

# Increasing Governance Capacity and Governance Legitimacy. A Case Study of the Lithuanian Crisis Management System.

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A Case study of the Lithuanian Crisis Management System.**

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Crisis management performance, coordination capacity, analytical capacity, regulative capacity, delivery capacity, informal networks, bottom-up communication.

## Abstract

In 2022, the Government of Lithuania approved the new Crisis Management and Civil Safety law to establish the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC). This thesis was written during the initial phase of the NCMC creation process. The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the Lithuanian governance capacity and legitimacy within the emergency and crisis management (CM) system and investigate the focus areas for more efficient CM performance. The primary data for this case study was collected through 12 semi-structured interviews. Three main theories are used in this thesis: *complexity theory, governance capacity and governance legitimacy*.

Some of the key findings of this thesis are: Governance capacity: In daily and crisis *communication, top-down communication and decision-making processes* are used. The *analytical capacity needs to be improved* in the Lithuanian CM system. Governance legitimacy: Overall, the general *public and public employees trust the CM system*. However, the interviewees have *high hopes* for what the centre must achieve, and *the public tends to be critical towards politicians and decisions made*. Factors that can increase governance capacity are *the encouragement of informal networks and encouragement of bottom-up communication, collaboration, and involvement of the tactical level in the decision-making process*. Factors that can help maintain and possibly increase governance legitimacy are *honesty, transparency, consistency, and openness*. All the listed factors should be considered with complexity in mind. The NCMC has to decide on how and who should be included in the different processes in the way they can manage them.

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## Summary

With increasing numbers of disasters, the context in which crises, disasters, and emergencies have to be resolved is increasingly becoming more complicated. To understand formal crisis management (CM), one must understand the driving factors behind the creation of a given CM system. For one, every country has a responsibility to protect its citizens (UN, 2016). One country contains complex heterogeneous systems and diverse individual actors who act locally but their actions might have effects on the system which makes a system, such as a crisis management system, that is engaged during a crisis, complex (Heylighen *et al.*, 2007; Suchman, 1995). Additionally, globalisation and geopolitics play a big role in how a country defines and builds its CM system.

In 2022, the Government of Lithuania approved the amendment to the Crisis Management and Civil Safety law to establish the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC). This thesis was written during the initial phase of the NCMC creation process in Lithuania. **The purpose of this thesis is** to analyse the Lithuanian governance capacity and legitimacy within the emergency and crisis management system. Furthermore, it will investigate the areas the NCMC could focus on for more efficient CM performance in the country.

**Methodology:** This thesis is a case study written using an iterative research method. The primary data was collected through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews and one focus group discussion, encompassing twelve interviews in total. Professionals working on national, regional, and local levels within the CM system for public, private, and non-governmental organisations were interviewed. The secondary data was collected from publicly available legal documents, national statistics, secondary scientific research, and grey literature.

**Theoretical Framework:** Three main theories are used in this thesis: complexity theory, governance capacity and governance legitimacy. An adapted version of Christensen *et al.*'s (2016) *Model of Analysis* will be used in the analysis process and for structuring the presentation of the results. Complexity theory looks at the non-linear autonomous interactions of components with the multi-agent system that is acting on a local level. Non-linearity describes how their actions can influence and change a global order (Heylighen *et al.*, 2007). Throughout this thesis, governance capacity should be understood as the ability of the national government to monitor, prepare, and respond to emergencies and crises and evaluate, improve, and upgrade existing capacity after a crisis. This thesis looks at *the Lithuanian CM*

*system's coordination, analytical, regulation and delivery capacities. Legitimacy can be understood by observing the relationship between the government and its people, which represents how people see and interact with the government and its institutions during crises. Two-sub-categories will be used to analyse governance legitimacy: *legitimacy within the crisis management system* and *the public's legitimation of the crisis management system*.*

**Results:** Some of the key findings of this thesis are: **Governance capacity:** Lithuania's government and its institutions formally use top-down communication and decision-making processes in daily and crisis communication. However, there are a lot of informal networks which are commonly used to save time during crisis and emergency response. This research identified that the analytical capacity needed to be improved in the Lithuanian CM system prior to the amendment of the law. A new CM system was established with the new law, but there is a need to revise other laws, by-laws, policies, and mandates before the system can effectively function. **Governance legitimacy:** The Lithuanian public, in general, tends to be critical of politicians and decisions made. Overall, the general public and public employees trust the CM system. Among the Lithuanian public, there is a difference between generations. The public employees interviewed expressed high trust and respect for the hierarchical order of the new CM system and the hierarchical placement of the NCMC. However, the interviewees also have high hopes for what the centre must achieve to optimise the system.

**Discussion: Factors that can increase governance capacity** are *the encouragement of informal networks*. Informal networks should be seen as an asset and encouraged. Likewise, *the encouragement of bottom-up communication, collaborative initiatives, and involvement of lower tactical levels in decision-making processes should also be supported*. **Factors that can help maintain and possibly increase governance legitimacy** are *honesty, transparency, consistency, and openness*.

**Conclusion:** This thesis examined the governance capacity and legitimacy within the formal Lithuanian CM system and identified some factors that can help increase and maintain it by increasing CM performance overall. However, all those suggestions should be taken with complexity in mind. The NCMC has to decide how and who should be included in the different processes in manageable ways.

## **Abbreviations**

**CM** – Crisis management

**CM&CS** - the Crisis Management and Civil Safety law

**CS** – Civil Safety

**CSO** – Civil Society Organisation

**EEAS** - The European External Action Service

**EU** – European Union

**GO** – Government organisations

**NCMC** – National Crisis Management Centre

**NGO** – Non-governmental organisation

**PO** – Private organisations

**SITCEN** - the Situation Centre

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# 1. Introduction

For the first time in this planet's history, humanity has reached the point where some of the impacts that influenced negative change on the planet's environment and climate are irreversible (Becker, 2014). With increasing numbers of disasters due to climate change, international wars, and large-scale migration, countries must start planning how to prevent, prepare, respond to, and recover from future crises and disasters. Some countries are experiencing more severe crises and disasters than others. Lithuania, which gained its independence from the Soviet Union in the 90s, has had only a few significant crises since then. Predominately, the COVID-19 pandemic, a migration crisis on the Belarus and Lithuanian border which started in 2021, an influx of refugees due to the war in Ukraine, and an increase in cybernetic attacks (LTR.LT.(a), 2022; Welscher, 2021; NCSC, 2021). However, the context in which crises, disasters and emergencies have to be resolved is becoming increasingly complicated due to the rising frequency and severity of these events, and more resources are needed to handle them (Nakrošis & Bortkevičiūtė, 2022).

To understand a formal crisis management (CM) system, which is engaged during a crisis, one must understand the driving factors behind the creation of this system. Firstly, every country is responsible for protecting its citizens and what it defines as valuable against harm (UN, 2016). CM can be understood as a combination of factors designed to fight crises and reduce the damages they create (Coombs & Laufer, 2018). Secondly, one country contains heterogeneous systems and diverse individual actors who act locally, but their actions might affect the system, making a system, such as a CM system, complex (Heylighen *et al.*, 2007; Suchman, 1995). Complexity theory can be seen as the driving force behind the CM system in which all the actors involved must be accounted for and coordinated to ensure efficient CM performance. Thirdly, globalisation and geopolitics play a significant role in how countries define and build their governance system, including crisis management systems (Paasi, 2009; Kliot & Newman, 2013). Lithuania is part of the EU and NATO, and it must navigate through the laws, directives and regulations that bound it as a member state, when shaping the national CM system (NATO.(a), 2022; NATO.(b), 2022; Roepke & Thankey, 2019; EEAS, 2021). Being a member state increases safety in the country, and at the same time, it also adds another layer of complexity to the already complex CM system.

In 2022, the Government of Lithuania approved the amendments to the Crisis Management and Civil Safety (CM&CS) law to establish the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC).

The centre aims to systemise, optimise and coordinate preparation and response to emergencies and crises in the country (LTR.LT.(b), 2022). This thesis was written during the initial phase of the NCMC creation process in Lithuania. This period is a window of opportunity for the Government of Lithuania and its organisations to build new structures. As well as revising policies and laws, identifying strengths and weaknesses of the existing crisis response system, and building a more holistic, efficient, transparent, and inclusive national crisis management system.

### ***1.1. Purpose and Research Questions***

**Purpose:** This master's thesis analyses Lithuania's governance capacity and legitimacy within the country's emergency and CM system. It will further investigate areas the newly established National Crisis Management Centre could focus on for more efficient crisis management performance in the country. This thesis identifies potential focus areas by interviewing professionals working on the different levels in the Lithuanian CM system, analysing interview data, and identifying reoccurring themes.

#### **Research Questions:**

1. What factors are important to consider in order to increase governance capacity in the Lithuanian emergency and crisis management system?
2. What factors are important to maintain and possibly increase governance legitimacy in the Lithuanian emergency and crisis management system?

### ***1.2. Background of the crisis management system in Lithuania***

Lithuania's formal crisis management procedures are regulated by the Crisis Management and Civil Safety Law (CM&CS law), amended in December 2022. The new law establishes the legal bases for crises and emergency prevention, preparedness, management, and recovery elimination of consequences, as well as a clear role division and the chain of command during a crisis. In Chapter 5, Article 42, three levels of crisis management are listed: *strategic*, *operational*, and *tactical* (CM&CS law, 2022, p. 46). *The government of Lithuania* makes *strategic* decisions based on the recommendations of the National Security Commission. The NCMC then, on the *operational* level, plans crisis management measures and coordinates and controls their implementation. On the *tactical* level, *ministries, public institutions, government, non-governmental and private organisations, and other actors* implement the state crisis and emergency management plans, follow their legal mandates, and deliver the tasks assigned to them by the government (ibid.).

The government announces a national state of emergency when a crisis or an emergency exceeds one municipality's borders. At the highest level of the crisis management pyramid is the Government of Lithuania, with the prime minister in charge. The government selects who will be the Operational Manager of the crisis; it can either be the NCMC director or one of the ministers in whose domain the emergency or crisis occurs. The Operations Manager gives orders and approves actions during the response. They coordinate all public, private, and non-governmental organisations.

All the actors involved in the CM system are listed in the new CM&CS Law (2022) according to their hierarchical placement:

1. The Government
2. National Security Commission
3. National Crisis Management Centre
4. Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania
5. Ministries and other state institutions and bodies
6. Fire Protection and Rescue Department under the Ministry of Internal Affairs
7. Municipal institutions
8. Other institutions
9. Economic entities
10. Emergency operation centres
11. Civil defence forces

Below, *Figure 1* illustrates the hierarchical structure of the CM system in Lithuania.

