



## **Crowdsourcing as citizen-empowered tool for natural hazards. The MAppERS project.**

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MAppERS is a co-financed project by European Commission and it is focused on natural hazards risk prevention and emergency response, through the development of a smartphone application. The idea relies on the role of citizens and volunteers as 'territorial mappers' and the information they can provide to civil protection operators through the use of their smartphones.

The strategy is to promote the active participation of citizens and volunteers in disaster risk reduction promoting responsibility and preparedness. The application embraces tools for crowdsourcing data collection, for preparedness, prevention and alert warnings.

The pilot activity conducted in order to assess its usability and performance is presented. One activity presented took place in Denmark, by Frederikssund Halsnæs Fire & Rescue Service, where 12 voluntary citizens were enrolled. The age ranged between young and elderly people with different educational level. Two separated groups were defined; one followed an introductory course on the application usage and were supervised during the test, while the other was untrained and without support. The usability of the app was assessed through the filling in of a form.

Results showed that volunteers were extremely interested in the app and were seeing the advantage of using it. The app was considered user-friendly even to elderly people. The differences in comprehension of several aspects of the application by the two groups allowed to highlight the weak points in terms of approachability. These were then addressed in the following release of the app.