



Re-inventing prevention? - An evaluation of tools for strengthening private preparedness for floods and heavy rains

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Experiences in Europe and Austria from coping with numerous floods and heavy rain events in recent decades point to room for improvement in reducing damages and adverse effects. One of the emerging issues is private preparedness, which has only received punctual attention in Austria until now. Current activities to promote property protection are, however, not underpinned by a long-term strategy, thus minimizing their cumulative effect. While printed brochures and online information are widely available, innovative information services, tailored to and actively addressing specific target groups, are thin on the ground. This project reviews (national as well as international) established approaches, with a focus on German-speaking areas, checking their long-term effectiveness with the help of expert workshops and an empirical analysis of survey data. The Transtheoretical Model (Prochaska, 1977) serves as the analytical framework: We assign specific tools to distinct stages of behavioural change. People's openness to absorb risk information or their willingness to engage in private preparedness depend on an incremental process of considering, appraising, introducing and finally maintaining preventive actions. Based on this stage-specific perspective and the workshop results, gaps of intervention are identified to define best-practice examples and recommendations that can be realized within the prevailing legislative and organizational framework at national, regional and local level in Austria.