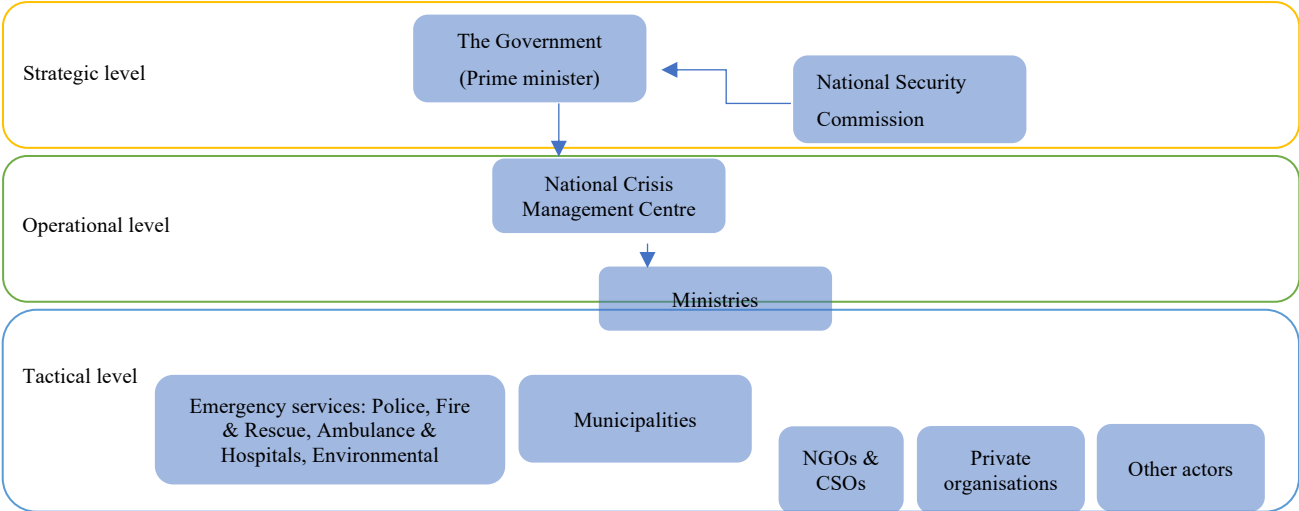
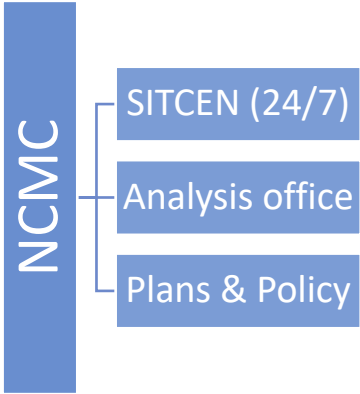


Figure 1 -The Lithuanian governance structure for crisis management.

The NCMC has three main elements, which are shown in *Figure 2*:

- 1) *SITCEN* – Situation Centre, which monitors the situation in the country 24/7 and looks for potential risks. The centre receives information from other situation centres (in municipalities and other key institutions).
- 2) *The Analysis office* analyses risk levels and suggests possible risk mitigation actions.
- 3) *Plans and Policy* – The planning office is responsible for describing formal procedures, evaluating CM proposals and drafting new proposals. Apart from these three main elements, the NCMC coordinates available resources and manages crisis response (LRVK).



*Figure 2 – The three main elements of NCMC.*

However, more than existing capacities are needed to handle potential emergencies and crises. Financial resources are needed to increase the CM system’s capacities, and the Lithuanian government is presently allocating more money to strengthen national security. In 2023, compared to 2022, the state budget for state and public security has increased overall. In the 2023 budget, the Ministry of Finance has listed an 8% increase in state security and defence, a 17% increase in public safety, and a 49% increase in foreign policy (Ministry of Finance, 2023). The Minister of Finance, in her foreword to the 2023 budget, wrote: “*The budgetary plan gives priority to four areas, i.e., mitigation of energy price shocks for people and businesses, preservation of the purchasing power of the population, **strengthening of national security** and sustainable investment in Lithuania’s future.*” (ibid.).

Furthermore, according to Christensen *et al.* (2016), a trusting and state-friendly society can increase governance capacity and efficiency of response. The Lithuanian Public Opinion and Market Research Centre, VILMORUS (2023), interviewed over a thousand Lithuanian residents, asking if they trust different institutions. The results are presented in *Figure 3*. Notably, Lithuanians maintain a high trust in the fire and rescue service (90,4%), the military (54,6%), and the police (52,7%). While they have lower trust in health care (14,3%), and maintain very little trust in the government (-24,4%), parliament (-43,15) and political parties (-49,4%).

## Public trust in Lithuanian institutions. 2023 statics.

The research was carried out by the **Centre for Public Opinion and Market Research "VILMORUS"**

Research time: **2023 July 12th - 19th**

Number of respondents: **N = 1003**

Research object: **Lithuanian residents age**

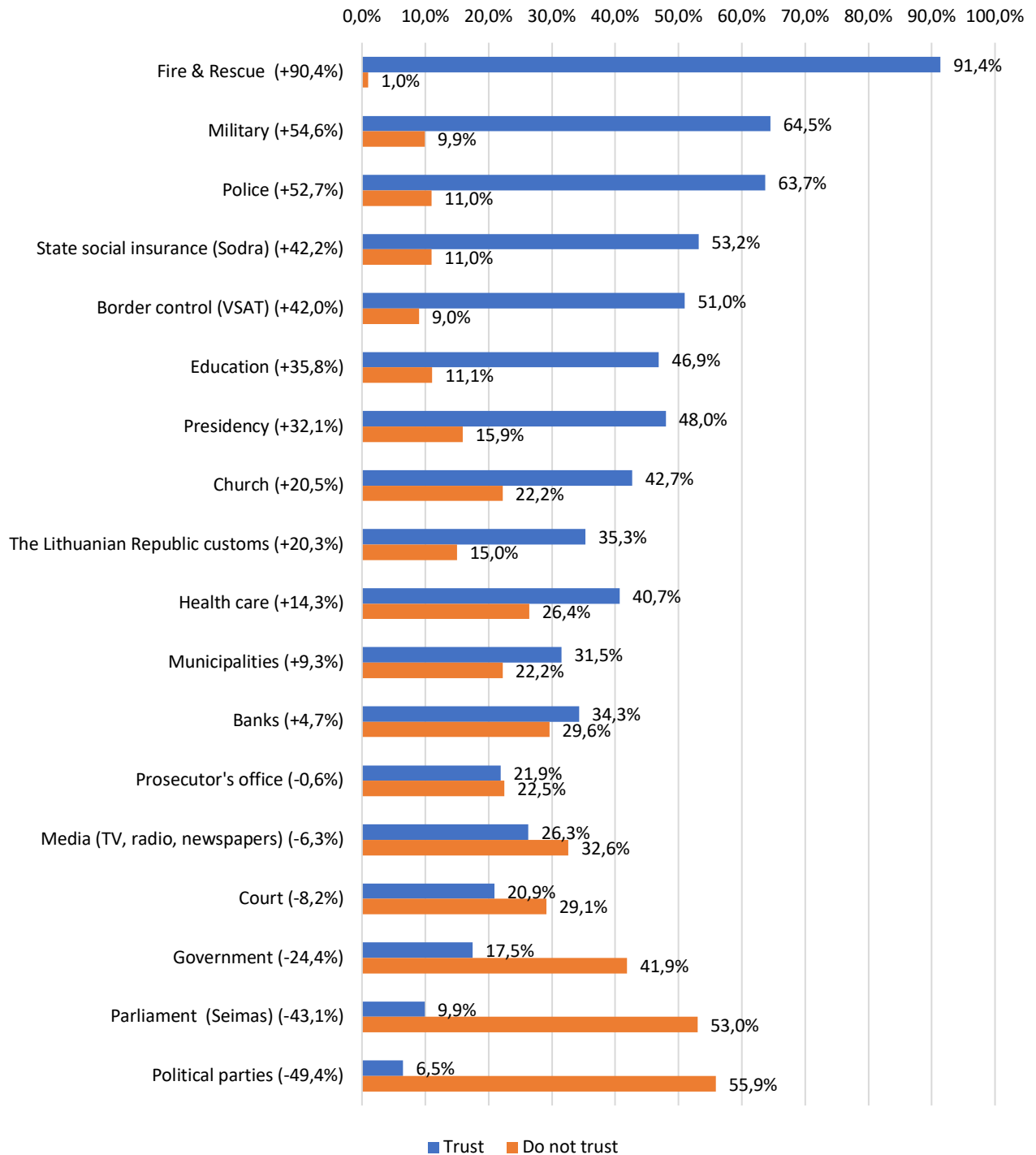


Figure 3 - Public trust in Lithuanian institutions. Sourced from Public Opinion and Market Research Centre "VILMORUS" website (VILMORUS, 2023).

### 1.3. Previous research

The searches for scientific publications conducted for this thesis show that emergency response in Lithuania is a new and emerging field. Most of the research in Lithuania is based on the COVID-19 pandemic and the topics differ from *crisis and public health and psychology research* (e.g., Stankute *et al.*, 2021; Budrevičiūtė *et al.*, 2023; Vaitkaitis, 2008); *CM system analysis* (e.g., Webb *et al.*, 2022; Solska, 2013; Pitrenaitė, 2007; Burneckis & Bekesienė, 2022); to *comparative analysis of CM performance during a specific crisis* (e.g., Masiulytė, 2023; Kuipers *et al.*, 2015). The few examples above are part of a more extensive scoping process whereby the search words related to this thesis purpose, the research questions and the theoretical framework used in the search engine and topic-related publications were revised. The process has shown that little research has been done on crisis management, governance capacity, or governance legitimacy within the CM in Lithuania. It shows that these topics are not well researched, and most of the CM research has been sparked with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The above-mentioned gives space for this thesis topic to research a new area and contribute to existing research within Lithuanian crisis management.

Regarding international research on crisis management, governance capacity, and governance legitimacy with CM fields, Christensen *et al.*'s (2016) article is one of the leading ones. Legitimacy is a belief "*that a rule, institution, or leader has the right to govern*" (Hurd). This term originates and is commonly used in sociology and political science (*ibid.*). Suchman (1995), best known for his research on managing legitimacy, argues that the legitimisation of an actor is a process where one actor must prove their '*right to exist*' to the rest of the system. In this article, he also points out the factors that make it hard to maintain legitimacy: the public being heterogeneous, the rise of opposition and stable systems being inflexible (*ibid.*).

Governance capacity is commonly researched in public administration, political and environmental science fields, and this concept has been used to describe shifts in government (van Popering-Verkerk *et al.*, 2022). The research mainly focuses on specific areas, such as scaling up *governance capacity to adapt* (e.g., Termeer, 2010; Gupta, 2010) and *collaborative capacity* (e.g., Lai, 2012; Inners & Booher, 2003). In their article, Christensen *et al.* (2016) incorporate the two concepts and present how governance capacity and governance legitimacy both face challenges during a crisis. They influence each other and overall CM performance.

The authors argue that the linkage between the two governance capacities and legitimacy needs to be explored better. Furthermore, it has yet to be used in the Lithuanian context. Complexity theory is well-studied in the field of strategic management and organisational studies and is increasingly used in the crisis management research field. This theory examines uncertainty and non-linear interactions between actors whose actions affect the whole system (Becker, 2014; Heylighen *et al.*, 2007). Several relevant publications are available, and analytical choices have been made on which scientific articles to include in this thesis. They are presented in more detail in *Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework*.

## **2. Research Methods**

This chapter introduces the chosen research methods for this thesis are introduced. This thesis was written using an iterative research method, and different chapters were adapted while writing the thesis, and when collecting additional primary and secondary data. Srivastava and Hopwood (2009) argue that the iterative data analysis process is fuelled by the themes and categories that come out from the data collected and that they are shaped by the theoretical framework and what the inquirer wants to know. The theoretical framework laid the grounds for starting themes, which were then adjusted, and new ones were added once more primary and secondary data was collected.

