Decreasing trust in industry and political systems and influence on risk perception and behavioural responses to adverse events

In the last decade, the trust in industry and political systems has significantly decreased, which sociologists partially explain with better education, the rise of citizens' expectations and a general increase of public aspirations and demands of institutions (Renn & Levine, 1991). An additional factor for growing dissatisfaction and the decrease of trust in institutions is the pluralization of values and lifestyles (Renn, 1995). However, this does not indicate a decline of relevance of trust for the management of risks. On the contrary, public institutions are always forced to legitimate their actions, especially when faced with accidents (Rohrmann & Renn, 2000). Although mismanagement can be covered up by referring to the alleged randomness of the events or by labelling it as unpredictable, public institutions can be blamed and hold responsible for events they did not prevent or mitigate properly (Luhmann, 1986). Trust in authorities influences both risk perception and people's behavioural responses to adverse events (Rohrmann & Renn, 2000).

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Types of Actors Concerned: National civil protection body, Local authorities, Non-active citizens, Active citizens, Entrepreneurs, Media, Government, National research bodies, Red Cross, NGOs, Military, Law enforcement agencies, Healthcare and emergency services, European Civil Protection Mechanism, UN and other international organisations, All types of actors
Hazards: Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations, Man-made intentional hazards

Recommendations:
- Engage in activities and develop strategies aiming to improve trust between citizens and authorities
- Foster social connectedness and the development of a strong sense of community, as these encourage citizens to help each other in disaster situations

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Source

Deliverable D4.2 "Report on 'risk cultures' in the context of disasters" (page 24)