



The  
Federal Government

Summary

# German Strategy for Strengthening Resilience to Disasters

Implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) –  
Germany's contribution 2022–2030





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## Foreword



Humankind has always had to deal with crises and disasters. Our more recent past, our present and a glimpse into the future show, however, that crises and disasters are presenting us with new and changing challenges. Over the past two years alone, the Covid-19 pandemic has tested the coping strategies of every single human being and the global community and constantly imposed restrictions on our social lives. At the same time, the flood disaster in July 2021 emphatically demonstrated that unrelenting climate change is also leading to extreme weather events on an unprecedented scale in Germany, for which we need to be better prepared. Following Russia's war of aggression waged against the Ukraine, in contravention of international law, it has once again become fundamentally clear that peace and security in Europe should not be taken for granted. Simultaneously emerging acute threats are increasing our vulnerability to such hazards. We must bolster our resilience to a broad range of crises; resilience to disasters also strengthens our resilience to military and hybrid threats.

Risk and crisis management in Germany is the task of the government and an integral part of our security architecture. Security is a fundamental human need, for which the state bears particular responsibility. Accordingly, we need to focus on people in our initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience to disasters. At the same time, social change must also be considered. Demographic change, social cohesion and democratic cooperation, changing lifestyles and mobility patterns as well as digitalisation and the global networking of societies equally have an impact on our prevention and coping strategies.

With the Federal Government's Strategy for Strengthening Resilience to Disasters (or 'Resilience Strategy' for short), we will make Germany more able to withstand crises on a lasting basis!

The Federal Government is pursuing an integral strategic approach in order to invest in prevention and be able to better manage disasters and crises and help us to recover from them. The Resilience Strategy highlights the efforts that are already being made in this regard and points out where there is a need for comprehensive action in five specific action areas:

- Understanding disaster risk.
- Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.
- Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.
- Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to 'Build Back Better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.
- International cooperation.

In order to understand the complex relationships between the causes and consequences of disasters and crises and implement integral solutions, joint action is needed by all stakeholders at all levels – locally, regionally, nationally and internationally and across all sectors.

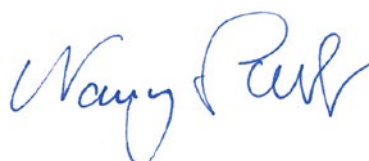
For joint action of this kind, the United Nations has formulated targets, guidelines and priorities for action in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030). We are using these as a basis to enable us to play our part in creating a more resilient future both in Germany and in terms of our international commitment. With regard to sustainability, climate change mitigation and adaptation, urban development, humanitarian assistance and security policy, we are also promoting measures to prevent new risks, mitigate existing risks and avert crises in line with other global and European agendas. In doing so, Germany stands firmly by its international partners as part of the global community.

The integrated system of assistance provided by municipalities, the Federal Government and the Länder, which characterises civil protection in Germany, already constitutes a very good basis for enhancing resilience. A number of stakeholders – authorities, fire services, aid organisations and the Federal Agency for Technical Relief – work together in an efficient hazard prevention chain. With an action force of 1.7 million people, most of whom are volunteers, civil protection is firmly anchored in our society. I would like to thank the professional and voluntary personnel for their commitment!

In order to adequately address existing and prospective risks in the future, risk and crisis management at federal and state level must be even better intertwined and treated as a permanent cross-functional task in all policy areas.

That is why, for the first time, the Resilience Strategy creates a common strategic framework for increasing resilience to disasters. We are thus promoting an integrated and inclusive approach to disaster risk management and setting the course to tackle new challenges by joining forces. Important here is the cooperation of the Federal Government, the Länder and municipalities as well as stakeholders from civil society, the scientific community, the private sector and the media!

The Resilience Strategy is designed to initiate a public discussion on how Germany can become more resilient. Accordingly, I invite all interested parties to get involved in the implementation process and play their part in further developing the strategy. After all, the Resilience Strategy is a milestone on the way to a more secure future. Let's take this path together!



*Nancy Faeser*

Federal Minister of the Interior and Community



# German Strategy for Strengthening Resilience to Disasters

On 13 July 2022, the Federal Government enacted the **German Strategy for Strengthening Resilience to Disasters** (or ‘Resilience Strategy’ for short). This **summary** provides an overview of key elements of the strategy.

