implementation.[3] [4] Also, the Spanish 2024 National Civil Protection Strategy confirms the need to educate students in preparedness and teach them basic self-protection skills against different types of disasters. [17] These national developments represent an important step towards embedding preparedness in education. However, their implementation will need to be supported

by financing, staffing, teacher training, inclusive planning and coordination across Autonomous Communities to avoid widening territorial inequalities or increasing pressure on schools.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or disaster risk management (DRM)-related strategies?

Spain has recently developed a national strategy to integrate preparedness in education (The Civil Protection Emergency Training Plan) and has adopted the National Civil Protection Strategy (2024), which also references preparedness education. The Plan marks an important national step, but its decentralised implementation requires sustained coordination with Autonomous Communities to ensure consistent access and quality.

- Are any reforms, pilot programs, or timelines planned?

The implementation of the Plan started in September 2025, allowing schools to slowly adapt their curriculums. No additional reforms are currently planned, as the Plan remains in an early piloting stage. Given the early stage of implementation, the main priority is to monitor how the Plan is being introduced across Autonomous Communities and whether schools have the resources, staffing and training capacity needed to implement it effectively.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Following this new plan, education facilities/establishments are mandated to have emergency preparedness plans. Every private or public non-university education facility is obliged to include this civil protection training plan in their curriculum. This obligation mandates schools to find resources and build the capacity to implement the plan during the school year.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Spain's 2024 National Civil Protection Strategy promotes a public culture of prevention, which starts in schools. It calls for the education of early-childhood and primary school children and young pupils in matters such as emergency response and preparedness. It seeks to diversify existing educational material, beyond print format and prioritising online resources including short training videos uploaded to YouTube or similar platforms. Finally, it aims to develop different prevention programs, deploy them in education facilities and include civil protection as part of the syllabus to improve interrelations and security in schools and their surroundings. [17]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Limited and recent connection between DRM strategies and education policy.
- Risk of uneven implementation across Autonomous Communities if national requirements are not matched by adequate financing, staffing and technical support.

- 🟡 Risk that mandatory school-level implementation increases administrative and workload pressures if teacher training is not recognised or supported through protected time.
- 🟡 Need to ensure that the “preventive culture” promoted by civil protection strategies is implemented through rights-based, inclusive and solidarity-oriented education, avoiding fear-based or securitised approaches.
- 🟡 Need for future monitoring to assess whether the Plan improves student preparedness without increasing inequalities between schools and territories.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In Spain, preparedness education is shaped by the cooperation between schools and external emergency actors, not detailed national curricular prescriptions. While civil protection themes do appear in the curriculum, most hands-on activities arise through collaboration with the Civil Protection Directorate, firefighters, police forces, local emergency units and NGOs such as the Spanish Red Cross. These partners deliver practical demonstrations, awareness sessions, and evacuation drills. However, coordination often falls to municipal and regional authorities who manage their own civil protection plans, resulting in differences in approaches across Autonomous Communities. Students are not directly included in tailoring plans. Although international organisations such as UNICEF, UNDRR and EU institutions promote education plans focused on children safety and resilience, these efforts have not yet resulted in a comprehensive and well-curated disaster risk reduction (DRR) education framework in Spain. The resources produced by these stakeholders can be of use in classrooms but are often under-utilised due to the limited provision of disaster preparedness and emergency training in schools. Under the Civil Protection Training Plan for Schools, early childhood and primary schools will be able to select resources they consider most suitable for implementation, including the materials provided by the above-mentioned organisations. However, despite the active involvement of many stakeholders, the system remains fragmented, with preparedness initiatives largely driven by local and regional partnerships rather than coordinated through a unified national framework. Additionally, according to the recently developed Civil Protection Training Plan for Schools, the needs of children with disabilities will be taken into consideration by schools when adapting the Plan to their contexts.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🟡 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Regional civil protection authorities and other bodies, such as the police and the firefighting authorities, directly collaborate with schools through workshops and activities that bring preparedness education closer to the school community (e.g. workshops in Madrid). However, schools are responsible for contacting relevant authorities and requesting these services. Municipalities also collaborate with schools by delivering training, workshops and programs (e.g. ‘Valencia + Segura’). Other organisations, such as the Red Cross, support schools in integrating preparedness education into their activities (e.g. ‘The Pillow Project’ in Valencia). These examples demonstrate strong local and regional practice, but also show that access to

practical preparedness activities may depend on local capacity, municipal initiative and school-level engagement.

 Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

The drills and activities mentioned include children, enabling them to take an active role through discussions and practical exercises. Publicly available information on participatory approaches for children with disabilities remains limited. While their needs are considered within the newly developed Civil Protection Plan, they are not explicitly framed as active contributors within preparedness activities. However, initiatives such as the GEDES' inclusive School Evacuation Plan aim to ensure that pupils requiring additional support are protected and accounted for safety procedures.

 What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

UNICEF, UNDRR, and UNESCO have played a direct role in preparedness education by co-developing child-friendly educational kits, games and activities, and by organising webinars and workshops. [18]

 Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Multi-sectoral and cross-border partnerships exist but are project-based. For example, UNESCO-Spain collaboration combined preparedness education for early childhood and primary school children in Spain through a webinar for teachers and educators to learn on education in emergencies. Although these collaborations exist, they have not been turned into proper frameworks for disaster preparedness in education.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  UNESCO's webinar Education in emergencies – Towards resilient educational communities. The main purpose of this webinar was to delve into the fundamental concepts of education in emergencies from a human rights-based approach. This event was designed for teachers and educators to learn about education during emergencies. [18]
-  Regional initiatives such as Valencia + Segura, Educate to Prevent in Madrid, and the Pillow Project in Valencia show how partnerships can support practical preparedness education, but they also highlight the importance of ensuring that comparable opportunities are available across territories.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Without a national framework to embed partnerships in school practice and curricula, engagement stays uneven and limited to isolated projects.
-  The methods used in education are participatory, but not inclusive. Even though the new Civil Protection Plan aims to include the needs of people with disabilities and vulnerable groups, there is no evidence that this is happening.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

SWEDEN

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRM	disaster risk management
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EU	European Union
SCCA	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
QA	quality assurance

Sweden, EU Member State

Sweden illustrates a model where preparedness education is driven primarily by civil-protection regulation and municipal responsibility rather than curriculum mandates, resulting in strong compliance with safety procedures but limited pedagogical integration. Preparedness education in early childhood and primary education is therefore highly decentralised, often relying on uptake of materials from civil-protection authorities and NGOs rather than structured learning progression. The case illustrates the interaction between a well-established, national ‘total defence’ agenda and locally driven implementation in the education sector, with the extension and integration varying according to municipal priorities and school-level practice.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

Sweden faces a broad risk profile, including floods, storms, wildfires, industrial accidents and emerging security threats, and has recently re-emphasised a ‘total defence’ agenda in response to regional security developments and NATO accession. Civil protection and crisis preparedness are coordinated by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (SCCA) while municipalities have frontline responsibility for local risk management and crisis response.

