



CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Exploring the use of social media in crisis situations for the protection of citizens

With the development of internet applications and data connections, the concept of social media came into being and attracted a vast number of users in a relatively short amount of time. The increase in the availability and use of social media applications (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogger etc.) has significantly impacted the way people interact and communicate. On a global scale, individuals are able to communicate and share digital based media with many other users. Furthermore, the development of information communication technologies from smart phones to tablets has made it

easier for individuals to remain connected with their wider social networks and beyond. In relation to crisis management, the widespread availability and ease of connecting with others via social media has important implications for the way in which individuals can communicate and share information with others in a crisis. Accordingly, the **COSMIC (Contribution of Social Media in Crisis management) project aims to assist first responders in providing guidelines as to how to optimise their use of new ICT applications.** The aims and objectives of COSMIC include:

- To explore new and emerging communication technologies and applications and provide insight into the most effective ways to utilize this media to promote the safety and security of citizens in crisis situations.
- To assist better communication and better information gathering for authorities and first responders.
- To examine the potential roles and ethics for citizen participation in emergency response.
- To produce guidelines that will assist authorities and first responders in deploying new and emerging communication technologies and applications to better protect citizens in crisis situations.

COSMIC will review information and communication needs, infrastructure bottlenecks, security priorities and major stakeholders associated with crisis situations, particularly those involved in search and rescue missions/operations, and the role of first responders in those situations. Second, the project will examine new ICTs and applications and their use (or misuse) in crisis situations. The project will also explore emerging ICTs and applications, and identify political, social and industrial challenges and opportunities

arising from these. The consortium will develop scenarios that consider possibilities for their use in crisis situations by the public, officials and first responders.

COSMIC is funded by the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme FP7-SEC-2012, under grant agreement no. 312737. The COSMIC project's total budget is 1,2 million Euros, of which EU funding accounts for €997,000. The project runs for a period of 24 months and is due to end in March 2015.

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Recent years have marked a watershed in the use of new communication media during crisis situations and disasters. Citizen journalism has proliferated around the world, where news

and events are recorded by ordinary people and shared globally through social media applications including YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and other outlets.



COSMIC will identify the most effective ways in which these new technologies and applications are being used by citizens and governments. The project will also provide guidelines for all relevant stakeholders to use new information and communication technologies for the benefit of the security of all citizens.

COSMIC will produce the following key reports and they will be made available via the project website:

- Report on search and rescue actions
- Report on the role of main stakeholders in crisis situations
- Model of crisis concepts and dynamics
- Baseline analysis of communication technologies and their applications
- Case studies of communication media and their use in crisis situations
- Report on the adverse use and reliability of new media
- Report on the use of emerging communication technologies in crisis situations.
- Report on the political, social and industrial opportunities from the use of emerging technologies in crisis
- A report on citizens' involvement in emergency communication
- Report on the strategic use of emerging communication technologies for crisis stakeholders
- Report on the ethical considerations of citizen involvement
- Report on Workshop on citizen emergency communication
- A set of guidelines for citizens for the use of new media in crisis management and search and rescue operations
- A set of guidelines for governments and corporate actors for the use of new media in crisis management and search and rescue operations
- A report on recommendation for future research.

In addition to the project coordinator - European Dynamics, the COSMIC consortium is represented by Trilateral Research & Consulting (UK), Safety region South Holland South and

Crisislab - Radboud University Nijmegen (NL), Koç University (TR), Hellenic Rescue Team (GR) and Public Safety Communication Europe (BE).



FURTHER INFORMATION

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