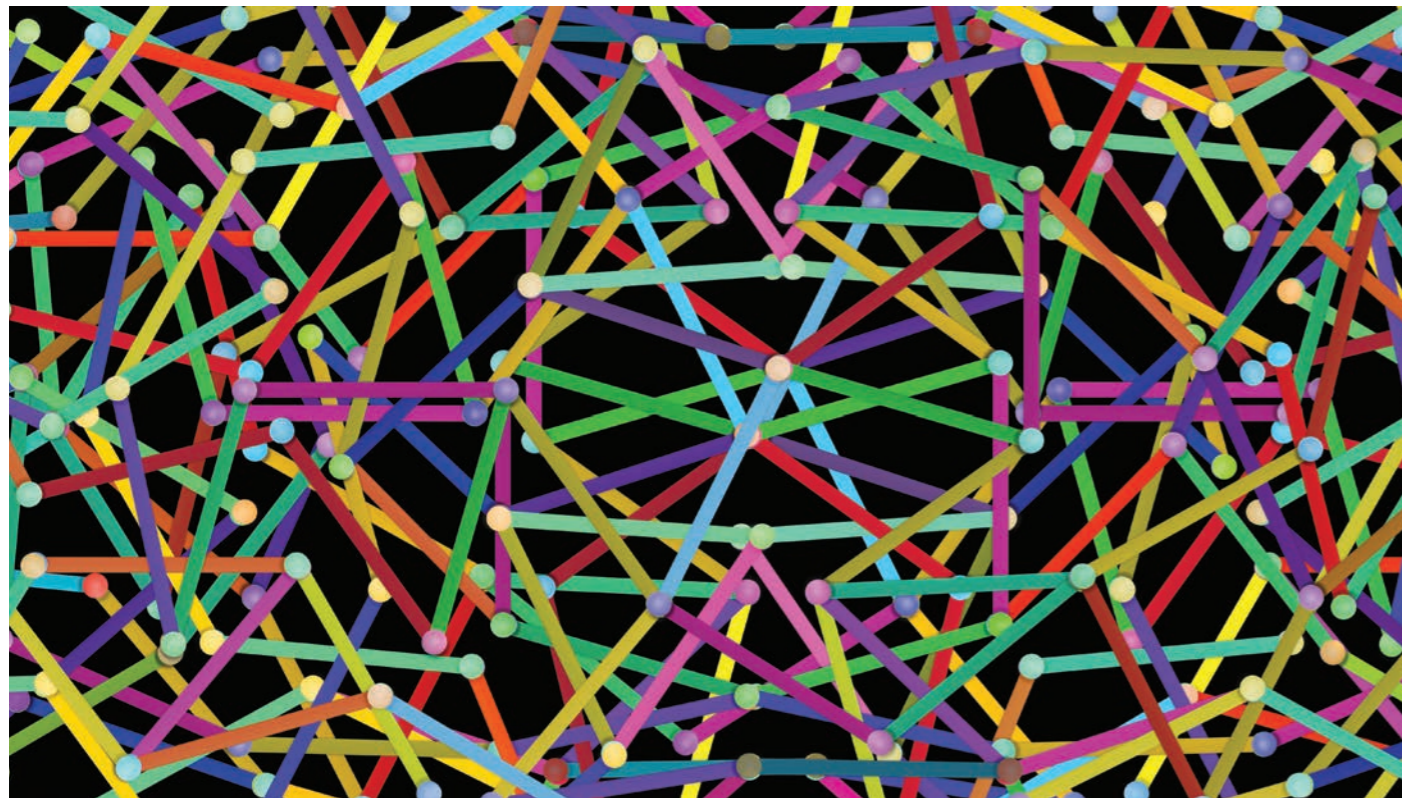


Cross-sectoral resilience networking

Jon Hall outlines how the Crisis Management Innovation Network Europe brings practitioners and policymakers together for greater global resilience through communications, dissemination and engagement activities



The simplest way of explaining the Internet is to call it: “The network of networks.” It’s the connection of computer networks around the world into one entity, so to speak. It’s not one big computer, but rather numerous networked computers connected together. Imagine such a concept for our professional resilience world – a network of networks – the connection of groups around the world into one entity. Not one big organisation, but rather numerous networked individuals, groups and organisations that are all interconnected. Many *CRJ* readers will be aware of the structure of recent European research initiatives, Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) and Horizon2020, and may be familiar with the latest – Horizon Europe, which is the EU’s ninth Framework Programme for research and innovation. It is the largest programme of its kind

anywhere in the world, with a total budget of €95 billion; if you want to make a difference to European resilience thinking, it’s almost a requirement to be involved.