### **2.1. Methodology**

A case study methodology guided this research and bounded system of this research is time and space (Creswell, 2013). Primary data was collected from November 2022 to May 2023, and all the assumptions and findings drawn from the data have been primely bound to this period. An inductive research strategy was used in this case study, which means generalisations were made from specific data. The primary data was collected in Lithuania through qualitative interviews to answer the two research questions. The findings are listed in the *Result* chapter and discussed in the *Discussion* chapter. The space of this thesis has been limited to the Lithuanian context, specifically governmental organisations on the national, regional, and local levels, non-governmental organisations, and private organisations working within the formal CM field. From the available qualitative data, the key factors that are important to optimise crisis management performance were identified, which then led to the conclusion in the final chapter of this thesis (Blaikie, 2010).

## 2.2. Data collection

Mixed data collection methods have been used to answer the two research questions. Primary data was collected through conducting individual and focus group interviews. The secondary data was collected from legal documents, national statistics, secondary scientific research, and grey literature analysis. The research started with the relevant available documents and literature analysis, which was the key input to the interview guide and laid the ground for the primary data collection plan.

Semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews were used to collect interviewees' first-hand experiences of working within the CM field in Lithuania. This interview technique was selected for this thesis because, through semi-structured, in-depth interviews, the interviewees could redirect the interviewer with their answers, thoughts, and experiences. This then challenged the interviewer to change, delete or create new questions during the interview and helped to get the most accurate knowledge from those working in the field (Blaikie, 2010; Creswell, 2013). The interview participants have been carefully selected to represent different parts of the crisis management system. In total, twelve interviews with thirteen participants were conducted (eleven individuals + one focus group with two participants). *Table 1* presents all the interviews conducted, and all the original quotes used in the *Results* chapter can be found in *Appendix 3, p.55*.

| Interviewee's number | Type of interview   | Type of organisation / level       | Length of the interview |
|----------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| P1                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Government / national              | 46 min                  |
| P2                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Emergency services / national      | 30 min                  |
| P3                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | NGO / national                     | 38 min                  |
| P4                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | NGO / national                     | 60 min                  |
| P5                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Government / national              | 59 min                  |
| P6                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Civil protection / private company | 76 min                  |
| P7                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Emergency services / national      | 50 min                  |
| P8                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Emergency services / national      | 46 min                  |
| P9                   | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Emergency services / regional      | 88 min                  |
| P10                  | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Municipality / regional            | 46 min                  |
| P11                  | Semi-structured, individual                                     | Municipality / regional            | 49 min                  |
| P12                  | Semi-structured, focus-group<br>(interviewed together with P13) | NGO/ national                      | 79 min                  |



|            |   |   |        |
|------------|---|---|--------|
| <b>P13</b> | Semi-structured, focus-group<br>(interviewed together with P12) | NGO/ national + (ex-Municipality/ regional<br>employee) | 79 min |
|------------|---|---|--------|

Table 1 - Overview of the interviews conducted for this thesis, during February and May 2023.

Furthermore, secondary data was collected by reviewing topic-related academic articles and grey literature. Several interviewees suggested relevant websites, publicly available documents, and reports for additional information. Studying the available and relevant documents helped the researcher better understand Lithuania's existing crisis management system and what laws, policies, and regulations influence and restrict response, for example. Additionally, looking at publicly available scientific articles on crisis management, governance legitimacy and capacity, and complexity theory within CM lead to the creation of the theoretical framework. Furthermore, the identified literature was valuable in understanding the system better and assisted during the creation of the interview guide.

### **2.3. Data analysis**

The open coding data analysis method (Nvivo software) was used to transcribe and analyse the qualitative data collected through in-person, semi-structured individual, and focus group interviews. According to Blaikie (2010), this process involves separating and breaking down data and defining the concepts to create blocks from the raw data. All the interview transcripts were done manually, and a notebook with essential points, quotes and insights was kept throughout the process. Transcribing all the interviews manually helped to separate reoccurring themes and topics, which were then made into brought code categories. A few examples of the codes are *existing governance capacity, governance legitimacy, bottom-up communication, information sharing, knowledge exchange, legal structures, media, and public opinion*. Appendix 4, p.58, presents a complete list of the codes with descriptions.

### **2.4. Research limitations**

For this thesis, a small group of experts (*total number thirteen*) working for public and private sectors on national and local levels were interviewed. Due to time constraints and not having easy access to public employees, a strategic selection has been made. However, those interviewees only represent part of the whole picture of the crisis management system in Lithuania. It is a narrow representation of this system from public employees working on national, local, and municipality levels, NGOs, and private civil preparedness experts. Furthermore, confidentiality restricts access to reports and other documents that might have significant importance to this research.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this thesis and the relation between the fundamental theories, an adapted version of *Christensen et al. (2016) Model of Analysis*, and the thesis topic will be made. The theoretical framework will serve as an overall structure for this thesis, help analyse the data, guide the discussion, and assist in concluding the thesis. *Christensen et al. (2016)* suggest that governmental structures and institutional elements must be studied to understand the national crisis management structure.

The analysis of the primary data and discussion of the key elements that lead to efficient crisis management performance in the Lithuanian context will be done through the following theories:

#### 3.1. Complexity Theory

A formal crisis management system can be considered complex because it entails many different actors, such as GOs, NGOs, POs, and the public. These actors interact and work together to achieve common goals that they have set together or that are guided by the laws and their organisational mandates. *Heylighen et al. (2007)* describe complexity as a non-linear autonomous interaction of components within the multi-agent system that is acting on a local level. However, their actions can influence and change a global order. The consequences of the agents' actions are subjective and uncertain to them. Nevertheless, the agents usually manage to self-organise into an emerging and adaptive system in this unpredictable world (*Becker, 2014*). It is essential to understand the implications of complexity on a social organisation or a system and consider it when conducting narrow research on one institution, for example.

In their article, *Christensen et al. (2016)* argue that social, technical, administrative, political, legal, and economic factors add up to the complexity of the CM system. One must acknowledge its complexity to analyse the performance of one institution, in this case, the NCMC. The NCMC is not working in a vacuum; they depend on the resources of other organisations, individuals, and the Lithuanian public, who are navigating their complex systems. So, to understand one organisation, it is essential to analyse other structures and systems, as well as interactions, communication, and networks around it, to get a more coherent and holistic picture of one system. Looking at one system actor in isolation is

insufficient for understanding complex systems. According to Bergström *et al.* (2016), the holistic principle looks at the whole system's behaviour and non-linear interactions between the constituent components. The view cannot be reduced to the functioning of one constituent component in isolation.

In this thesis, a formal crisis management system should be understood as one that contains the government, the NCMC, public institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations, and private actors. These actors are formally invited to take part in the system. Their roles and responsibilities are specified in laws, mandates and other agreements. A formal CM system, activated during an emergency or crisis, is a bureaucratic system guided through plans, rules, blueprints, mandates, and laws that represent order and in itself is not complex (Heylighen *et al.*, 2007). However, during a state of emergency, different actors, which consist of diverse individuals, are activated in response. During the state of emergency and initial, spontaneous response, the actions of the CM system can be seen as irregular, chaotic, disorganised, and complex. This state is complex because the different actors and systems involved in response are driven not just by the laws, their legal mandates, and obligations but also by the societal rules, culture, biases, and beliefs (*ibid.*). During a crisis, agents act from an urgent need to save lives and protect what humans define as valuable from any harm (Aven & Renn, 2009). As a result, to achieve that goal, they might act differently from designed and prefixed plans, rules and blueprints, which can lead to a chaotic, irregular, and complex system state. A complex system is hard to control because the configurations of components and their relationship depend on the situation they are in (Uhr & Frykmer, 2021).

### **3.2. Governance capacity**

People need the capacity to handle crises and emergencies because they tend to protect what they consider valuable to them, including themselves (Aven & Renn, 2009). When a crisis or an emergency occurs, the CM system engages its capacity to handle such events and work to mitigate the risks of it happening. Governance capacity throughout this thesis should be understood as the ability of the national government to monitor the situation on the ground, efficiently prepare for different crises (human and physical resources), respond to them, and evaluate and improve/upgrade existing capacity after a crisis. Resources involved in crisis management are physical workforce and their skills, physical equipment, the public, crisis and emergency plans, and laws and policies. Christensen *et al.* (2016) distinguish four types of governance capacity: *coordination*, *analytical*, *regulation* and *delivery*. Efficient governance

capacity to prepare, mitigate, respond, and evaluate crises is crucial to limit possible damages and protect what humans define as valuable (UNISDR, 2015; Aven & Renn, 2009; Slovic, 2001).

According to UNDP, capacity development is “*the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their development objectives over time*” (CADRI, 2011, p. 9). This thesis looks into the organisational capacity of the Lithuanian government, its organisations and non-governmental actors involved in the formal CM system. Capacity development encompasses human resources, skills and knowledge, and material and physical resources’ optimisation and efficiency processes. Additionally, governance capacity influences the government’s institutional legitimacy from the perspective of society, as well as the trust and validation of public employees (Christensen *et al.*, 2016).

### **3.3. Governance legitimacy**

Besides the governance capacity, the crisis management system actors also need to be legitimised; in other words, they must prove their “*right to exist*” to the system's different actors and the public (Suchman, 1995, p. 573). Legitimacy is not a static state but is rather a constantly evolving state that multiple participants produce through an “*ongoing process of social negotiations*” (Suddaby *et al.*, 2017, p. 459). According to Suchman (1995), three aspects make it hard for the system to maintain legitimacy:

1. *The public is heterogeneous* (they are complex and diverse).
2. *Stable systems tend to be rigid* (bureaucratic systems like governments and crisis management systems are established, regulated by laws, and act through lengthy procedures).
3. *The creation of institutions frequently gives rise to opposition* (if the institution becomes homogeneous, it will not meet the demands of the heterogeneous public, giving space for the opposition to rise).

In this thesis, governance legitimacy will be split into two subcategories: 1) ***legitimacy within the crisis management system*** (in this part, this thesis will examine if formal actors consider other actors as legitimate actors); 2) ***the public's legitimation of the crisis management system*** (in this part, this thesis will examine if the public views the crisis management system as legitimate). The choice to split the term legitimacy in this way was made because

legitimacy has many meanings, and according to Suddaby *et al.* (2017), there is a need to be explicit about how the term is conceptualised in research.

Trust in and acknowledgement of the government and public organisations will determine how the public understands them. Furthermore, it will define the public's judgment levels towards the successes and failures within crisis management performance (Christensen *et al.*, 2016; Suchman, 1995). According to Suchman (1995), social norms, beliefs, values, and definitions constructed into systems validate the existence of one entity and its actions and legitimise them as preferable or appropriate. Legitimacy can be understood by observing the relationship between the government and its people, representing how people see and interact with the government and its institutions during crises. Furthermore, Christensen *et al.* (2016) state that public attitudes towards governmental structures might influence organisational and policy decisions. Legitimacy is important not only to make sure that the public acts appropriately during an emergency or a crisis but also that the politicians and people in power might make confident decisions and approve the laws to make themselves less vulnerable and more popular, to be favoured by the public (Suchman, 1995).

