



## Role of online communities in a disaster situation

“I do not trust institutions themselves. I only trust the people around me, the community, when an emergency occurs” (G3-P2 - see source document for full reference). As a strategy, some participants described how they had turned to online communities: “Yes, we have a Facebook group in our neighbourhood. Actually, we have two: One is in [place where the participant lives at the moment], and the other one is for the building where I lived before and I never got out of that group. The group alert works perfectly, because as soon as someone smells or hears anything we are all alerted and ready to take action” (G5-P2 - see source document for full reference). Whilst the setup of such “virtual neighbourhood watch” groups is widespread in some European countries, this statement points into a further direction, i.e. the effect a network of such alert groups may have, or could be made use of, when citizens move their homes but stay in touch online with their previous local communities.

### Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Local knowledge](#), [Communication](#), [Attitudes toward authorities](#), [Social networks](#)

Disaster Phases: [Prevention](#), [Preparedness](#), [Response](#), [Recovery](#), [All disaster phases](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [National civil protection body](#), [Local authorities](#), [Non-active citizens](#), [Active citizens](#), [Media](#)

Hazards: [Natural hazards](#), [Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations](#), [Man-made intentional hazards](#)

### Recommendations:

- [Develop culturally aware disaster preparedness and response training](#)
- [Foster the adoption of a culture of disaster prevention and resilience by informing and motivating citizens to take action](#)

### Source

[Deliverable D5.5 "Report on citizens' reactions and opinions: Citizen Summit 3 \(Italy\)" \(page 22\)](#)

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