## Where we are at present

In recent years, various hazardous situations, occurring naturally and/or human-induced, have led to complex crises and disasters. Particularly in high-tech societies intertwined in global trade, the consequences for all areas of life and our community have become much more complex: loss of human life and livelihoods, significant economic, social and environmental damage as well as the threat to critical infrastructure. The Covid-19 pandemic that has been raging since 2020, the flood disasters in July 2021 as an effect of climate change, and more evident migration movements – also due to climate change and armed conflicts – are the most serious disasters of recent years. They have had a significant impact on our society and politics and continue to change them. These and other damaging events have also clearly shown where both our preparedness and coping capacities and skills are well organised and where we must significantly improve in order to be fit for the future. This applies to civil protection in general and our risk and crisis management measures in all other policy areas.

## Where we want to be

New challenges in dealing with hazards, risks, disasters and crises call for new strategies. An integral approach to resilience must take all hazards into account and be viewed as a permanent political task that is constantly being readjusted and embedded in the overall state security architecture.

Disaster risk reduction instruments will thus also be used to counter risks with a security policy dimension as well as military hazards. At the same time, disaster resilience forms the basis for reliable civil defence. All state and non-state stakeholders must be involved and play their part here, i.e. the state itself, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community and the media from all disciplines or sectors across all administrative levels.

### International concepts

- Multi-hazard approach
- Stronger focus on prevention
- Disaster risk management as a task for all sectors and levels
- Coherence across all policy areas

The Federal Government recognises this need in the Resilience Strategy. We are using it to create the strategic framework in order to promote forward-looking action informed by risk and foster a resilient society as important elements of sustainable development. The driving forces behind it are the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) published by the United Nations and other global and European agendas that are mutually committed to the importance of integrated disaster risk management for sustainability, climate change mitigation and adaptation, international cooperation and urban development.

### Our strategic goals for 2030 are:

#### ► Integration:

Existing structures and systems are supplemented or linked by new or improved disaster risk management measures.

#### ► Cooperation:

State and non-state stakeholders work more closely together in the area of disaster risk management.

#### ► Coordination:

Information, insights and findings in the area of disaster risk management are increasingly disseminated and interlinked.

## What we will do to achieve it

The aim of the Resilience Strategy is to protect people and their livelihoods and to strengthen the resilience and adaptability of the community to disasters. The Resilience Strategy also shows how Germany can use development cooperation and humanitarian assistance to contribute to the global implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and thus increase resilience to disasters.

The implementation of the Resilience Strategy is based on the following overarching guidelines:

- A focus on protecting people and their livelihoods
- A perspective that embraces society as a whole
- The responsibility of all stakeholders in line with their skills and capacities
- A multi-hazard approach
- Building on existing processes, capacities and principles

- Generating synergies and coherence between existing efforts
- Continuous learning during and from the implementation of the Resilience Strategy

The Federal Government formulates measures across five action areas to resist the impact of a wide range of hazards in a timely and efficient manner, to absorb them, to adapt to them and to recover from them. This is accompanied by the responsibility to maintain and restore critical services for society as well as a transformation process to reduce existing risks and prevent the emergence of new risks.

**Action area 1 – Understanding disaster risk** – includes measures for enhancing knowledge of risks and how they interact, i.e. becoming more aware of existing and potential risks and being able to assess them better and identify them earlier. These include areas such as strategic foresight, risk analysis, data availability and processing, awareness-raising initiatives among the population and education and training.



**Action area 2 – Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk** – focuses on establishing which stakeholders must work even more closely together, how they can do so and which planning-related and regulatory principles should form the basis of such collaboration. This means anchoring disaster risk management as a cross-functional task and significantly improving coherence across all policy areas as well as risk management skills and interdisciplinary and cross-level coordination. This requires closer cooperation with non-state stakeholders and international organisations (United Nations, European Union).

**Action area 3 – Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience** – identifies measures within 17 subject areas that help to reduce disaster risks as an integral and systematic element embedded within structural investment, financing and support measures. These measures not only help to build resilience to disasters through sectoral development, but also address underlying risk drivers that can arise from social, economic or environmental processes.

**Action area 4 – Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to ‘Build Back Better’ in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction** – focuses on crisis management tasks such as early warning systems, emergency planning and exercises, training of leaders and emergency services, voluntary work, networking of stakeholders and the question of how we can learn from crises. At the same time, it highlights how crisis management can draw on the knowledge, capacities and structures of risk management.