Education is compulsory from age 6 to 16, covering the preschool class (förskoleklass) and nine-year compulsory school, with a national curriculum set by the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket). [1] Although safety and secure learning environments are statutory requirements, preparedness education is not explicitly integrated into the early education and primary-school curricula (ISCED 0 and 1). Instead, preparedness education is supported through civil-protection legislation, local responsibility for systematic fire protection, and a growing total defense agenda, combined with voluntary teaching materials from SCCA, municipalities and NGOs.[2]

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

Sweden’s education system is regulated by the Education Act (Skollag 2010:800) and national curricula issued by the Swedish National Agency for Education. The system covers early education (förskolan), preschool class (förskoleklassen), and compulsory primary school (grundskolan) within a unified curriculum framework. [3]

Preparedness education is not defined as a standalone subject in either early childhood or primary school curricula and there are no explicit curriculum sections on disaster preparedness, civil protection, or total defense.

In early childhood education, the preschool curriculum frames safety as part of the institution’s duty of care, emphasising children’s wellbeing, safe environments, and supervised exploration. These are mandatory at the framework level, but do not prescribe preparedness competencies, hazard-specific content or instructional hours, and preparedness is not treated as an educational domain. [4]

In primary education, preparedness-relevant content is curriculum-embedded, primarily within Physical Education and Health, where pupils must learn to act safely and manage risks in outdoor activities and natural environments. [5] While this requirement is mandatory, it is not framed as preparedness education and does not specify progression, assessment criteria, or minimum teaching time related to hazards or emergencies.

Practical preparedness activities (e.g. fire drills and evacuation routines) are mandated through civil protection and fire-safety legislation, notably the Civil Protection Act and regulations on systematic fire-protection work, and function as training and compliance overlays, not curriculum-based learning.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness education is not explicitly referenced in early childhood and primary education curriculum. Safety and resilience are framed broadly (health, safe environments, rights and obligations in nature) rather than as parts of preparedness education.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

Elements of safety in nature, physical activity outdoors, and sustainable development but no explicit coverage of natural-hazard response, first aid, media literacy in crises, or civic resilience.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Safety-related themes are mandatory, but any explicit integration of preparedness concepts is de facto optional and dependent on teacher and school initiative.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

Use of curriculum objectives on outdoor life, health and sustainable development to anchor discussions about risks in nature (e.g. weather, ice safety, storms) in physical education and science. [6]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

No formal preparedness-education in national early childhood or primary education curriculum. The integration of preparedness concepts largely relies on teachers' voluntary efforts to connect general safety goals with preparedness.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In Sweden, preparedness-related teaching materials for early childhood and primary education are not governed by a curriculum-approved national package. Instead, materials originate mainly from civil-protection authorities, municipalities, and NGOs, and are used at school discretion. Responsibility for technical accuracy and consistency lies with the issuing authority, while age-appropriateness and pedagogical adaptation rest with schools and teachers.

At the national level, SCCA develops public preparedness materials, including the nationally distributed brochure 'If Crisis or War Comes' (Om krisen eller kriget kommer), as well as guidance for schools on crisis management, emergency planning, and response to serious incidents. [7] These materials are authoritative for content accuracy but are not designed as curriculum-aligned teaching tools for early childhood and primary education. Municipalities, as school owners, are responsible for systematic fire-protection work, evacuation

routines, and local emergency plans under the Civil Protection Act (2003:778). These materials function as training and compliance overlays, not as pedagogical resources. such as the ‘Strategic Guidance for Inclusive Crisis Communication with Children’ that provides a practical guide for communication with children in crisis situations.

NGOs, notably the Swedish Red Cross, provide voluntary, age-adapted materials on first aid, personal safety, and crisis awareness for children and youth. These resources typically use interactive and experiential pedagogy (demonstrations, simulations, peer learning), but uptake depends on local initiative.

Pedagogically, preparedness activities in schools are most often delivered through drill-based practice (fire and evacuation drills), project days, or campaign-linked discussions (e.g. national Preparedness Week), rather than through sequenced classroom instruction. There is no national mechanism to ensure pedagogical consistency or progression across grades.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Educational materials are optional. Schools are required to carry out systematic fire protection work and drills, but not to use specific pedagogical materials.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

SCCA, municipalities, emergency services, NGOs (e.g. Red Cross) and publishers of health and safety materials.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Materials are disseminated through SCCA’s website and campaigns, municipal channels, Preparedness Week activities, and school-safety projects. Uptake depends on school leadership and teacher interest; resources are more frequently used during national campaigns (e.g. preparedness week, total-defense information drives) or after local incidents.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  SCCA’s brochure and multimedia package ‘If Crisis or War Comes’, which many municipalities use in schools to discuss household preparedness and the role of individuals in total defense.
-  SCCA’s guidance ‘Acts of violence with significant consequences in schools’, offering school leaders and staff concrete procedures, discussion points and training content to strengthen readiness for low-probability, high-impact events.
-  The ‘Strategic Guidance for Inclusive Crisis Communication With Children 2024’ document provides a practical guide for communicating with children, including strategies to reach and involve children. It highlights the importance of including children’s voice in crisis preparedness.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Fragmented landscape of materials, with no national, curriculum-aligned preparedness education teaching package for ISCED 0–1.
- Uneven access and usage across municipalities and schools, especially where local capacity for school-safety work is limited.
- Limited adaptation of materials for young children and for students with disabilities or diverse language backgrounds.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Initial teacher education in Sweden is university-based and competency-oriented, with a strong emphasis on child development, inclusive pedagogy, democratic values and education for sustainable development.[8] National regulations do not require specific modules on disaster preparedness or total defence for teachers working in preschool or primary school. Preparedness therefore tends to appear indirectly, through content on safe learning environments, student wellbeing and outdoor education, rather than as a clearly defined professional competency.[9] Continuous professional development is similarly focused on pedagogical development, inclusion, and subject-specific didactics. In 2022, the Government tasked the National Agency for Education with developing support materials and web-based guidance to help teacher assistants and other staff strengthen safe and secure learning environments, but this primarily targets crime prevention and psychosocial safety rather than hazard-specific preparedness. [10]

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?**

There is no evidence of mandatory preparedness-specific modules in either initial teacher education or national continuous professional development for early childhood and primary teachers. When covered, preparedness tends to be part of local safety training, fire-drill procedures or municipal total defence information sessions.

- What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?**

Topics such as emergency evacuation, crisis communication, or first aid are handled mainly through local staff training and are not standardised nationwide. These activities are not part of the national certification points system and do not influence salary progression.

- Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?**

According to publicly available data, courses are not reflected in certification/point system/salaries of teachers.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Uptake depends on municipal initiatives, school leadership and individual interest. Recent public debates on total defense and national campaigns (e.g. Preparedness Week) have increased demand for such training, but participation remains uneven and is not systematically monitored.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Municipal or regional training days where SCCA experts or local emergency services provide workshops for school staff on crisis communication, evacuation and total defense.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Lack of a national preparedness competence framework for preschool and primary teachers.
-  Limited systematic data on participation or impact of preparedness-related professional development.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Sweden has a well-developed quality-assurance system, combining internal school quality work with external supervision by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. Schools are required to ensure a safe and secure learning environment and to conduct systematic quality-assurance processes, but current does not include explicit preparedness learning but focuses on overall learning outcomes, equity and safety climate than on explicit disaster-preparedness learning.[11] In parallel, systematic fire protection work is mandatory for all buildings, requiring documented planning, training, inspections and follow-up.[12] This generates regular fire drills and safety checks in preschools and schools, and municipalities that may include schools' crisis-management readiness in broader local audits. However, these mechanisms track compliance with procedures rather than student learning about preparedness.