Involvement can be complex, however. Already I’ll have been using terminology and referencing organisations and programmes that carry their own massive barriers to entry. Language, nomenclature, acronyms – all have the potential to put you off practising your skills where they are most needed. In this article, I will discuss one particular approach to professional networking that seeks to give you a home in this complex world and to surround you with colleagues who face exactly the same challenges but who are, nonetheless, managing to contribute substantially to global resilience.

Born of the successful Driver+ Project (a child of both FP7 and H2020) which finished last year (see

CRJ 14:1 & 15:1), the Crisis Management Innovation Network Europe (CMINE) was created to bring together practitioners, researchers, policymakers and industry into a single network environment where they could communicate and influence the direction of future resilience innovation, whatever their speciality or level of expertise. In 2020, CMINE came under the custodianship of the Resilience Advisors Network (RAN) as part of a sustainability strategy designed to strengthen and support its embryonic community where members meet in a neutral and informal, but structured and moderated, professional environment.

In recent months, CMINE has increasingly become a natural home for aligned H2020 and Horizon Europe projects wishing to share knowledge and streamline processes wherever they can. In discrete groups of like-minded professionals, some great and innovative steps have been taken in the areas of ethics, etymology and standardisation.

You may have noticed that almost every new project proposes to develop a new platform or tool for a specific interest group or function and spends months building capability appropriate to this interest. These are often very good and are full of promise and ambition, but they often struggle to create a sustainable legacy strong enough to become embedded within the sectors they target. It’s rare to see a platform created within a project survive in any useful or meaningful way beyond its end date. That’s where CMINE is different – it doesn’t actually aspire to do so.

We don’t need to keep creating new networks, so much as give existing ones a place to interact and thrive. CMINE seeks to facilitate the coming together of many of those networks that are in the process of being created, or which already exist:

- National networks such as those operating successfully in UK, Germany and Spain;
- Thematic networks for specialist subjects such as community resilience, CBRN or wildfire;
- Project-based networks such as the Community for European Research and Innovation for Security (CERIS); and
- Sub-networks such as that for Disaster Resilient Societies (the DRS01 cluster of projects).

All have a long-lasting and natural home in an environment where they can function for their niche interest groups, but also exist in a larger and more inclusive network of networks where everyone can interact. On this principle, CMINE continues to gain partners, growing in this mutual space of sustainability or longevity and the ability to survive and grow in an ever-changing environment of crisis management, disaster risk reduction and security enhancement.

The recent emergence and realisation of the European Commission’s rescEU Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network, along with CERIS’s increasing presence and support for research in the field of disaster resilience and security, and the emerging science pillars of the Commission and its many agencies, mean that everyone needs somewhere to converge and meet, otherwise potentially excluded parties involved with ground breaking innovation will be missed. Industry, practitioners and academics are constantly pushing the boundaries and a structured

but informal network of networks such as CMINE is considered by all involved to add considerable value.

Put simply, CMINE is a professional networking website that supports the interests of those involved in crisis management and civil protection by encouraging innovation in all aspects of crisis and emergency prevention and resolution. It provides an environment where practitioners, policymakers, researchers and industry can connect and discuss ideas relating to process and product innovation, in an informal and neutral environment.


To make itself accessible to the broadest range of experts who work within the crisis management arena, the site is organised with a communal area for all members and specific groups or forums to address specific interests and specialities. As an example, a single research project or theme may have its own area, as well as a shared one where colleagues engaged in related themes interact. There are specific areas for those interested in specific aspects of the Driver+ legacy and its ongoing work such as trial design, the register of crisis management tools and products in development (known as the Portfolio of Solutions) and training. Finally, there are forums dedicated to specific professional subjects such as wildfire, flooding and CBRNe.

CMINE provides several other services to members such as rolling newsfeeds coming out of the main emergency and humanitarian organisations – UNDRR, OCHA and the Union’s Civil Protection Mechanism, among others.

Innovative & far-sighted

A fully-functioning event management facility is provided for members, for discussing, promoting and administrating (registrations, ticketing etc) conferences and meetings. In addition, for virtual events, conferences and webinars, an online facility for members to meet is provided free of charge for up to 300 attendees with full classroom and breakout facilities.

So, as we have seen, CMINE was created as part of the Driver+ project and, on completion of the project, provision was made for the site and its administration to pass to the management of the RAN. Platform infrastructure was funded for three years to enable RAN to follow a sustainability strategy to embed it further into crisis management arrangements across Europe. It now operates under a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding endorsed by the European Commission and owned by its Research Executive Agency. It is the host of the European Network of Centres of Expertise (CoE), a group of ten organisations dedicated to encouraging innovation in all matters relating to crisis management and resilience and is increasingly supported by formal network developments across Europe.

Increasingly, it supports Horizon Europe programmes with communications, dissemination and engagement activities and currently promotes innovation through the Network of CoEs in some 20 projects. 

■ For more information about CMINE, visit www.cmine.eu/signup

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