**3.4. Model of Analysis**

The analysis in this thesis is split into two chapters: Chapter 4, *Results* and Chapter 5, *Discussion*. An adapted version of Christensen *et al.* (2016, p. 888, 890) *Model of Analysis* is used in the analysis process and for structuring the presentation of the results from primary data collected through semi-structured interviews and one focus group. In the discussion chapter, the findings are discussed and analysed through the presented theoretical framework and additional secondary literature.

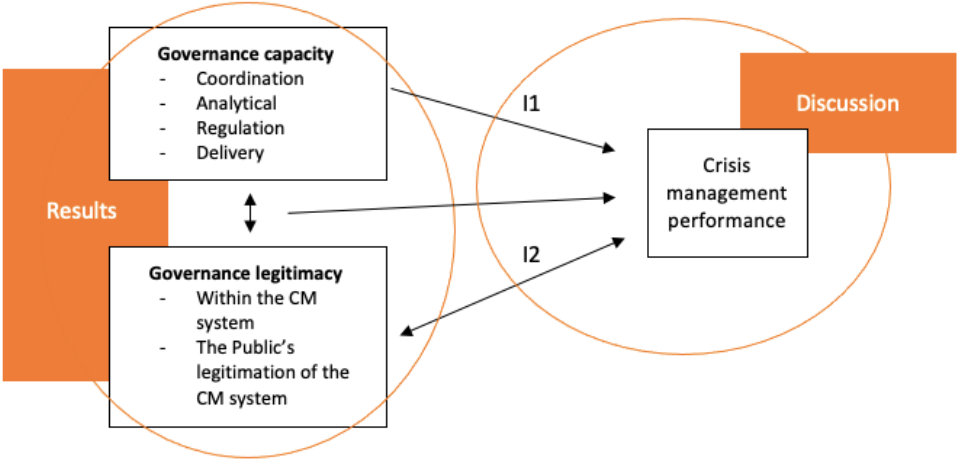


Figure 4 - Adapted Analysis Model from Christensen *et al.* (2016, p. 888,890).

The *Results* section will be structured into two main sub-categories with the following sub-sections:

- **Governance capacity:** *coordination capacity* (bringing different organisations for a collaborative action); *analytical capacity* (analysing available data, providing risk and vulnerability assessments, and adequate advice); *regulation capacity* (controlling, overseeing, surveilling and auditing); *delivery capacity* (managing the crisis, providing public services, and exercising power).
- **Governance legitimacy:** *within the CM system* (will reflect on how the individual actors working within the CM system view the system); *the public's legitimation of the CM system* (will reflect on how the public views the CM system).

The *Discussion* section will be structured into two main sub-categories:

- **Influence 1 (I1)** – Crisis management performance can be increased by enhancing governance capacity within the crisis management system in Lithuania.
- **Influence 2 (I2)** – Enhancing governance legitimacy will optimise crisis management performance, and better crisis management performance will increase legitimacy.

## 4. Results

This chapter presents the results and key findings from the interviews conducted under two main concepts: governance capacity and governance legitimacy.

### 4.1. Governance capacity

*Governance capacity is the governmental administrative system's ability to manage formal and informal actors and resources during all the steps of CM performance (Christensen et al., 2016). Capacity development is the process of obtaining, strengthening and maintaining the capacities to achieve development goals over time, which is crucial in disaster risk reduction (CADRI, 2011; UNISDR, 2015). The results will be presented under four capacity types identified by Christensen et al. (2016): coordination, analytical, regulation and delivery capacities.*

#### 4.1.1. Coordination capacity

*Coordination capacity is the government's and its superior organisations' ability to bring different organisations (governmental and non-governmental, non-profit and private sector organisations) to perform a joint action (Christensen et al., 2016).*

The Lithuanian government and its institutions use a top-down communication approach in their daily and crisis communication, and when they give orders to the people working on the ground. In this case, decisions are made at the governmental or ministerial levels, and then they are communicated and ordered down to the people working on the ground. Eight interviewees pointed out that during the decision-making process, there is space, not formally (mostly), for professionals to share their opinions and suggestions. Three state-employed interviewees working at the regional and local levels pointed out that employees working at lower levels sometimes feel demotivated and occasionally even afraid to share their knowledge, information, and opinions. They feel this way because they fear if they say something wrong, next time, others might not listen to them or judge them due to their comments and suggestions. They further stated that it is crucial for the employees who share their suggestions, comments, and experience or place a critical report to see that what they have communicated has been taken seriously. An action has been made; change was brought up. Most interviewees emphasised the importance of having a safe and empowering environment to channel top-down and bottom-up communication, including a systemic structure where employees can share their feedback, complaints, and ideas. Several interviewees, both on the national and regional levels, agreed that having such a system in place would motivate employees and make them trust their employers.

One Fire and Rescue Department representative discussed some of the good practices that take place among their employees and within their chain of command. They encourage feedback and input from their employees when a decision is made. Even when the order is given, there is space to challenge the decision if the situation has changed on the ground: *"when you communicate the decision and explain **why is that so**, it might be that the person who has to execute the decision might say: Chief look, now [the situation] is this and this, and at that moment you might change the decision a little bit (...) important that both the decision maker and the executor everything is clear."* (P2, quote1). The practice is not formally used, but similar informal structures for feedback and inputs that might influence the decisions or response activities to change are also practised by the Lithuanian police workers on the national level.

Every public worker interviewed for this thesis talked about the fact that there is a lot of informal communication and agreements made between different public employees during crisis response. Three interviewees talked about how they personally know people working in



other institutions. The existing structures and legal procedures are time-consuming. During a crisis, while the legal procedures are being processed, personal connections are often used to go around the system. The employees working at the different institutions make verbal plans and agreements on which they can act once the request is legally approved by the government, another organisation, or an individual with the structural-hierarchical power to do so. It is done this way to save time during a crisis and respond in the most efficient way. One of the public employees stated that with the new law, they will have to learn the new legal procedures; however, new informal procedures will be created: *"There will be new formal communication ways and other ways will appear, where we will directly solve, saving time, those specific questions"* (P9, quote2). A public worker pointed out that this informal network is not only based on a personal network but also on knowing the system and responsibility areas of different organisations and individual positions of people within them. A few public employees said that even if they did not know someone in the other organisation, they would still know which position was responsible for what information or resource in the other organisation and could call them directly to get help. Nonetheless, six public employees pointed out that encouraging personal, informal networks and having space to facilitate friendships were essential to increasing delivery capacity.

Government employees must know and trust each other well for these actions to happen. During different workshops, training, and exercises, they meet and maintain close contact. These activities are also where professionals exchange their knowledge, lessons learned, and dos and don'ts, because there is no formal practice of sharing written reports as such. One interviewee joked that they meet colleagues, working at the national and regional levels, *"more often than we see our family members"* (P7, quote3). Having an informal network can help one quickly gain insights from someone who has experience with similar situations and can share lessons learned and dos and don'ts. One NGO representative confirmed that this interpersonal connection is also used between NGOs and governmental institutions to obtain information and expert opinion informally.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Lithuania and its institutions have realised the value of volunteers. A representative from one of the municipalities explained that volunteers from different NGOs are valuable resources for them during emergencies. However, the government still needs to use volunteers to their fullest potential. A national-level public employee elaborated that training volunteers and educating the society as a whole on how to prepare and act during different crises has not only many benefits but also is crucial



in critical moments: *"We must focus on preparing the society, give the society as much knowledge as possible, because especially those big disasters such as war, they are critical survival moment for the society. Those institutions, which have several thousands of people, will be unable to do anything. (...) The citizenship, abilities, and capabilities of society to act in such situations are critical."* (P8, quote4).

There are instances during CM processes when the NGOs can lead specific tasks better than the public institutions. One of the NGO representatives gave an example where the governmental institution tried to recruit its volunteers and failed to manage them. In this case, they should have asked NGOs for advice on how to work with volunteers and hired an HR company. This backfired as volunteers were managed like paid employees, the demands for their performance were high, and they left. The NGO representative further elaborated that the government should *"let the NGOs do what they are good at"* (P12, quote5) and provide and manage volunteers. In exchange, the government can support NGOs with funding, training, workshops, and other resources.

#### **4.1.2. Analytical capacity**

*Analytical capacity is the government's and its organisations' ability to monitor and analyse information and potential risks and provide advice and risk and vulnerability assessments (Christensen et al., 2016).*

Seven interviewees mentioned that written reports were not made after every emergency or crisis, and when they were written, it often ended there. The interviewees shared that lessons learned are usually shared verbally during workshops, training and evaluation meetings of an emergency or crisis response. On a municipal level, the ministry that assisted municipalities during the emergency or crisis might send a questionnaire to describe how the response went. Usually, the municipalities receive a full report from the ministry after it is conducted. However, there needs to be the practice of taking the lessons learned and turning them into educational material or workshops that can be shared with other municipalities, institutions or organisations. According to seven interviewees working in the public sector, both rescue and protection services or municipality employees, the interpersonal informal knowledge exchange based on network and connection is common. In a severe emergency or crisis, ministries involved write reports, but do not share them with other institutions as a common practice. In that case, there is no learning loop to share information with other organisations who have been involved in the response. Lessons learned are not being used as learning

material or as a guide on how to change/improve procedures: *"There are no structural reporting systems, when there is an emergency, everyone acts, but no one is asked to write a report, and some ministries ask to fill in a questioner."* (P10, quote6). The interviewee talked about the system as it was prior to the NCMC establishment.

SITCEN (the Situation Centre), under the NCMC, will monitor the situation in the country 24/7 and receive reports from other situation centres in the municipalities and other vital public institutions. Prior to the new law, there were already situation centres (sitacijų centrai) in all the key institutions (e.g., police, military, border control service, The Ministry of Interior, The Foreigner Ministry, etc). They were used to collect data, analyse situations, and report to their executive ministries or organisations according to the chain of command. One interviewee pointed out that in 2022, The Lithuanian State Control (Valstybės kontrolė) produced a report after auditing the preparedness levels to respond to different emergencies and crises. One key finding was that the threats and dangers that may cause an emergency or crisis are often ineffectively predicted and identified. Furthermore, according to the interviewee, the report stated that the mitigation actions to lower emergency risks are inefficient and lack implementation control and consistency.

Two NGO representatives pointed out that the information often travels longer than needed, and they do not have complete needed information on time; they are not asked to write reports, instead they are only asked about what resources they used in response and not about their lessons learned and recommendations for improvements. Furthermore, different NGO representatives expressed the importance of allowing their representatives to be part of the municipality operations centre to ensure their mission and capabilities are represented. One interviewee gave an example that only Vilnius municipality has NGO representatives in their operation room. According to the law, the NGOs are not required to be part of operations, but this municipality saw the need and decided to include them. NGOs have different work mandates than the municipality and can contribute with valuable information. Two representatives from an NGO expressed their concern that the governmental institutions and municipalities lack information about where the vulnerable social groups live (e.g., older people and people with health conditions or impairments). According to two NGO representatives, the lack of information about the whereabouts of vulnerable people is dangerous, because if people with special needs are not considered when making the evacuation plans, the evacuation processes might be delayed or unsuccessful.

