

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002572/26**  
**to the Commission**  
**Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)**  
(22 June 2026)

**Subject:** Ensuring that people with hearing and visual impairments can access the information provided in emergency communications

Under Article 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as ratified by the European Union, States Parties are to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services. The human rights of people with hearing and visual impairments should therefore be upheld by ensuring that they too receive emergency communications that are sent to the public.

The vulnerability of people with hearing and visual impairments when it comes to receiving emergency communications has become more of an issue in recent years owing to the general security situation and to geopolitical conditions. This raises questions as to how people with hearing and visual impairments are taken into account in the design of emergency communications and the tools used to send them, and what practical solutions exist to ensure that people with hearing and visual impairments can access information and assistance in crisis situations.

With that in mind:

1. What steps does the Commission intend to take to ensure that people with hearing or visual impairments receive information on an equal footing with other EU citizens in crisis situations?
2. In the implementation of the forthcoming regulation on the EU civil protection mechanism, how does the Commission intend to ensure that people with hearing and visual impairments are also able to receive, in full, the emergency communication actions defined in the regulation?

Submitted: 22.6.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission**  
(3 September 2026)

The European Electronic Communications Code (EECC) <sup>(1)</sup> provides for the obligation for Member States to ensure that public warnings are transmitted by providers of mobile-based interpersonal communication services to the end-users concerned.

The technologies implemented under this provision ensure text communication to all end-users in the geographic areas potentially being affected by major emergencies and disasters.

As a complementary solution, Member States may deploy public warning applications that have to be accessible by making them perceivable, operable, understandable and robust in compliance with the Web Accessibility Directive <sup>(2)</sup>.

The compliance with the EECC is monitored by the Commission by way of a data-gathering exercise, the result of which is published in a report every two years <sup>(3)</sup>.

The next report will be published by the end of 2026. The proposal for a Digital Networks Act <sup>(4)</sup> reinforces these provisions setting out the equivalence requirements for emergency communications.

The Preparedness Union Strategy and Disaster Resilience Goals (DRGs) <sup>(5)</sup> strengthen crisis preparedness and resilience through a whole-of-society approach, including the needs of vulnerable groups.

National, regional and local authorities are responsible for designing and implementing measures adapted to their specific risk landscapes and societal needs, including ensuring that preparedness, warning, evacuation and response arrangements are accessible to persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Articles 109 and 110 of Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (Recast) (Text with EEA relevance).  
ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/1972/oj>

<sup>(2)</sup> Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies (Text with EEA relevance).  
ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2016/2102/oj>.

<sup>(3)</sup> <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/2024-report-implementation-eu-emergency-number-112>.

<sup>(4)</sup> <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/proposal-regulation-digital-networks-act-dna>.

<sup>(5)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/topics/preparedness\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/topics/preparedness_en).

The Enhanced Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities up to 2030 <sup>(6)</sup> introduced a specific new flagship initiative ‘Prepared for anything, prepared for everyone’ to make preparedness and crisis management more disability inclusive.

The proposed Regulation on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and health emergency preparedness <sup>(7)</sup> highlights the importance of addressing vulnerable groups’ needs, particularly in the context of the DRGs.

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<sup>(6)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/disability/enhancing-strategy-rights-persons-disabilities-2030\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/disability/enhancing-strategy-rights-persons-disabilities-2030_en).

<sup>(7)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/publications/union-civil-protection-mechanism-and-union-support-health-emergency-preparedness-and-response\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/publications/union-civil-protection-mechanism-and-union-support-health-emergency-preparedness-and-response_en) Recitals 17 and 18 stressing that safety preparation and risk communication must reach everyone, including persons with disabilities and through Article 23, underlining the importance of considering these groups’ specificities in the impacts of climate change on disaster risks.