KEY QUESTIONS:

-  Are preparedness education topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Inspections consider whether schools provide a safe environment and follow legal requirements, but there are no national indicators that specifically measure disaster risk reduction competencies or the pedagogical quality of preparedness activities in ISCED 0–1.

-  Are there indicators or frameworks to assess how teaching, school management, and community practices build students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from hazards while sustaining learning continuity?

No dedicated preparedness learning outcomes or indicators are embedded in national quality assurance frameworks. School-safety audits and fire-safety checks focus on plans, drills and documentation rather

than students' knowledge, skills and behaviors during crises.

Is there evidence that these preparedness protocols and education activities are effective?

Available evidence relates mainly to compliance (e.g. documentation of drills, presence of crisis plans) rather than educational impact. There is no systematic mechanism to feed such insights back into curriculum revision, national teacher-training priorities or the design of teaching materials.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Swedish preschools and compulsory schools are required under national legislation (e.g., the Civil Protection Act and corresponding guidance) to conduct systematic safety work, such as regular fire drills and evacuation exercises. These activities are embedded into schools' internal quality assurance systems and are periodically reviewed as part of safety protocols and organizational checks. Though not part of curriculum content, this practice reinforces preparedness behaviors and provides measurable activities for monitoring safety compliance. While Swedish quality assurance system does not assess pedagogical dimensions, it provides a foundation upon which a pedagogical aspect, such as students' knowledge and skills, could be incorporated in the future.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Preparedness is understood primarily as compliance with safety regulations rather than as a learning domain.
-  No preparedness-specific indicators in national quality-assurance or evaluation frameworks for early childhood and primary education that could potentially improve teaching or curriculum.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Sweden's overall crisis-preparedness and total defence policy has been strengthened in recent years, with government strategies emphasising that resilience depends on the preparedness of individuals, municipalities, agencies and private actors. The education sector is recognised as part of this whole-of-society approach, but preparedness is not yet considered a specific learning objective in early-childhood and primary school curriculum. Instead, obligations for schools derive from the Civil Protection Act, systematic fire-safety rules, and forthcoming legislative changes on crime-prevention and safety work in education.

KEY QUESTIONS:

-  **Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?**

There is no standalone national strategy for preparedness education in early education and primary school. Preparedness is addressed implicitly through broader civil-defense, crisis-preparedness and child-rights strategies, which underline the need for safe, secure, and inclusive learning environments.

Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

Government announcements signal an intention to expand education on total defence and NATO to students but only starting with upper secondary school from 2025. Researchers and policymakers have argued that crisis preparedness and total defense should be written into school curricula more broadly, but concrete timelines for ISCED 0–1 have not yet been set.

Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

All schools and preschools are required to have emergency plans, conduct regular drills and participate in municipal crisis-management systems as part of civil-protection legislation and SCCA requirements.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  National Preparedness Week in Boden Municipality, during which pupils in both preschool and primary school take part in various exercises focusing on preparedness and safety. The purpose is to increase knowledge and strengthen resilience among children and young people in the event of a crisis or disruption. In preschools, both shelter-in-place and evacuation drills will be carried out. With consideration to the young age of the children, the exercises are done in a playful way, while teachers practice according to the applicable routines and methods. In lower secondary schools, teaching material from the SCCA is used. Through short films and follow-up discussions, pupils reflect on different crisis situations and strengthen their preparedness. The week concludes with scenario-based exercises where pupils put their knowledge into practice. [13]

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Absence of a clear roadmap to translate total-defense and crisis-preparedness ambitions into age-appropriate curricula for preschool and primary.
-  Disconnect between strong national civil-defense frameworks and limited curricular guidance on preparedness education.
-  Risk that preparedness remains confined to procedural drills, without systematic integration into teaching, learning, and assessment.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness in Swedish schools is strongly shaped by multi-level collaboration. Municipalities bear primary responsibility for local crisis preparedness and civil defense, and they coordinate with schools on emergency planning, drills and local preparedness campaigns. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (SCCA) provides national guidance and campaigns for individuals and municipalities, while NGOs, emergency services, and community organisations complement these efforts.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?

Many municipalities engage in preschools and compulsory schools during Preparedness Week, organising drills, information sessions and visits from local emergency services. The Swedish Red Cross and other NGOs provide first-aid courses and materials that schools may use. Parents are involved mainly through information sent home during campaigns or after drills.

Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?

In preschool and primary settings, evacuation and shelter-in-place drills implemented by municipalities are often framed as playful, age-appropriate exercises, allowing children to practice routines in a low-stress environment while staff rehearse formal procedures. Broader Swedish practices in education for sustainability and child rights also promote children's agency and participation, which can be leveraged for preparedness, though explicit preparedness-focused participatory approaches remain limited. No publicly disclosed information regarding inclusion of vulnerable groups is available.

What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

Sweden participates in EU-level civil-protection and resilience initiatives and engages with Nordic and Baltic partners on crisis communication with children and youth. These collaborations inform guidance materials and campaigns but have not yet led to a dedicated DRR-education framework for early grades. [14]

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

The total-defence agenda is multi-sectoral, integrating military, civil protection, social services, and education. Cross-border Nordic–Baltic projects on inclusive crisis communication illustrate emerging partnerships that could be expanded to school-based preparedness education.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 Municipality-led Preparedness Week activities in preschools and schools (joint drills, visits by emergency services, parent information).

 Nordic–Baltic collaboration on crisis communication with children, providing strategic guidance and workshop formats that could be adapted for classroom use.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

 Partnerships are active but largely campaign- or project-based, without a stable national framework anchoring them in curricula and teacher training.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

TÜRKİYE

Acronyms and abbreviations

AFAD	Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency
DG	Directorate General
DRM	disaster risk management
DRMIS	Disaster Risk Management in Schools Project
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EBA	Education Network Platform
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
EU	European Union
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
MoFSS	Ministry of Family and Social Services
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MoI	Ministry of Interior
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ÖBA	Teacher Training Network
SSDE	Safe Schooling and Distance Education
TYMM	Türkiye Education Model
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
UN	United Nations
QA	quality assurance

Türkiye, Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) Participating States

The Türkiye case illustrates a hazard-driven, centrally steered model of preparedness education integration, where Ministry of National Education (MoNE) leads curriculum reform, teacher development and deployment, and digital continuity, while Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) and municipalities play complementary roles. Preparedness is embedded across the curriculum rather than through stand-alone mandates, with emphasis on rapid response, digital resilience, and psychosocial recovery following major shocks. Türkiye exemplifies how a centralised system can rapidly scale emergency response and infrastructure yet still face challenges in achieving vertically aligned learning outcomes, inclusive delivery, and sustained disaster risk reduction.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

The Turkish education system includes 12 years of compulsory education; 4 years of primary (ISCED 1), 4 years of lower secondary (ISCED 2), and 4 years of upper secondary (ISCED 3) (the ‘4+4+4’ system). Primary education officially begins at approximately 5.5 years and is compulsory under the MoNE. Children between 5-5.5 years old may enroll in Grade 1 upon parental request, while children younger than 5 years old are not eligible for primary school and are expected to attend early childhood education.

