



Council of the
European Union

THE EU INTEGRATED POLITICAL CRISIS RESPONSE – IPCR – ARRANGEMENTS

in brief



After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the realisation grew within the EU that a framework was needed to coordinate responses at the highest political level to major cross-sectorial crises.

The **Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) arrangements** were created to fill that gap. They provide a flexible crisis mechanism for supporting the presidency of the Council of the European Union in dealing with major natural or man-made cross-sectorial disasters, as well as acts of terrorism.

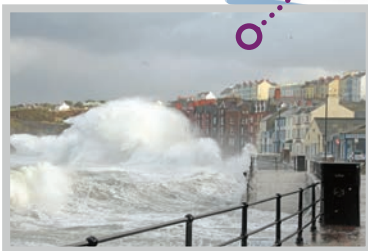
The IPCR provides the presidency with a number of unique tools designed to facilitate information sharing, joint decision making, and coordination of the response at the highest political level:

- **An informal roundtable.** This is an informal meeting that allows the presidency to bring key actors and expertise together around the same table (e.g. the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), relevant agencies, the Cabinet of the President of the European Council and experts from the member states most directly affected or from relevant international organisations). The round table's main function is to support the presidency in the handling of the situation within the Council.
- **The Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis (ISAA) report.** This is an analytical report, drafted by the Commission and the EEAS, under an ISAA lead service determined by both the Commission and the EEAS depending on the nature of the crisis. Its aim is to provide decision makers with a clear common picture of the current situation.
- **The IPCR web platform.** This online tool allows for the exchange of information, including the ISAA report, situational maps and stakeholders' contributions. It also facilitates the gathering of information for the ISAA reports through questionnaires.
- **The central IPCR 24/7 contact point,** established within the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) at the Commission, ensures 24/7 liaison with key actors, as well as performing monitoring and alerting functions for IPCR purposes. It supports the production and circulation of the ISAA report.

The IPCR can be activated by the presidency in case of a major crisis where there is a perceived need for political coordination between EU member states, regardless of whether the event occurs inside or outside of the EU. It may also be activated following a request from a member state.

The level of activation of the IPCR can be fine-tuned to the situation. Three levels are available: a monitoring mode, which does not constitute activating the IPCR, and two levels of activation for which the supporting tools are available, namely information-sharing mode and IPCR full activation.

- **Monitoring** allows information about a crisis to be shared on a voluntary basis, without activating the IPCR. Monitoring pages on the IPCR web platform have covered crises ranging from Syria/Iraq to the Nepal earthquake, and Ebola. This mode does not trigger the production of ISAA reports.
- **Information-sharing mode** involves an obligation for the Commission and the EEAS to produce ISAA reports. A dedicated crisis page is generated by the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) on the IPCR web platform. Information-sharing mode can be triggered by the presidency or by the GSC, the Commission and the EEAS in line with the presidency.



- **IPCR full activation**, requested by the presidency or the member states, brings higher visibility to the EU response and facilitates the handling of the crisis at EU level through the organisation of (extraordinary) Council or European Council meetings. In addition, full activation entails the preparation of proposals for action with regard to the EU response, prepared at the presidency-led roundtables and presented to Coreper and the Council.

Solidarity Clause

The IPCR also underpins the political response to the invocation of the solidarity clause (Article 222 of the TFEU, which stipulates that the EU and its member states should act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a member state is the object of a terrorist attack or the victim of a natural or man-made disaster). Invocation of the solidarity clause by a member state automatically triggers the activation of the IPCR.



The IPCR was sanctioned on 25 June 2013 by the Council of the European Union. On 30 October 2015, during the Luxembourg presidency, the IPCR was activated in information-sharing mode for the very first time, in view of the refugee and migration crisis. Ten days later, with the blessing of the Justice and Home Affairs Council, it was activated in full.

Throughout the current refugee and migration crisis, there have been frequent meetings of the IPCR informal round table at high level (Ambassador/Director-General level) and at working party level (experts). A small number of meetings have also taken place at ministerial level.

Because of strong buy-in from key stakeholders, including the Commission, the EEAS, agencies and member states, the IPCR has become an effective tool in agenda-setting and coordinated fact-finding, elements that have sometimes been found lacking during other crises.



On 24 June 2014, the Council adopted the rules and procedures for the implementation of the solidarity clause, including its link to the IPCR.



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