Additionally, a lack of accurate national risk and vulnerability assessment, as well as a need for more information on vulnerable groups, was also mentioned by three interviewees. The state commission (Valstybės komisija) completed a risk matrix in 2022 to identify potential crisis and emergency risks in the country by collecting inputs from the different ministries. According to one interviewee, the risk matrix does not accurately reflect the risk, and some risks are exaggerated. The same interviewee suggested that the ministries know that more significant risks will receive funding for mitigation and capacity development projects and capacity to lower or eliminating eliminate that risk: *"risk management system, it says that you should rationally combine those risks, but on the other hand, those financial incentives, let's say, distort it"*(P8, quote7). Thus, according to this interviewee, Lithuania has no accurate potential risk analysis.

#### **4.1.3. Regulation capacity**

*Regulation capacity is the government's ability to control the systems and processes, surveilling, overseeing, and auditing them (Christensen et al., 2016).*

Most public workers have mentioned the importance of hierarchy and a clear chain of command. Several of them have talked about how important it was that the NCMC is structurally placed above the ministries, just below the government. Prior to the new NCMC, there was the Department of Civil Protection, which was under the Ministry of Interior, that, according to the public institution workers, was inconsequential in the whole crisis management chain of command: *"when you are one of the institutions working under the Interior Ministry, you are no different from us, how can you manage us. (...) Now it is logical when the Crisis Management Centre was created under the government; now no one can go against it, this is a serious institution, this is a right path indeed. "* (P7, quote8).

However, the informal networks and communication that take place during crisis response need to be more regulated to optimise the response. If a mistake occurs, it is harder to hold someone accountable. Additionally, someone might face consequences because it was not in their mandate to act when they did. It is a common practice in Lithuania among public employees to make ad hoc decisions and not act according to the formal mandates: *"Then there is only this, hierarchy, some are looking at what to do, the others: do like this. And that is it, but then if something does not work out, the responsibility will be with the one who gave the order"* (P5, quote9). According to eight interviewees working in the public sector, when emergencies and crises occur, people act due to time pressure. There is a need to increase the

number and frequency of workshops, training, and exercises where all the actors get together to minimise mistakes and ensure everyone acts according to their mandates during response.

Furthermore, during their interviews, four public employees discussed that the CM&CP law, which laid the grounds to create the new NCMC, was done too quickly. There was no overlapping period between the old system fading out and the new system taking over. The absence of overlapping periods between the old and new system, according to the public employees, left them uncertain of their roles and responsibilities. They also expressed the need for a better understanding of what the new formal procedures will be and the role of the NCMC in their day-to-day work and during the crisis management. The new law came into practice on January 1st, 2023, but the by-laws and policies which would clarify roles and procedures have yet to be done; some were in the process of making when the interviews were conducted. One public interviewee mentioned on May 2023: *"Of course, you can talk one way, but reality shows otherwise. Politics are politics with us; government representatives can not tell otherwise than that we are always ready for everything. However, reality probably sometimes shows that in certain places, more effort is needed and that the legal base is obviously still complicated enough here. Well, now the laws have changed, but they still do not really correlate with the by-laws... To this day, there are no by-laws in many areas. This already shows that a little, maybe something is being done chaotically."* (P10, quote10).

#### **4.1.4. Delivery capacity**

*Delivery capacity is the government's and its organisations' actual ability to handle crises, provide public services and exercise power (Christensen et al., 2016).*

Even though they are listed in a hierarchical order, the interactions, formal and informal communication happen in non-linear ways. All the interviewees discussed that the country's bureaucratic procedures are relatively complicated and slow. According to interviewees, they managed to handle emergencies and crises that threatened Lithuania due to their ability to mobilise and respond quickly through informal networks. One public employee reflected that the *"[official] request goes in circles and squares; it takes time. But I always know what I want and from whom I want it, and I can always call (...) specific actions, they are described in the laws, and they must be formalised. Whether it is, a request or an [official] order has to come about. Let the request go, but I know who to call directly, and during the call, I will decide tactically, strategically, and practically how everything will be. And in reality, by the time that request reaches him, he already knows what I want; we have already agreed on how*

*everything will be, how everything will happen, and that request comes only as a formality.*" (P9, quote 11). One of the municipality representatives shared that during the COVID-19 pandemic, they responded to the crisis before receiving formal instructions and commands.

Another public employee working on a national level talked about how there are slow legal procedures; they are written in the laws, some of which are from the 90s, and it is not the government's priority to revise them. They understand that they navigate a very complex legal system, so they find ways to go around. However, according to five public employees, there is a need to revise those old laws and by-laws and have more efficient systems, training, and other preparedness activities to increase delivery capacity. Six public employees discussed how they can always mobilise and offer their organisation's resources during emergencies or crises. However, they are not obliged to do so by their legal mandates. Still, in the long term, according to public employees, this way of working could be more efficient, and it creates a more stressful environment where people need to act more ad hoc.

The level of informal communication and involvement of others in decision making is down to an individual and their interests, biases, and values. Several interviewees agreed that this makes the system more fragile, and if something is done or not done on one of the levels, it will affect the whole chain of command. Two municipality workers and three NGO workers emphasised that municipalities and NGOs must be involved in all the steps of crisis management. They believe there is a need for a faster and more efficient response, including the optimisation of stakeholders' expertise and resources to avoid wasting time during crises and not being able to deliver what is expected of them. One international NGO representative expressed their concerns about only being presented with the national response plan during a crisis. Only during a crisis are they informed of their involvement during the response without prior discussion or agreement. Although they have been able to deliver on those expectations, the NGO worker mentioned how much more efficient and smooth the process would have been if they were involved during the planning process.

#### **4.2. Governance legitimacy**

*Legitimacy is gained by the people through the government's risk and crisis management processes and from the results of those actions for the people (Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, 2015).*

*Legitimacy can be understood by observing the relationship between the government and the public, which represents how people see and interact with the government and its institutions*

*during crises. Governance legitimacy represents not only governments' interaction with the citizens but also their interaction with other organisations. Also, governance legitimacy represents how the citizens understand the system and their trust level towards it (Christensen et al., 2016; Suchman, 1995).*

#### **4.2.1. Legitimacy within the crisis management system**

*This chapter will present findings from primary interview data to illustrate how the actors working within the crisis management system view the system.*

There used to be an old crisis management unit next to the Interior Ministry, which was dissolved several years ago. Three interviewees talked about the fact that they failed to have a visible impact or change in the system. All the experts interviewed, working for governmental and non-governmental organisations, agreed that there is a need for a new CM system. They all look forward to seeing how the NCMC will contribute to the CM system. However, their hopes are very high. Six experts pointed to the NCMC with the hope of mapping out and coordinating a fully functioning crisis management system. The task is massive and will require time to implement a functional system, to which only some experts interviewed agreed. The centre came into existence in January 2023, and by the summer of 2023, some experts hoped to see visible impacts and changes in the system. To list a few, the interviewed experts are hoping that the NCMC will be able to

1. Map out all the GOs and NGOs that are involved in crisis management;
2. Create algorithms and action plans;
3. Improve communication and information sharing in all directions: top-down, bottom-up and horizontal, during mitigation, response and recovery periods;
4. Coordinate GO and NGOs involved in response to crisis;
5. Facilitate workshops, training and exercises for GOs, NGOs, and draft plans for civil preparedness training.

All the interviewees mentioned the importance of where the NCMC is placed in the chain of command, just below the government and above the ministries. Several public workers mentioned that they see the NCMC as a legitimate organisation with skilled experts working for a common goal. Three public employees and two NGO representatives mentioned that for the government to be trusted, it must have functioning procedures and resources to manage the complex CM system. It cannot be only written in the law and policies; it has to work in reality. Furthermore, everyone who will have to be involved in mitigation, preparedness and

response activities must be aware of their roles, responsibilities, chain of command and legal, formal, and informal procedures. An expert from one of the NGOs talked about how, during crises, it is hard to create new systems, and the problem is that those systems were not in place before the big crises, so no one knows how to work with them.

Additionally, three governmental institutions' workers mentioned how the political system is complex and constantly changing. For them to trust the government, they need to see that their concerns are being acknowledged and addressed and that importance is given. Politicians work for four years at a time, and they have to achieve visible impacts until the next election; that is why *"when you say that there might be an even bigger disaster, they say: it might not happen during my tenure, there will be no funding for that"* (P8, quote12). For the experts who work at governmental organisations, it is important to see that the issues are taken seriously and that proper and fair evaluations and measurements are in place to prioritise the most urgent issues. One specific interviewee, who talked about the national risk matrix done in 2022 (*mentioned under "Analytical capacity"*), expressed concerns and distrust in the system when they saw that it was misusing power and resource distribution.

All public employees reflected that they trust the government and the system. However, they can see that critical decisions are often made more ad hoc, and more consistent and transparent preparation procedures are needed. Two of the public employees expressed their concern that some issues must be taken care of because timely solutions are needed to mitigate or eliminate those risks. They were concerned about what would happen if those emergencies and crises happened, and then some of the actors could not respond efficiently.

#### **4.2.2. The public's legitimisation of the crisis management system**

*This section presents primary data findings that illustrate how the public views the Lithuanian CM system.*

According to one interviewee who works for one of the emergency services at the national level, the citizens of Lithuania need to know that the main guiding principle of the Lithuanian government and its public organisations is to ensure the well-being and protection of every person in that country. One of the interviewees, who works on the regional level, argued that in Lithuania, the public sometimes lacks the understanding that the government and its institutions are obligated to protect them: *"But everyone is forgetting the key fundamental thing that the country is protecting its people. (...) on the national level, the decisions are*



*made not just because they are needed to be made but because it is needed to protect the people. (...) Part of the community, society still don't want to take it in that the country has the responsibility to protect them, sometimes even from themselves."* (P9, quote13). Seven interviewees mentioned that they believe that the public generally trusts the government and its institutions. Ten interviewees stated that the Lithuanian public often criticises response activities; according to one of the interviewees, it is widespread among Lithuanians to be unsatisfied and critical. Even though all the interviewees have agreed that, especially during an emergency or a crisis, the public trusts the institutions, it seems that on a day-to-day basis, trust is lacking. Additionally, one interviewee noted that public criticism is not bad in itself; it can help grow and improve response activities.

When it comes to the public's preparedness for different crises, many public employees stated that on both formal CM and the public levels, what it means to be prepared needs to be clarified, and at what state and level one is prepared and for what. There are very general multi-hazard preparedness guides on a national website, [www.72.lt](http://www.72.lt), which could be more concrete.

Three interviewees discussed the differences between the generations, their approach to preparedness, and their need to do so. Most interviewees mentioned that younger generations are especially more aware of why it is important to be prepared on a personal level. They know that the government and public organisations try to empower them by ensuring they are prepared for emergencies and crises, and it is not because the country does not want to care for them.

One societal aspect that a few interviewees brought up is a societal division among people from different generations. In some ways, the older generations, that lived through the Soviet Union, are more resilient and adaptive. However, they also tend to rely more on the state supporting them: *"Basically, we still have those generations who lived in the old Soviet period, and that thinking has remained. And it remained, well, if someone came up with the idea that I should have five liters of water, canned food or something, then give it to me, and I'll keep it. Although probably they will not keep it, it will be consumed sooner than needed. The post-Soviet generation hasn't turned around yet, but I think that the mindset, the attitude that the state doesn't have to give everything, is emerging"* (P9, quote14). Furthermore, one interviewee shared their opinion that the Soviet generation is more innovative and capable of



preparing and acting ad hoc than the younger, post-Soviet generations that did not live through the challenges of that era.