In Türkiye, early childhood education is being implemented under different institutional arrangements. Children aged 3-5 years are mainly covered by early childhood care services under the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS), delivered through nurseries and day-care centers. However, there are institutions under MoNE’s responsibility which operate as stand-alone preschools or as attachments to primary schools. As a result, both ministries jointly cover the transition years. [1] Türkiye’s early childhood education system includes also municipal childcare centers alongside MoNE and MoFSS provision. Municipalities’ legal role is generally complementary: land/buildings/preschool facilities, not core instruction. MoNE retains responsibility for education delivery, staffing standards, and teacher assignments. This complementary model becomes especially critical in disasters, where rapid establishment of temporary spaces (tents/container units) must be matched with timely deployment of qualified MoNE personnel to sustain early childhood education continuity and psychosocial support.

Türkiye lies on one of the world’s most active seismic zones, which creates complex tectonic processes such as subduction, collision, and lateral escape. In 2023, Türkiye experienced two major earthquakes (with 7.7 and 7.6 magnitudes centered in Kahramanmaraş), that affected 14 million people. Both the earthquakes and the COVID 19 pandemic highlighted the need to remain flexible and responsive to changing conditions while continuing to support the education system’s long-term resilience. [2]

Türkiye has undertaken substantial measures/steps to strengthen preparedness education and to ensure more effective, coordinated response efforts. Given the clear impact of disasters on learning outcomes and Türkiye’s vulnerability to such shocks, more efforts are needed to focus on building the education sector’s resilience and ability to implement preparedness and recovery strategies in the short term while adapting and creating enhanced disaster resilient systems in the long term. To do that, there is a need to embed preparedness, psychosocial support, and resilience more systematically into the curriculum.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:



Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

MoNE’s Climate Change Action Plan (2022/2023) integrates disaster-relevant priorities within a broader framework of climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and education system strengthening. [3] The Plan provides a strategic and largely non-binding policy framework that emphasises curriculum reform, teacher capacity

building, and school-level action to improve climate literacy and risk awareness across all education levels. Curricula are being updated to incorporate environmental and climate-change principles, including resilience and adaptation concepts, and new courses such as Environmental Education and Climate Change have been introduced at the middle-school level. While it informs curriculum reform, the Plan itself does not constitute a mandatory preparedness curriculum.

In parallel, MoNE has delivered large-scale climate and environment trainings to teachers and school administrators through its professional development system, supported by the development of diverse learning materials (videos, animations, and awareness-raising content). Tens of thousands of teachers have already completed these trainings, significantly strengthening national delivery capacity.

While the Climate Change Action Plan does not frame its objectives explicitly as ‘preparedness education’, it is closely aligned with Türkiye’s National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, which prioritises education, awareness-raising, and capacity building to address climate-induced risks such as floods, heatwaves, droughts, and storms. The Plan promotes preventive and cross-cutting awareness activities and foresees the development of a School Climate Change Action Plan guide, enabling schools to design context-specific resilience actions based on local risks. Implementation is led by MoNE in collaboration with local authorities, universities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other ministries.

Curricula are currently being implemented under the new Century of Türkiye Education Model (Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli- TYMM) by MoNE, started in 2023. [4] Preparedness is formally embedded through the TYMM, which emphasises skills-based, holistic, and resilience-oriented learning by integrating skills such as digital, problem-solving, critical-thinking, social-emotional and practical skills.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

The TYMM integrates preparedness education across Turkish, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Life Sciences in primary education. Preparedness appears in themes such as ‘safe and healthy living’, ‘values and social responsibility’, and ‘citizenship’. There are also disaster-focused trainings such as Disaster Awareness Training (Afet Farkındalık Eğitimi). [5] Provincial directorates host downloadable modules, videos, and presentations that schools can use. The aim of these activities is for students to understand natural events, recognise risks, develop preparedness skills, and contribute to community resilience. Through thematic activities and project-based learning, students learn what to do before, during, and after disasters, how to reduce risks, and how to take action for a safer, more sustainable environment

Despite significant progress in expanding early childhood education, Türkiye continues to have relatively low pre-primary enrolment compared to Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, which might leave young children highly exposed to learning disruptions during disasters and emergencies. In early childhood education, preparedness education is more indirect and response oriented. While pre-primary education (ages 3-5.5 years) is increasingly universal and governed by MoNE curricula, disaster preparedness for children is embedded mainly within broader recovery and resilience frameworks.

 What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

National curricula focus on natural disasters, fire, hazardous material leaks, violence and explosions. Guidelines exist to ensure the safety of individuals by promoting rapid, informed, and appropriate actions during critical situations. In project-based learning and in MoNE's emergency response trainings, civic resilience and community solidarity (volunteering, social cohesion, inclusive support to vulnerable groups including refugees and children with disabilities) are emphasised. In the curricula, there is no compulsory stand-alone course titled 'First Aid'. These topics appear only at a general, introductory level within broader subjects.

 Is integration mandatory or optional?

There is no stand-alone disaster course on disaster in either primary or early childhood education. Life science courses in primary education that integrate disaster awareness topics are mandatory. Basic safety and disaster-awareness content and participation in drills are effectively mandatory as part of school routines and centrally guided campaigns. However, the depth and frequency of integration into everyday teaching (lesson plans, projects, assessments) is at the discretion of individual schools and teachers.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Provincial initiatives such as First Lesson: Disaster Awareness Education ('İlk Ders: Afet Farkındalık Eğitimi') in vulnerable regions and city-wide campaigns where the first class of a school day is devoted to disaster awareness.
-  Students may use the AFAD reports and real-life cases to examine how their environment can be made more resilient and propose actions to reduce disaster impacts. By creating and sharing their own products, they learn to think critically about preparedness and strengthen their sense of responsibility toward disaster risks. MoNE has also created animation videos for early childhood and primary school students to increase disaster awareness.
-  The integration of disaster topics into life sciences and social studies with practical drills and simulations, enabling students to practice evacuation and basic protective behavior.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Preparedness content remains mainly focused on response (what to do during an earthquake) rather than comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) (risk mapping, prevention, mitigation, inclusive planning, climate-related risks).
-  There is a lack of clearly articulated nationwide learning progression for disaster preparedness across early childhood and primary education.
-  There is a need for more emphasis on psychosocial wellbeing, trauma-informed pedagogy, and social-emotional learning in the curriculum.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

In 2011, the FATİH (Movement to Increase Opportunities and Technology) Project in Education was launched to ensure equal opportunities in education and to improve technology in schools. [6] Through the FATİH Project and the recently closed World Bank (WB)-funded Safe Schooling and Distance Education (SSDE) Project [7], the Republic of Türkiye (RoT) has supported the provision of interactive smart boards, digital infrastructure expansion and digital content development via the Education Information Network (EBA) platform.