**Action area 5 – International cooperation** – consolidates the subject areas from action areas 1–4 for Germany’s bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field of disaster management, humanitarian assistance and development cooperation.

## What happens next

The implementation of the Resilience Strategy at Federal Government level in line with its constitutional responsibility can only succeed through joint action by the various departments. Here, a targeted approach should be taken to using the synergies and interfaces with related strategy processes. At Federal Government level, the Interministerial Working Group tasked with implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (IMAG Sendai) acts as a steering and coordinating committee, which will be supported by an inter-agency working group in the future. The National Focal Point for the Sendai Framework (NKS) at the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK) is on hand to provide expert advice and public relations and networking services to the Federal Government and all stakeholders who would like to get involved in the process as well as other implementation partners. The NKS is also the point of contact for the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. Initiatives and measures taken to improve disaster risk management and increase resilience to disasters should be qualitatively recorded in the form of a progress report at three-year intervals and form the basis for the continuous development of the Resilience Strategy.

The strategy also provides a guidance framework for various stakeholders, institutions, sectors and levels with the overriding aim of helping to create a society that is more resilient to disasters. In order to implement and develop the Resilience Strategy, the Federal Government will start a dialogue and participation process with the Länder, representatives from the municipalities as well as stakeholders from civil society, the scientific community, the private sector and the media. This process is set to be made permanent within the framework of a National Platform.



## German Strategy for Strengthening Resilience to Disasters

Overarching goal

German society is more resilient to disasters and Germany's international cooperation contributes to the global implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Strategic goals

### Integration

Existing structures and systems are supplemented or linked by new or improved disaster risk management measures.

### Cooperation

State and non-state stakeholders work more closely together in the area of disaster risk management.

### Coordination

Information, insights and findings in the area of disaster risk management are increasingly disseminated and interlinked.

Stakeholders

All disciplines/sectors – All levels – State – Non-state

Action areas

### 1. Understanding disaster risk

- 1.1. Enhancing and using risk analyses
- 1.2. Identifying newly emerging risks at an early stage
- 1.3. Improving the data situation
- 1.4. Raising awareness of self-provision among the population
- 1.5. Including disaster risk management issues in education and training

### 2. Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk

- 2.1. Anchoring disaster risk management as a cross-functional task
- 2.2. Bolstering risk management skills and coordination mechanisms
- 2.3. Expanding and leveraging coherence with other cross-sectoral policy areas
- 2.4. Stepping up cooperation between state and non-state stakeholders
- 2.5. Increasing cooperation in the area of disaster risk management in and with the EU and NATO

### 3. Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience

- 3.1. Finance
- 3.2. Healthcare
- 3.3. Economic affairs and energy
- 3.4. Digital infrastructure
- 3.5. Construction, urban, rural and regional development and land-use planning
- 3.6. Transport
- 3.7. Food, agriculture and forestry
- 3.8. Environment
- 3.9. Labour and social affairs
- 3.10. Education and science
- 3.11. Civil and military defence
- 3.12. Justice and consumer protection
- 3.13. Vulnerable groups
- 3.14. Innovative technologies
- 3.15. Protection of cultural assets
- 3.16. Critical infrastructure
- 3.17. Disseminating proven resilience practices

### 4. Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to 'Build Back Better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction

- 4.1. Improving early crisis detection and early warning systems for timely and targeted action
- 4.2. Better forecasting the potential developments of a disaster
- 4.3. Conducting regular incident exercises
- 4.4. Enhancing emergency planning
- 4.5. Improving the training of leaders and emergency services
- 4.6. Offering better incentives for voluntary work
- 4.7. Networking stakeholders, interests and expertise before the crisis
- 4.8. Learning from the crisis

## 5. International cooperation

- 5.1. Supporting the use of comprehensive risk analyses

- 5.2. Strengthening cooperation with civil society
- 5.3. Enhancing governance
- 5.4. Promoting risk-informed planning and development
- 5.5. Linking international, regional and national approaches
- 5.6. Promoting multilateral cooperation

- 5.7. Strengthening participative and community-based prevention measures
- 5.8. Supporting social security systems
- 5.9. Strengthening healthcare systems
- 5.10. Encouraging risk finance and risk transfer
- 5.11. Developing resilient infrastructure

- 5.12. Strengthening preparation and coping capacities
- 5.13. Supporting resilient reconstruction with developmental focus (Build Back Better)
- 5.14. Linking humanitarian assistance and development cooperation



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