Moreover, one NGO representative elaborated that the system might think that people are prepared or not, and the public might criticise the system, but Lithuanians have not seen many or frequent emergencies and crises; COVID-19 was the first big shock to the system: *"This Lithuanian society has not seen so much that I could criticise what is the right response and what is not the right response. Because, really, there were very few of those crises in Lithuania. And that [means], how we answer, how the state reacts is simply for the first time, and we are not like Turkey, where the earth shakes three times a year, and you probably already know how to react to an earthquake. Often, this criticism is like that without, let's say, a strong perception of what a good reaction from society is. And it is often so politicised, polarised"* (P4, quote15). There is criticism towards new laws and decisions made during crises from the public, and it is often influenced by the media and discussions on social media platforms. According to four interviewees, people often need to understand why the decision has been made, or they do not try to read a new law and understand it. Instead, they focus on informal discussions and posts on social media platforms as the formal source of information. Several experts agreed that there needs to be more information about the preparedness for an emergency or crisis and why one must be ready. There must be more clarity to the public of why a particular decision has been made and what the future steps will be for them to trust the government and public institutions.

## **5. Discussion**

In this chapter, the results will be analysed and discussed in order to see how:

**I1** – the crisis management performance can be increased by enhancing governance capacity in Lithuania within the crisis management system;

**I2** – enhancing governance legitimacy will optimise crisis management performance, and better crisis management performance will increase the legitimacy (Christensen *et al.*, 2016).

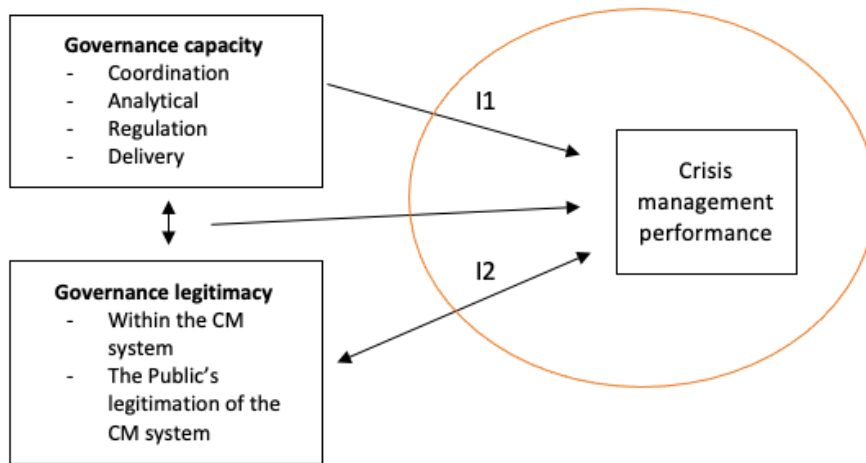


Figure 5 - Adapted Analysis Model from Christensen et al. (2016, p. 888,890).

## 5.1. Factors for increasing governance capacity

*This section will discuss the following two factors: the role of informal networks in complex systems and facilitating bottom-up efficient collaboration.*

### 5.1.1. The role of informal networks in complex systems

All the interviewees reflected on the complexity of crisis management systems, the communication lines, and how often they depend on informal-personal networks for a more efficient information flow and legal procedures. Having informal-personal networks to optimise crisis management procedures and increase the efficiency of information flow is an asset. Many interviewees working for the public and NGO sectors reflected that keeping those networks and strengthening them through workshops, training, and other facilitated interactions is important. Krackhardt and Stern (1988) argue that through informal structures, friendships, personal contacts, and accidental communication, many tasks are lifted, work efficiency is increased, and a large amount of influence is made within the organisation. Formal organisations and systems represent hierarchy, chain of command, legal structures, and procedures that are necessary to avoid mistakes and failures, which can be done on a personal level (ibid.). This emphasises that the legal structures, regulations, mandates, and laws assist in navigating complex systems and procedures. It clarifies the chain of command and decision-making process but might not be the most optimal and unifying approach.

Informal-personal networks can cause unexpected issues and complications. If the responsibility falls on an individual to determine the next course of action, disseminate

information, allocate resources, or perform similar tasks, it will invariably hinge upon that person's level of professionalism, values, beliefs, and biases. However, suppose individuals are systematically trained, and those informal networks are encouraged and guided through laws, policies, and mandates. In that case, they can increase the efficiency of the crisis management performance through informal interactions. Krackhardt and Stern (1988, p.138) argue that *"personalized ties are a reserve resource which provides the potential for the coordination needed to meet rapidly changing circumstances."* The interviewees confirmed this point; most of the experts interviewed agreed that to have a more efficient response to an emergency or crisis, they use their personal network on top of following the official bureaucratic procedures. According to Woodhill (2010), change in an organisation, improvements, and development are closely related to interpersonal relations, a class of leadership, and existing processes to moderate those interactions. In the case of Lithuania, the interviewees have reflected on strong interpersonal relationships and networks. They show trust in each other and willingness to help one another, both on a personal and organisational level, when needed. They must follow formal bureaucratic procedures, and they do so, but for efficiency of response, they heavily rely on informal networks.

When understanding governance capacities to respond to different kinds of emergencies and crises, as well as factors that might positively and negatively affect the CM system, it is crucial to consider the implications of the system's complexity. Complexity is not only bound to the crisis management system but is everywhere in any interaction, situation, and on individual existence level. An individual agent interacts in non-linear ways within the multi-agent system, and their actions can influence a change on a bigger scale (Heylighen *et al.*, 2007). According to Woodhill (2010), navigating within complexity is necessary to recognise its existence and be conscious of the implications of planned actions. Furthermore, to accept that working with complex situations is not just about the practical tools but also about the attitude and mindset. It is difficult for large organisations and bureaucratic systems to navigate through complexity. That is where layers of institutionalised rules, laws, by-laws, and policies are introduced to assist those organisations in functioning more efficiently (*ibid.*). In the case of the Lithuanian CM performance, laws regulate who has what mandates and responsibilities, which help to navigate through a multi-agent system. However, it also limits one's ability to legally act ad hoc, formally engage, or initiate procedures or actions of improvement when it is out of one's area of responsibility or mandate. This can slow down and reduce efficiency during the emergency or crisis response. For example, someone working on a more tactical, lower level might have information or experience to share, which

could be crucial in managing a specific crisis or building an improved system. Nonetheless, if legally there are no formal systems to facilitate that specific information collection and sharing, this kind of knowledge exchange formally will not be possible. According to Woodhill (2010), when decisions are made following a solid hierarchical structure, it is harder to adapt and learn within the system from the different actors involved.

To conclude this subchapter, one key finding in this thesis is the high reliance on informal networks in the formal CM system in Lithuania, which can help to increase efficiency in complex, bureaucratically heavy systems. Even though in Lithuania, the professionals working at public organisations are willing to follow the official legal procedures, they also heavily rely on informal networks. Informal networks should be seen as an asset, and encouraged; safe and systemic spaces to facilitate those connections should be created to optimise the CM performance.

### **5.1.2. Facilitating bottom-up efficient collaboration**

All the interviewed professionals working for public, NGOs and private organisations on national, regional, and local levels reflected that the Lithuanian CM system enhances top-down communication. There are no formal procedures or channels to request bottom-up communication or experience sharing. Some interviewed experts talked about informal, bottom-up communication and experience-sharing initiatives, like requesting it during meetings, workshops, and exercises. Alternatively, Fire and Rescue services use "*why is that*" logic where, when giving the order, they explain why and how that decision has been made. This invites and gives space for feedback; sometimes, a decision is adjusted after the feedback is given and before the decision is implemented. Uhr and Pettersson (2018) identify two types of response operations: planned and spontaneous. According to the authors, planned operations from the beginning enable top-down processes. Spontaneous, reactive operations start to shift from bottom-up to top-down when system actors from higher hierarchical levels join in until the whole operation becomes top-down. This logic can be applied to the Lithuanian CM system as well. Many of the interviewees working on the regional and national level shared their experience of how often, during emergencies or crises, they act before an official order reaches them because the bureaucratic procedures are complicated and slow. However, most of the examples given were of them acting before the official order reached them, but through the informal networks, they knew beforehand what decision had been made. They were not doing a bottom-up action; they acted without an official order due

to slow bureaucratic procedures but by following the decisions made on the strategic level, which is still a top-down leadership.

The fact that most bottom-up initiatives are informal shows that there needs to be more bottom-up initiatives and communication lines in Lithuania. Kapucu *et al.* (2010) argue that even though there is no perfectly efficient and effective system, the approach that the system should be built top-down must change with the more inclusive, bottom-up approach. While conducting interviews, it was clear that the representatives from public institutions have been included in the NCMC building processes. However, they were all already working on the national and regional levels. This shows that even though different actors are included, it might still not reach all the way to the lowest levels. A more bottom-up system-building approach is essential for a more efficient CM performance. There is much power in more decentralised, bottom-up initiatives. All the actors involved in the CM system should not just participate in the operations, but lower levels should also be involved in the decision-making processes. This will increase the system's capacity and, on the other hand, make the structure more complex (*ibid.*). This leads to the point that even though bottom-up communication and lower (tactical) level inclusion in different steps of the CM system building is necessary, one must be realistic about which complex systems and actors they can manage. If everyone is included, everyone will want to be heard and see the impacts of their presence in the system. It is difficult to answer how much complexity one system can handle.

Institutionalised regulations and rules are introduced to enable public organisations to work. However, they usually have a "*strong hierarchy of decision-making*" processes, making it difficult to learn and adapt (Woodhill, 2010, p.55). Furthermore, if learning is to take place, there is a need to create a safe environment where people can collaborate, share, and receive honest and open feedback from each other. To facilitate successful *collaboration* and *collaborative processes*, it is necessary to be aware of factors that can influence those processes. There is a need to be aware of *prior cooperation* and *conflict history* among the different actors, what *incentives* are given to different stakeholders for their participation, *power* and *resource imbalance*, *leadership*, and how are the different *institutions designed* (Kapucu *et al.*, 2010). According to Woodhill (2010), there are three essential conditions to facilitate a trusting environment:

1. Activities and processes that can give individuals *time* and *space* for self-development and the ability to understand themselves better.

2. To normalise and include *feelings* and *emotions* as a regular part of discussions and *explore* collaborative change processes.
3. Understanding that a safe environment is needed for people to develop emotional and self-reflective aspects.

To elaborate further, many public employees reflected that there are no formal channels or systems for bottom-up communication or initiatives. Some reflected that there might not be a '*consequential punishment*' for the ones who gave unintentionally misleading information or wrong suggestions. However, public employees might feel discouraged from sharing their input or feedback because they might fear being mistrusted or laughed at when they say something.

To conclude this subchapter, there is a need for more formal bottom-up, safe communication, and feedback systems to be implemented in each step of the CM system to create a more efficient system. Bottom-up initiatives and including actors from the lower hierarchical levels in decision-making would increase governance capacities. On the other hand, it would also increase the system's complexity. To facilitate better collaboration, which is another factor in successful CM, there is a need to invest in giving time and space for the actors to interact before the crisis.