Türkiye's COVID-19 experience accelerated education technology reforms under the FATİH program and updated distance-learning policies. MoNE expanded online and TV-based access and transformed the EBA into a New Digital Education System (NDES) to ensure continuity during emergencies. During school closures, MoNE used EBA and partnered with TRT to deliver remote lessons, providing teachers, students, and parents with customisable digital tools and resources. The EBA was mandatory for public schools and optional for private schools.

The EBA includes more than 1,600 courses and 20,000 items of content (video, audio, documents, infographics, interactive content, etc.) [8] for learning from preschool to 12th grade, including supportive materials for teachers, tests and exams. [9]

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Core textbooks and centrally approved supplementary materials on the EBA platform are mandatory in the sense that they align with national curricula. Many disaster-specific resources (videos, posters, PowerPoints, community training modules) are recommended but not strictly mandatory; their use depends on provincial and school-level initiative and leadership/teacher motivation.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

MoNE's Board of Education (Talim Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı) oversees the development of teaching material, coordinating their development and revision, providing guidance for the preparation of textbooks and other learning resources (including student workbooks, teacher guides, electronic content, and implementation modules) and overseeing their review and evaluation. With the leadership of the Board of Education, the Directorate General (DG) for Innovation and Education Technologies manages the development of digital content and material. The MoNE is legally mandated (under the 2013 Regulation on Disaster and Emergency Response Services (Official Gazette) to ensure that all schools prepare comprehensive disaster and emergency plans.

School disaster and emergency management plans must be developed in line with the format designed by the AFAD under the 'Disaster-Prepared Türkiye – Disaster-Prepared School Project', in coordination with and approved by the MoNE.

International partners (e.g. WB, UNICEF) contribute technical guidance, financing, and some content, including materials on Syrian refugees' education and child protection in emergencies.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Through MoNE's digital platforms (EBA, Teacher Training Network (ÖBA), e-Müfredat), provincial and school websites, teacher training portals, and printed materials, in-school campaigns (awareness days, drills), community workshops, and Lifelong Learning 'production workshops'. After the earthquakes, materials were used/distributed intensively in temporary learning spaces (tents, containers, prefabs) and psychosocial support and play-based activities were undertaken to restore a sense of normalcy.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Teachers accessed EBA and used a wide array of digital resources and tools to facilitate remote teaching during COVID-19 pandemic.
-  MoNE created dedicated spaces and play opportunities for preschool-aged children and established game and activity tents that integrate recreational materials with psychosocial and educational content, providing critical support for young children experiencing trauma.
-  DRMIS project in Türkiye helps ensure learning continues during emergencies by supplying affected schools with essential teaching materials, emergency kits, replacement supplies, and digital content, while also strengthening preparedness through disaster response guidelines, evacuation maps, psychosocial support tools, and teacher training resources.
-  A trainer's Handbook on Children's Rights and Education in Disasters and Emergencies has been developed and published by MoNE's Board of Education in collaboration with UNICEF [10] [11].

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  There is limited systematic monitoring of the use of preparedness resources in schools and their impact on students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors.
-  Accessibility standards do not integrate appropriate design features for users with visual, hearing, and motor impairments.
-  The cost of mobile internet remains a barrier to continuous access for some students (to access digital sources), particularly those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, thereby limiting platform usage.
-  Descriptive analysis indicates that internet connectivity, hardware constraints, limited teacher experience, and weak digital skills are barriers to effective EBA use during distance education.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

MoNE has increased teachers' opportunities for engaging in professional development aligned with evolving demands. These efforts have been complemented with the creation of the ÖBA platform in 2022, where teachers have access to digital resources for online learning and opportunities for virtual collaboration. A recently closed SSDE project of the WB supported in-service teacher training in Türkiye. Disaster preparedness has been integrated mainly via in-service training and large-scale teacher campaigns rather than initial teacher education.

MoNE's First Aid Trainer Training Center provides a 40-hour professional development program to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in basic first aid and instructional techniques. In addition, 82 first aid training centers across 81 provinces offer a 16-hour first aid course for teachers and staff to promote safe learning environments, reduce school injuries, and strengthen emergency response skills [12].

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

In Türkiye, initial teacher education programs do not include mandatory, stand-alone courses on DRR. Instead, disaster-related competencies are addressed mainly through in-service professional development delivered by MoNE and AFAD (e.g., Afet Farkındalık Eğitimi, MEB-AKUB trainings [13]).

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Covered topics include school safety procedures, evacuation and drills, teacher roles in emergencies, risk communication, community outreach, and in some programs, psychosocial first aid and inclusive practices. 'Post-Disaster Psychosocial Support Skills for Preschool Teachers' trainings aim to equip teachers at all education levels (especially those whose students were affected by earthquakes) with the knowledge and skills needed to support children's mental and emotional well-being after disasters. Courses are mandatory for teachers participating in specific projects/programs (e.g., School-Based Disaster Education [14], AFAD-linked programs) but are not mandatory for all teachers nationally on a regular basis [15].

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

Participation in MoNE-accredited continuous professional development, including disaster-related courses, contributes to teachers' professional development records and career progression (i.e. becoming master teacher); however, there is no national incentive scheme (e.g., salary differential) specifically tied to preparedness education.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Approximately 60 online trainings have been offered via ÖBA, reaching over 1 million teachers with content on disaster awareness and digital skills. Training access is being expanded with mobile apps and offline

modalities. The School-Based Disaster Education Teacher Training Program trained tens of thousands of teachers nationwide, aiming to strengthen their preparedness beliefs and classroom practices. [16] [17]

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- Teacher training has increased confidence and effective use of digital tools in teaching and learning processes.
- MoNE has established trained volunteer teacher teams (MEB AKUB) to work alongside AFAD and provide rapid, coordinated support during emergencies and disasters.
- Under the SSDE Project, preparedness education was first delivered to 1,500 students in six provinces across Türkiye through two-day training programs. Subsequently, Japanese-made non-vibrating earthquake search-and-rescue equipment sets were procured and provided to MoNE AKUB teams in 30 provinces. These teacher teams are now transferring their knowledge to students and establishing MoNE AKUB student teams in schools. In addition, AKUB teachers received both theoretical and hands-on training at ETKİM (Education technologies Hub in Ankara established under SSDE project). After the 2023 earthquakes, MoNE organised targeted psychosocial support, guidance, and 'just-in-time' professional development for teachers deployed or re-deployed to affected regions, including training on supporting children with special needs and trauma.
- The Post-Earthquake Psychosocial Support Action Plan was developed and put into practice, and nationwide seminar programs were delivered through the Teacher Cyber-Network to inform approximately 1.2 million active teachers about disaster and crisis management, as well as post-disaster mental health.
- Activation of teacher networks (call centers, WhatsApp groups, ÖBA) to quickly mobilise and support teachers during and after the emergency.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- Limited systematic focus on disability-inclusive preparedness pedagogy and on working with refugees and multilingual classrooms in emergency settings.
- Teachers' own housing, childcare, and wellbeing needs are not yet fully integrated into a coherent 'teacher resilience' policy package during emergencies.
- More training is needed on effective teaching practices and learner-focused recovery strategies during emergencies for recovering and accelerating learning.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

The Turkish Education Management and Information System (EMIS) is a well-established platform. It collects a broad spectrum of data, including administrative, financial, demographic, and human resource information, data on student learning, attendance, and achievement. The system is currently undergoing modernisation to incorporate secure artificial intelligence (AI) features and additional integration and security steps. This will

enable the system to provide important flags and guided actions to ensure high-quality learning for all students, including refugees. These updates are particularly crucial during emergencies and for tracking and bolstering infrastructure resilience. Moreover, the enhanced capabilities will support strategic planning, budget allocation, and effective policy actions [18].

Projects such as DRMIS and SSDE have their own monitoring frameworks and often extract information from the main EMIS. The system is also being improved to aid in tracking students and teachers during emergencies. Optimisation methods are being integrated to facilitate the swift reallocation of students and teachers during emergencies to public and private schools, ensuring the seamless continuation of safe educational operations.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are preparedness-related topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Inspectors may check compliance with basic safety regulations, presence of evacuation plans and drill logs, and building safety, but preparedness is not a core domain in school evaluation frameworks nationwide.

Are there indicators or frameworks used to assess impact of such curriculum/teaching materials/teacher education?

Project-based evaluations (e.g., SSDE, DRMIS, MoNE earthquake response evaluations) have used specific indicators (number of trainings, drills and participants, and teacher awareness levels). There is no national results framework linking curriculum content, teacher training, school practices, and student outcomes in preparedness and resilience.

Is there evidence of effectiveness or feedback loops?

MoNE's online teacher and students' platforms have a feedback loop mechanism. Research shows increased disaster awareness, basic knowledge on disaster risk reduction, and increased practical skills among teachers who participated in School-Based Disaster Education and related programs, and positive attitudes toward preventive measures.

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

 Under the recently closed SSDE project, MoNE integrated EBA and E-school systems, enabling school needs to be monitored comprehensively during emergencies.

 The SSDE project included specific indicators covering: (i) beneficiaries' perceptions of the effectiveness of consultation processes; (ii) knowledge events and analytical work on MoNE's disaster risk management and emergency education prevention, preparedness, and response; and (iii) the share of students whose parents monitor their children's learning progress through the EBA dashboard. Through these mechanisms, MoNE systematically tracks engagement and outcomes for both students and parents.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 Preparedness indicators are not yet mainstreamed into the national school quality assurance framework (inspections, self-evaluation, performance reporting).
- 🍌 EMIS is not fully exploited to track vulnerable students (e.g., displaced, refugee, children with disabilities) across sectors over time, which limit targeted interventions and early-warning systems.
- 🍌 There is limited systematic collection of student-level preparedness education indicators (such as knowledge, skills, attitudes) and longitudinal impacts on learning and wellbeing.
- 🍌 The education database has not been integrated with the health, social assistance, and refugee databases to track students, their families and disadvantaged groups (e.g., children with disabilities, migrant and refugee children) to design better education policies.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Türkiye has a strong national disaster management architecture (AFAD, national risk plans). MoNE has engaged in disaster-related projects, most notably the World Bank-supported DRMIS and SSDE. National education strategies (Education Vision 2030 and TYMM) emphasise resilience, equity and skills for a green and digital transformation, though not always under the explicit label of ‘preparedness education’. Following the February 2023 earthquakes, MoNE’s three-stage model (first response, continuity of education services, return to normalcy) demonstrates political commitment to education in emergencies.

MoNE aims to integrate data systems across different ministries to enable regular monitoring of students, teachers, and their families, and to embed AI-based solutions into students’ learning pathways, as set out in the AI Strategy in Education published in June 2025 [19].

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?**

Türkiye integrates preparedness mainly within broader DRM and climate/green development strategies (AFAD, climate commitments) and through MoNE projects rather than a single stand-alone ‘Preparedness in Education’ policy. However, the TYMM creates a framework (skills, resilience, equity) that integrates preparedness as a cross-cutting dimension.

- 🍌 **Are any reforms, pilot programmes or timelines planned?**

Implementation of TYMM is a major opportunity to integrate preparedness and resilience more explicitly into student learning, key competencies, and school-based planning.

- 🍌 **Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?**

Schools are required to have basic emergency plans and to conduct regular drills, guided by MoNE regulations and complementary guides (e.g., Disaster and Emergency Management Planning Guide for Educational Institutions). Plans typically cover risk mapping, evacuation routes, assembly points, roles and responsibilities, communication protocols, and collaboration with local authorities (AFAD, municipalities, health services).

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

- 🍌 DRMIS as a national-scale program combines retrofitting/new construction of resilient schools with strengthened institutional capacity for disaster risk management in education.
- 🍌 The SSDE rapid digital response project during COVID-19 created infrastructure and experience now used for hybrid emergency education during earthquakes.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

- 🍌 Ensuring that school-level emergency plans go beyond compliance (paper plans and drills) to become living documents linked to curriculum, student participation, and community engagement.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

There are strong partnerships across government agencies, local authorities, schools, civil society, and international organisations to ensure coordinated, child-focused responses during and after emergencies. Türkiye's earthquake and COVID-19 response in education have involved close coordination between MoNE, AFAD, municipalities, NGOs, universities, and international partners (WB, UNICEF, UNESCO, EU).

MoNE's Board of Education and UNICEF published a comprehensive Training Manual on Child Rights and Education in Disasters and Emergencies. The manual promotes a holistic, child-rights-based approach to disaster management and provides practical modules on child protection, educational continuity, psychosocial support, and safe and inclusive learning environments.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 🍌 **Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Yes. Collaboration with AFAD and municipalities is common for drills, community awareness events, and emergency planning. Turkish Red Crescent [20], NGOs and local associations support psychosocial services, child-friendly spaces, material distribution training.

- 🍌 **Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

Children and youth participate in drills, peer-to-peer awareness activities, and in some projects, school

councils and student clubs. However, structured participation of most vulnerable groups (children with disabilities, refugee children, out-of-school youth) in preparedness planning remains limited.

What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?

UNICEF co-implements programs for Syrian refugee children (Accelerated Learning Programme, CCTE extension) and supports education in emergencies and child protection. UNESCO and UNICEF provide global technical guidance on integrating DRR into curricula and comprehensive school safety. World Bank projects (e.g. DRMIS, SSDE) support the enhancement of digital infrastructure, teacher training, resilience of school building, awareness raising activities and broader analytical work on learning loss and human capital impacts during disasters and emergencies.

Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?

Education–health–social protection linkages (e.g., EMIS with social assistance, refugee databases, child protection) are emerging but not fully realised. In addition, there is cooperation with EU, United Nations (UN)'s agencies and international NGOs on refugee education, DRR, and emergency response (including cross-country learning from OECD/UNESCO/UNICEF initiatives).