## **5.2. Factors for maintaining and increasing governance legitimacy**

*This section will discuss the following three topics: trust in hierarchy, factors that make it hard to maintain legitimacy, and the importance of the system's consistency and transparency.*

### **5.2.1. Trust in hierarchy**

Overall, the interviewees expressed their belief that the Lithuanian public does trust the government; they feel that during an emergency or a crisis, they will be assisted by public organisations. However, legitimacy is not static; it is a fluid concept, and its development is influenced by many complex factors (Suddaby *et al.*, 2017). The government and its organisations must be trusted and acknowledged to have an efficient CM performance. Both the public and the public employees must see the need, value, and effectiveness of an organisation and institution to trust it and act according to its orders during a crisis (Suchman, 1995). Legitimacy influences how the public acts toward government authorities during emergencies and crises and how the public understands them (Christensen *et al.*, 2016).

For the public to trust the system, first and foremost, they must understand why the system is trying to protect them. The main goal of a state is to keep its citizens safe and protect them from harm. Nonetheless, one interviewee said the Lithuanian public often lacks that understanding. Secondly, the public needs to know how the system can protect them and in what way they can participate in preparedness and response to benefit themselves. A few interviewees reflected that there is no general guide of what it means to be prepared, and there is a need to define it, both for the public and the formal actors involved in the CM system. Furthermore, two NGO representatives talked about how the municipalities do not have information on where the vulnerable groups of people live. Not having that information might complicate rescue and evacuation processes. It is vital that the government and its organisations can account for every person. If they do not have sufficient information about the location and needs of vulnerable groups of people, they could use NGOs to gain that information, as well as the government and its public organisations can appoint NGOs to educate and train vulnerable people and make sure that they are prepared for the crisis and emergencies. For the public to feel safe, they must know who to contact, where to look for information and who can help them if they need assistance. In those situations, it only sometimes needs to be a public organisation that performs a particular action; other non-governmental and private organisations or individuals can lift a task. It is crucial that responsibilities and resources are efficiently and logically shared within the CM system and that all the system actors can contribute to preparedness and response activities depending on their expertise.

Thirdly, the public needs to feel that their opinions, ideas, and wishes are heard, whether it is through the politicians they elect or other means they might engage in the system. According to the national statistics, the public has a low trust in the government (-24,4%), the parliament (-43,15%), and the political parties (-49,4%). They seem to trust the public organisations more: the fire and rescue services (90,4%), the military (54,6%), and the police (52,7%), health care (14,3%) (VILMORUS, 2023). These statistics show that while the political system might not be seen as the most trustworthy in Lithuania, the public trusts the public institutions. The public's trust and confidence in the system are essential. "*A high-trust context and a state-friendly society*" (Christensen *et al.*, 2016, p.889), can positively affect governance capacity and an authority's behaviour to cope with a crisis. Furthermore, it shapes how the public perceives formal CM performance, which then influences the legitimacy and validation of the authorities (*ibid.*).



Since January 2023, the NCMC has been legally appointed to coordinate and manage crises, monitor and analyse situations in the country, and draft plans and policies (CM&CP Law, 2022). According to Suchman (1995), one organisation needs to prove its right to exist by ensuring its validity, need, and popularity among the public and towards the other system actors. The need for NCMC has credited them with legitimacy and trust within the CM system from the start. All the interviewed public employees were positive about where NCMC is placed on the hierarchical ladder. However, the public employees have high hopes for what the centre must achieve to increase the efficiency of the whole CM system, which makes the process of establishing NCMC more complex. The NCMC must find a way to collect those wishes and ideas, make a realistic plan of what can be achieved and when, and communicate to the rest of the system actors. This way, the system actors would feel heard and know they are part of a more significant systemic change and development process. Most importantly, no actors, including NCMC, are acting in isolation. All the actions made by one actor can affect the whole CM system. According to Suddaby *et al.* (2017), one way of understanding legitimacy is by looking at the processes that are used to build and maintain legitimacy, it is constantly gained and lost by the actors involved in the process. If there are negative impacts on the system, then the actors within the system will look for who is responsible and who is to blame. In this case, the organisation responsible for coordinating responses (e.g., the NCMC) might suffer a negative impact on how the public employees and the public view them, and their legitimacy might decline.

However, having legitimacy is not enough and does not ensure constant support from public and public sector employees. The governance capacity and vice-versa influence the legitimacy (Christensen *et al.*, 2016). This leads to another factor that might add an additional layer to the already complex task of maintaining legitimacy. To maintain or increase legitimacy, the NCMC needs to ensure that there are enough resources, in other words, efficient capacity, to respond to crisis, which is not entirely in their hands. To ensure capacity development, financial capital is needed, and the Ministry of Finance needs to allocate a budget for that. The Minister of Finance expressed that one of four priorities in 2023 is to strengthen national security; there is an 8% increase in state security and defence, a 17% increase in public safety and 49% in foreign policy (Ministry of Finance, 2023). However, that does not mean there will be enough financing to facilitate all the capacity development processes that the interviewees hoped for. The fact that the financial resources might be insufficient emphasises that it is vital to be realistic, systematic, analytical, and transparent to



the actors of the formal CM system. Furthermore, it is necessary to communicate the most critical capacity development processes that will happen every year to the CM actors in accordance with the budget. Ensuring transparency might help to maintain the legitimacy towards the CM system from the public employees.

In conclusion, trust is one of the key factors shaping legitimacy. The public and the public employees can validate and see the need for an organisation to exist. The NCMC is highly trusted and legitimised by the public employees, who also have high expectations of what the centre must deliver. The NCMC must have an open mindset and find a way to collect those ideas and wishes and make and communicate a realistic plan to the different actors within the CM system for them to see the NCMC as legitimate. On the other hand, the public must understand the role of government and the CM system. There is a need to define what it means to be prepared, what the public can prepare for and not, and ensure that all actors have a common understanding of it. The public needs to feel heard and represented, and that their wishes and needs are considered.

### **5.2.2. Factors that make it hard to maintain legitimacy**

According to Suchman (1995, p. 594), three characteristics make it hard to maintain legitimacy: 1) *the public is heterogeneous*; 2) *stable systems tend to be rigid*; 3) *the creation of institutions frequently gives rise to opposition*. The following reflects on how these characteristics can be seen in Lithuania:

1. The public is complex and diverse; every individual has their values, beliefs, biases, and background, which shape how they perceive their surroundings. According to Suchman (1995), legitimacy is not the property of an organisation or a system, but it is a relationship with the public. Most of the interviewees reflected on the apparent difference between the Soviet and the post-Soviet generations. Among many other aspects that make the public diverse, the Soviet generations are seen as less active, especially in the preparation period, because they wish to be provided with the resources and be taken care of. On the other hand, the Soviet generation has experienced a shortage of resources, and according to some other interviewees, they are much more resilient and self-independent during crises. This is one example of how generation difference might affect the public's preparedness and their actions during response, which should be accounted for. Acknowledging that the public is a heterogeneous group makes preparedness processes more complex because there is a

need to account for different needs, habits, beliefs, biases, and understandings. It is not possible to account for every single difference the heterogeneous public might have. However, considering differences is essential and the only way if the system wants to ensure efficient CM performance. The system's goal is to protect every person in Lithuania, and they would have to do so by identifying the crucial, not all, differences among the public and trying to account for them in every step of the CM's performance.

2. Complex systems like governments and their institutions tend to be rigid and inflexible, which makes it hard for them to keep up with constant demands from the heterogeneous public. Even though there is no perfect CM system, the system must stay flexible to adjust to changes. If the system is changing, all the aspects of the system should be updated, and it has to reflect the current state. Several interviewees talked about how the new law came into practice too quickly, and there was no overlapping period between the old and new systems. Additionally, the old laws that support the CM performance have yet to be revised, and amendments and by-laws have to be made. Many public organisations' employees have been talking about how the system is inflexible, and there are some old, sometimes not logical, laws that must be revised and changed to today's reality. This is a long process that the NCMC's Plans and Policy department will have to take part in. However, changing the law is a time-consuming and bureaucratic process. It is necessary to ensure that all actors within the formal CM system understand that change might take a long time. However, there must be a system in place to collect contributions, ideas, and feedback from the CM system actors because they are the ones who will have to work according to the new laws. It is also crucial to ensure that the actors view the whole system and the different level organisations in it as legitimate.
3. Stable systems become homogeneous with time, and they are not able to keep up with the demands of a heterogeneous public, which means that there is space for the opposition to rise, which can decrease the legitimacy of a system (Suchman, 1995). If, during a crisis response, something goes wrong, everyone looks for who was responsible and who is to blame. It has been established earlier that no actor is functioning in isolation; one actor's actions can have effects on the whole system and bring negative change that can affect legitimacy. Some public employees noted how politicians work from one term to another, and that politicians want to assure the

public that the country is always ready for emergencies and crises to maintain their popularity. However, some of the interviewees have reflected that some of the risks that require more timely mitigation projects are not taken seriously, and politicians do not want to allocate funding for them because the event might not happen when they are in power. The interviewees who talked about this issue accept that this is how politics works. Even with this, the legitimacy and trust towards the whole CM system or some specific actors might decline. One public employee who presented the national risk matrix that was made in 2022 expressed mistrust towards the ministries that contributed to the matrix's development. According to that interviewee, there is no accurate risk matrix, and some potential risks need to be taken seriously by politicians. If the public employees who are working on operational and tactical levels do not trust the politicians who work on the strategic level. In that case, the whole system might decline its legitimacy, and that will also affect how the broader public views the system.

Three of the key factors that make it hard to maintain legitimacy are that the public is heterogeneous, stable systems, like the CM system in Lithuania, with time tend to be rigid and inflexible. The creation of institutions gives rise to opposition, and there is a need to align the differences within the complex system for it to have a better CM performance and maintain legitimacy.

### **5.2.3. The system's consistency and transparency**

Three key elements make the public view authority as legitimate: 1) *traditional* – the authority has been there for a long time; 2) *charismatic* – the authority was brought up from community trust; 3) *rational-legal* – the authority is based on pragmatic logic (Suddaby *et al.*, 2017). In the case of Lithuania, the country has been independent for over 30 years, and according to the interviewees, the public trusts the government and its public organisations. Everyone interviewed for this thesis agreed that following the years since independence, trust has been increasing, especially during emergencies. However, the ways the public views the authority depends on the generation and other social factors. So, one could say that it has an aspect of traditional legitimacy. The government in Lithuania is democratically elected, which can be seen partly as a charismatic authority that comes from the public and is supported by them. The Lithuanian government and its public organisations are acting according to the laws, and their mandates and responsibilities are defined in them, which ticks the rational-

legal element box. Nonetheless, same as the fact that legitimacy is a process that constantly must be maintained, these factors need to be maintained as well. It is not enough that the authority has been in place for a long time, that it has been democratically elected, and that it follows laws and rational logic. It must be practical, efficient and inclusive to maintain legitimacy. Some public employees gave examples of how the laws that came into practice in the late 90s restrict their work today. Some of them are not logical and make processes within the formal CM system longer and less efficient. Therefore, it is not enough that the law is in place; other laws that have a direct link and influence on the CM system must be maintained, revised, and changed according to recent times and needs.