EXAMPLES/GOOD PRACTICES:

-  Since 2017, with support from the WB and Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), as well as the European Union through the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT), the MoNE has constructed 57 schools (comprising more than 1,400 classrooms) in compliance with Türkiye's latest seismic code, updated in 2018 in line with international earthquake engineering standards. New school infrastructure, including the addition of preschool classrooms within primary and middle schools, has increased participation among children from refugee and other vulnerable groups and encouraged greater engagement of their mothers with schools [21].
-  First aid guidelines are made in cooperation with the Ministry of Health (MoH).
-  Official post-earthquake assessment was prepared with inputs from international partners such as the WB and UNICEF.
-  Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) for Turkish and refugee children as a joint MoNE–Ministry of Family–UNICEF–EU effort to reduce dropout risk, especially in emergencies.
-  UNICEF, in collaboration with MoNE, has played a central role in integrating psychosocial support into early childhood education responses during emergencies. UNICEF-supported interventions emphasise play-based, socio-emotional learning and provided psychosocial support training for preschool teachers.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  Limited documentation and dissemination of lessons learned from disasters in a form that can feed into national DRR strategies and future cross-country learning.
-  Limited collaboration between stakeholders (including international partners) on disaster risk reduction principles, research, evaluation and monitoring.

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COUNTRY CASE STUDY

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Acronyms and abbreviations

DRR	disaster risk reduction
CPS	Continuing Professional Development
DOE	Department of Education
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
NYC	New York City
NGSS	Next Generation Science Standards
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
OSPI	Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
REMS	Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies

United States, Global Comparator

The USA illustrates a decentralised, hazard-driven model where operational preparedness (plans and drills) is mandated, while classroom instruction largely relies on recommended standards and voluntary resources. Preparedness content is typically embedded in existing subjects (especially science) and reinforced through standalone drills and NGO programs, yielding a blended “curriculum-plus-practice” approach. Early Childhood Education (ECE) emphasises licensed safety routines and drills, whereas primary schools blend standards-linked learning with exercises and family engagement.

Brief Context

Key facts about the education system, disaster risk profile, and rationale for selection.

This case study spotlights four U.S. states that are widely cited for preparedness education and school safety practice: California, Oregon, New York, and Washington. Each operates within a decentralised U.S. system where states set standards and districts implement. All four have strong legal or regulatory foundations for emergency operations planning and drills in K-5 schools and licensed early childhood programs, plus accessible teaching tools for hazards like earthquakes, wildfire smoke, severe weather, and public health events.

California and Washington pair statewide safety planning guidance with frequent drills. Oregon emphasises earthquake and tsunami readiness aligned to regional risk. New York adds robust city and state resources for family-school planning and has detailed regulatory requirements for building-level emergency response plans.

In addition, several states have pioneered early childhood preparedness programs that begin before kindergarten, including California's statewide licensed childcare emergency plan requirements and Washington's risk based early learning safety training.

1. Curriculum Integration

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Brief overview of the national curriculum structure (early childhood, primary, etc.).

K-5 hazard learning is primarily integrated through state science standards aligned to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). NGSS is the set of K-12 science education standards in the United States, but they are not adopted in all states. The NGSS includes natural hazards content and problem solving in grades 3-5. California, Washington, and New York have state science standards referencing Earth and Human Activity performance expectations. Cities and agencies augment standards with child-friendly preparedness booklets and activities.

Early childhood (pre K) practices emphasise safety routines, emotional regulation, and simple hazard awareness, often introduced during drills or story-based learning. For example, California requires licensed childcare centers to practice monthly fire and earthquake drills and maintain posted simplified response charts for toddlers and preschoolers.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness explicitly referenced in national curricula (early childhood and primary)?

Preparedness is referenced in elementary science standards that ask students to propose solutions to reduce hazard impacts. New York City and State publish K-5 preparedness materials that connect home and school planning.

What dimensions of preparedness are included? (e.g., natural hazards, media literacy, civic resilience, first aid; reference Eurydice questionnaire)

The following are included: earthquakes, severe weather, wildfire smoke, evacuation and shelter practices, first aid basics, and help-seeking. FEMA Ready 2 Help and Red Cross Pillowcase Project reinforce safety steps and coping skills for grades 3-5.

Is integration mandatory or optional?

Integration is optional within lessons but strongly encouraged through state standards and district adoption. NYC provides branded K-5 materials to embed in class.

GOOD PRACTICES:

-  New York City's "Let's Get Ready, New York!" K-5 booklet used in class and at home.
-  Red Cross Pillowcase Project sessions aligned to grades 3-5 standards across California districts.
-  FEMA Ready 2 Help cards used by Los Angeles Unified to teach five simple response steps.
-  California's statewide ShakeOut Schools model, which integrates annual drills, classroom scripts, and early childhood participation, creating a coherent and replicable preparedness education cycle.
-  California's mandated emergency drills in licensed childcare centers beginning at toddler age.
-  Washington's early learning safety guidance that includes emergency routines for infants and toddlers.

2. Teaching Materials and Classroom Tools

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

A wide array of free preparedness materials exist, curated by states, cities, federal agencies (FEMA, U.S. Department of Education's REMS Center), and NGOs to support both classroom instruction and early childhood education. While classroom materials remain optional in most contexts, some states and districts strongly recommend using vetted guides during designated safety weeks or awareness campaigns. Early childhood licensing requirements take a different approach, mandating emergency plan templates and posted procedures as operational compliance tools that must be visibly displayed and regularly updated. Pedagogical approaches vary by age group, with ECE settings (ages 0–5) emphasising visual cues, brief routines, and story-based practice that respects developmental limitations in attention and comprehension. K–5 instruction incorporates more interactive elements

including discussions, design challenges, story-based games, and home-school linkages that extend preparedness learning beyond the classroom. Despite this rich resource landscape, challenges persist, including variability in local curation quality, limited multilingual adaptations for diverse student populations, and minimal classroom time allocated for applied practice outside of mandatory drill participation.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are these resources mandatory or optional?

Most resources are optional classroom supplements, not mandated textbooks. NYC and districts often recommend specific K-5 guides for use during safety weeks and drills.

Who develops them (government, NGOs, civil protection authorities)?

Developers include FEMA's Ready Kids team, the American Red Cross, state education agencies, and municipal emergency management offices.

How are they disseminated and used in practice?

Dissemination uses agency portals and school safety centers. Washington's OSPI School Safety Center and NYC Emergency Management publish ready-to-print guides. Red Cross delivers in-school presentations.

GOOD PRACTICES:

 FEMA Ready 2 Help card game for ages 8 and up that teaches five steps: stay safe, stay calm, get help, give info, give care.

 American Red Cross Pillowcase Project for grades 3-5 with standards alignment and presenter kits.

 NYC's K-5 "Let's Get Ready, New York!" story-based booklet that links classroom learning to family plans).

 California's wildfire smoke and air quality classroom protocols, including child friendly materials on health protection and environmental hazard awareness.

 Washington's School Safety Center hazard specific toolkits, which include child appropriate visual materials for earthquakes, fire safety, and reunification processes.

 California childcare emergency plan templates required for preschool sites.

 Washington's early learning safety posters for shelter in place and evacuation guidance for ages 0 to 5.

3. Teacher Education and Professional Development

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Preparedness content reaches teachers mainly through continuous professional development rather than initial licensure programs. State safety centers, regional service agencies, and the U.S. Department of Education's REMS

TA Center offer free online courses, workshops, and toolkits for K-12 staff including elementary educators.

Early childhood educators also receive hazard planning training through childcare licensing systems, including fire drill procedures, emergency bag preparation, and infant evacuation techniques.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Is preparedness addressed in initial teacher education or continuous professional development?

Addressed in CPD: Yes. REMS offers self-paced courses on EOP basics, earthquake preparedness for schools, after-action reviews, and site assessments that elementary staff can take. Washington's ESD network and OSPI provide training and technical assistance statewide.

What topics and skills are covered, and are they mandatory?

Topics include all-hazards planning, drills, family reunification, threat assessment, and classroom response options. Most are recommended rather than mandatory at the teacher level, while school plans and drills are required by law.

Are any of these courses reflected in certification/points system/salaries of teachers?

Courses typically count as local professional learning hours, not salary steps by statute.

What is the reach and uptake among teachers?

Uptake is strong where states provide coordinated offerings through ESDs and safety centers.

GOOD PRACTICES:

-  REMS 'Developing EOPs K-12 101' training with pre-training modules and workbooks.
-  Washington ESD School Safety training that helps districts meet state requirements.
-  NYC DOE emergency preparedness guidance used in staff briefings and drills.
-  Washington's coordinated School Safety OSPI-ESD partnership, which integrates consistent statewide professional learning for districts including rural early childhood programs.
-  California childcare licensing requires emergency preparedness modules for preschool educators.

CHALLENGES/GAPS:

-  CPD is optional for individual teachers and can be uneven across schools.
-  Limited time for practice and interdisciplinary lesson planning in K-5 schedules.
-  Tracking teacher-level completion is inconsistent outside district systems.

4. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Quality assurance focuses on required plans, documented drills, and continuous improvement through after-action reviews. Washington, California, Oregon, and New York set expectations for school or district plans, annual reviews, and practice drills. Health and safety guides and inspection frameworks support implementation.

Early childhood centers undergo annual or biannual licensing inspections that include review of emergency drills and posted procedures.

KEY QUESTIONS:

Are preparedness-related topics included in school inspections or external evaluations?

Preparedness topics are embedded in external expectations rather than routine classroom inspections. Washington's OSPI Safety Center outlines compulsory school drills and preparedness resources. New York requires districtwide safety plans and confidential building-level emergency response plans with annual review.

Are there indicators or frameworks used to assess impact of such curriculum/teaching materials/teacher education?

Indicators include presence and annual update of EOPs, drill logs, and coordination with first responders. Washington's Health and Safety Guide compiles regulatory references and practice standards used by local health and fire authorities.

Is there evidence of effectiveness or feedback loops?

Evidence of effectiveness is gathered through exercises and after-action reviews promoted by REMS.

GOOD PRACTICES:

-  New York's Section 155.17 requiring annual review and drills tied to building-level emergency response plans.
-  OSPI School Safety Center drill guidance and short training videos for schools.
-  California's ShakeOut Schools program is used as an annual statewide quality assurance mechanism that enables comparison year to year and embeds evaluation guidance for administrators and early educators.
-  Washington's Health and Safety Guide, which consolidates codes and field practices in a uniform monitoring reference for elementary and early childhood facilities.
-  California childcare licensing inspections that include emergency plan compliance.

5. National Strategies and Future Plans

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

There is no single national K-5 preparedness curriculum mandate. Federal partners provide frameworks and resources while states set requirements for plans and drills. The four profiled states have explicit regulations for safety planning and are updating guidance to cover emerging hazards. The current system includes mandatory state laws governing EOPs and drills, recommended integration of preparedness concepts into academic standards and district policies, and voluntary participation in NGO-delivered programs and family outreach efforts. Early learning systems now appear more prominently in state updates, recognising that preparedness must begin before primary school.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Do countries have a national policy or strategy to integrate preparedness in education, or is this integrated as part of national climate change or DRM-related strategies?

Strategy is embedded in state school safety statutes and all-hazards approaches. New York's regulations specify districtwide plans and building-level emergency response plans. Washington law requires safe school plans and drills. California requires comprehensive school safety plans. Oregon law mandates emergency drills in schools.

- Are any reforms, pilot programs or timelines planned?

Reforms include periodic updates to safety regulations and guidance. Washington's 2025 Health and Safety Guide consolidates codes and standards. New York continues to refine Section 155.17 requirements.

- Are education facilities/establishments mandated to have emergency preparedness plans; and if so, what do they entail?

Facilities are mandated to maintain EOPs and conduct regular drills. NYC and districts publish districtwide plans while keeping building-level procedures confidential for security.

GOOD PRACTICES:

- Washington's statewide School Safety Center and updated Health and Safety Guide.
- New York's codified annual review of plans and regular drills.
- California district comprehensive school safety plans tied to state education code.
- California's integration of climate driven hazards such as wildfire smoke into statewide school safety operations and classroom health guidance.
- Washington's planned expansions of hazard specific protocols for extreme heat, smoke, and flooding, with child appropriate guidance in development.

- California childcare emergency planning regulations incorporated into statewide childcare quality systems.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

SUMMARY OF CONTEXT:

Partnerships are central. Schools coordinate with emergency management, health departments, fire services, NGOs, and regional education service agencies. Programs are designed to involve families and children directly and to connect school drills with household planning. Primary schools emphasise collaboration with first responders for realistic drill scenarios, reunification planning that addresses the specific challenges of elementary-aged children, and NGO classroom delivery programs that bring external expertise into schools. Early childhood centers also coordinate with licensing agencies, public health departments, and family engagement programs to support preparedness routines for families with very young children.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Are schools collaborating with civil protection, Red Cross, parents, or municipalities?**

Collaboration is common. Washington's OSPI and ESDs coordinate with local responders. NYC Emergency Management provides K-5 and household planning materials used by schools and parents. The Red Cross delivers in-school sessions.

- Are inclusive or participatory methods (e.g., involving children, vulnerable groups) used?**

Inclusive methods include child-friendly workbooks and multilingual guides for families with access and functional needs.

- What is the role of international organisations (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF)?**

International bodies are not directive in state policy, but their frameworks inform tools. Federal ED's REMS Center supports national technical assistance aligned to global good practice on drills, exercises, and after-action learning.

- Are there multi-sectoral or cross-border partnerships?**

Cross border partnerships emerge through national NGO networks and federal platforms that serve all states.

GOOD PRACTICES:

- NYC's K-5 booklet that prompts take home planning with caregivers.
- Red Cross Pillowcase Project delivered in California and other states with strong school-NGO collaboration.

- 🍌 Washington ESD safety collaboratives supporting rural and urban districts.
- 🍌 California's early childhood partnerships with Community Care Licensing and local fire services to train providers serving infants and toddlers.
- 🍌 Washington's regional reunification planning exercises include elementary schools, early childhood centers, first responders, and parents, creating a strong participatory model.
- 🍌 California's community childcare emergency preparedness partnerships that provide family emergency backpack programs for preschool families.

References and Data Sources

Documents Reviewed:

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