Trust and understanding of the system are some of the critical factors in defining the legitimacy of an organisation or a system (Christensen *et al.*, 2016; Suchman, 1995). The public employees, especially the ones working on the national and regional levels, understand the system well. To trust the system, they must see that the actors and organisations within the system are honest, transparent, and realistic about what needs to be done and what resources are available and needed, and make sure they are distributed fairly and according to the needs. It was mentioned in one of the interviews that when the national risk matrix was conducted in 2022, some of the risks were exaggerated because there were financial incentives to mitigate the most probable risks with the most severe impacts. This public employee sees the system as dishonest and biased. The person understands the system well, and they need to see that potential risks are measured realistically, honestly and in a transparent way. It is vital to maintain the trust among the employees working within the CM system to maintain the efficiency of the CM performance.

Moreover, every person who was interviewed has high hopes that the NCMC will solve many issues and increase the efficiency of the whole CM system. Trust can fall when the system actors lack transparency or honesty about their actions. The research has shown that the ways leaders communicate to their subordinates during challenging periods creates a foundation for future trust in their leadership. Additionally, a leader's positivity, transparency, openness, and susceptibility, prior to and during challenging periods, can increase trust and legitimacy from the system actors in the future (Norman *et al.*, 2010). The NCMC has the difficult task of collecting all the ideas and wishes and making realistic, tangible plans to realise the system changes that they view as necessary and suitable. The NCMC must create a safe space and a system to hear and collect the wishes of the system actors. Collate a list of ideas, make a realistic plan of what can be addressed, when and how, and communicate it transparently and

honestly to the rest of the system actors. This specific action is needed for NCMC to maintain their legitimacy amongst the CM system actors.

To summarize this subchapter, consistency and transparency of the system are needed in order for the system or the different actors within the system to maintain legitimacy. Consistency can be maintained by ensuring that once the new law is put into practice, old laws and regulations are revised and adjusted accordingly to empower the system and increase the efficiency of response. Transparency is needed in all the steps throughout the system. In communication, planning, reporting and analysis especially transparency is vital. If all the actors within the system and the public are aware of how and why decisions have been made, legitimacy will be maintained.

## **6. Conclusion**

This thesis was written during the initial phase of the NCMC creation, after the CM&CS Law amendment passed in December 2022. This law gave a window of opportunity for the government and its institutions to optimise the effectiveness and efficiency of the CM system in Lithuania. The purpose of this thesis is to provide input for the NCMC by suggesting important factors to consider to increase governance capacity and maintain, and possibly increase, governance legitimacy. Below, the two research questions of this thesis are answered, and the findings from this research are concluded.

*RQ1: What factors are important to consider in order to increase governance capacity in the Lithuanian emergency and crisis management system?*

The primary interview data and the secondary literature have highlighted the importance and benefits of informal networks within the CM system. Informal networks, which are widely used among Lithuania's CM system actors, can increase efficiency during crisis response. The interviewees and the secondary literature also pointed to the need to strengthen and encourage these networks through training, exercises, and other facilitated interactions for stronger collaborative action. Furthermore, there is a need to increase bottom-up communication and initiatives. Also, it is crucial to include the actors from the tactical level in the decision-making process because the lower-level actors often have more accurate knowledge about the situation on the ground and how the response went. However, it is essential to note that including more actors in the decision-making process adds to the system's complexity, and it

must be well thought through before engaging too many actors that the system can successfully handle.

*RQ2: What factors are important to maintain and possibly increase governance legitimacy in the Lithuanian emergency and crisis management system?*

Honesty, openness, consistency, and transparency of the system are some of the key most important factors to maintain and possibly increase legitimacy. Overall, this research has shown that the public and the public employees trust the system. The public employees refer to the new CM hierarchy and where the NCMC is placed on the hierarchical ladder in high regard. However, the public employees also have high hopes for what the NCMC must achieve to optimise the CM performance. To maintain trust and legitimacy, it is crucial that the public employees feel represented or are involved in CM planning processes and able to see logical, analytical, realistic, and transparent plans. It is also essential to maintain consistency; if there is a change in the system, the system must remain flexible, and an emphasis should be placed on revising and changing different aspects of the system to reflect the current state and have efficient CM performance.

Overall, all the suggestions above should be taken with complexity in mind. It is essential to recognise the implication of complexity on the CM system that an individual actor and the parts of the systems might have. Every actor within the system wants to be heard and will want to see the impacts of their presence in the system. Nonetheless, how much complexity one system can handle is difficult to answer. The NCMC must decide how and who should be included in the decision-making process in the way they can handle it.

To conclude this thesis, there is a need for future research within the crisis management field, governance capacity and governance legitimacy in Lithuania. First and foremost, there is a space for further research to monitor and follow up on the implementation of the new CM system, and follow and examine the system's work during real-life emergencies and crises. As well as a need for more quantitative studies that look at how the public understands and views governance legitimacy and what influence those aspects might have on governance capacity.

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# Appendix 1 – Interview guide (English)

## Interview guide for Lithuania

(February 2023)

### **Purpose (of this interview):**

This interview will be conducted in order to collect data for the master thesis with the following:

**(Working) Title:** Long-term capacity development model for managing different crises in Lithuania by the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC).

Through this interview, I hope to collect data and get a better understanding of what is the current situation of crisis management in Lithuania, and what needs there might be for better managing future emergencies, crises, and extreme situations in the country.

**Method:** I use semi-structured interviews to collect data. A semi-structured interview is guided by the interviewee. I have prepared open questions which then I can adjust, change and delete depending on your answers. You, as an interviewee will be able to direct and influence the flow of the interview.

### **Interview formalities\*:**

*\*The interview formalities must be read out aloud before the interview starts and the interviewee must consent to be recorded or not, as well as give verbal consent that what they say can be used for this specific thesis.*

- The purpose of this interview is to collect data for my master's thesis with the working title: ‘‘ Long-term capacity development model for managing different crises in Lithuania by the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) ‘’. Purpose: This master's thesis will explore how the National Crisis Management Centre (NCMC) can successfully merge the COBR and the Integrated Crisis Management approaches to have a new long-term-oriented model for responding to different crises in Lithuania.
- This is a voluntary interview and by participating you verbally agree to give your consent to be recorded and the information you share being used in this specific master's thesis.

- Whenever you want, you can not answer a question as well as you can end the interview at any point you wish.
- The transcription of this interview will be available on request.
- Do you give verbal consent that this interview will be recorded and everything that you will say can be used for this research process? (If not, can I take notes of what you say during this interview and use the information for my research?).
- Please state your full name, title, the organisation you work for, and date.

## **Interview questions:**

- **Background questions**
  - A)What organisation do you work for and what is your position and role in this organisation? B) How does the organisation you work for (used to work for) is contributing to emergency and crisis mitigation, management and/or response in Lithuania?
  - What is your personal experience of being actively involved in mitigating, managing and/or responding to emergencies, crises, and/or special situations in Lithuania?
  - In your opinion, how do you think the Lithuanian government and its organisations has been handling recent crises (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic, and increased migration from Ukraine)? Has there been voiced critique or public debate about how recent Lithuanian crises were managed? If yes, in your opinion, was the critique fair?
  - How do you describe a crisis? How do you classify a crisis in Lithuania? What are the formal criteria for saying that some event is a crisis in Lithuania? Are there formal criteria?
- **General governance system and crisis management system**
  - What would you say are the general characteristics of the Lithuanian governance system? Could you give some examples? (democracy, hierarchy, decision-making autonomy, societal sectors, geographical demarcations, legal system).
  - How would you describe what is Lithuanian government's responsibility in times of crisis: towards the citizens, government employees and foreign partners (a case example can be used)? Is the responsibility regulated in laws or policies?
  - How would you define, what is the Lithuanian government's role in crisis response: what general activities do government agencies do during a crisis response? Do they facilitate spaces/technology for collaboration, how are resources allocated, do they

have a system for information sharing (within the system and to the media/public), do they have a system for monitoring ongoing developments, are there functions that are tasked with making short- and long-term analyses and provide decision-making?

○ **Capacity development:**

- Training and manuals: How often and what kind of trainings, simulations, etc., do you have? Who is facilitating them?
- How would you describe the existing NCMC structure, do the responsibilities belong to a specific person and/or position, or it belong to a function? How is the capacity of the system made sustainable? Can people be replaced? Is this planned for?
- What kind of help, support, training do you expect from NCMC? In what way do you think this centre can assist you?

○ **Naturalistic decision-making:**

- What is the chain of command in Lithuanian crisis management when making decisions? Who reports to whom, who is in charge of whom, etc?
  - A) How much autonomy do you have in your position to make decisions and give order to the actions related to crisis mitigation, management, and response?
  - B) In your position, who is the next person/ institution higher up and below for the decision-making process? How are they influencing your decisions and limiting or giving you the power to act independently?
- From your personal experience, how often did you have to make or have observed the others making ad hoc decisions during crises? How often did you observe the decisions during crises being made from trained and prepared decision-making/ response approach?
- Is there a practice of getting external consultants during crises in Lithuania to help making decisions, and coordinating actions?

○ **Reports, information sharing, and use of lessons learned:**

- After an emergency and crisis, what are the reporting procedures? Do you write reports, is someone evaluating what resources have been used, etc.?
- How do you collect the good and bad lessons learned? Are they used in some way, for example, are they being transformed into educational material, do they turn into concrete by-laws, or are they used in any other ways?

- **Questions specifically for NGOs**
  - Is there an organisation or a system that is coordinating you during a crisis?
  - How much information did you receive from the government of Lithuania, is it enough and did you receive it on time, prior to, during and after the crisis?
  - Volunteer culture, how is it in Lithuania? Do people want to volunteer? Do people see them as a resource? Are they included in exercises and preparedness activities? Could you give some concrete examples?
  
- **Specific questions to the municipalities**
  - What is the connection, and distribution of responsibilities between the national and municipality levels during the preparation, response and recovery from the crisis?
  - What capacity does your municipality have and what is missing? Which equipment, education, information, experts, money, etc.
  - What kind of cooperation there is between you and other municipalities, how do you share information, and in which situations do you request other municipalities' help?
  - Civil safety education, how do you share important information? Do you feel that the public is prepared for possible crises and emergencies?

## **Appendix 2 – Interview guide (Lithuanian)**

### **Interviu planas**

**(Vasaris, 2023)**

**Interviu metodika:** Duomenis rinksiu naudojant pusiau struktūruoto interviu metodiką.

Pusiau struktūruotam interviu vadovauja pašnekovas. Aš turiu atvirų klausimų klausymyną ir, atsižvelgdama į Jūsų atsakymus, interviu eigoje tuos klausimus koreguosiu, keisiu ar iš viso kai kurių neklausiu, taip pat užduosiu papildomus klausimus, kurie nėra įtraukti į šį interviu planą. Jūs, kaip pašnekovas, galėsite vadovauti ir daryti įtaką pokalbio eigai.

### ***Pokalbio formalumai\*:***

*\*Prieš pokalbio pradžią turi būti garsiai perskaitomi pokalbio formalumai ir apklausiamasis turi sutikti ar nesutikti, kad būtų įrašomas. Taip pat duoti žodinį sutikimą, kad tai, ką jis sako, gali būti panaudota šiam konkrečiam darbui.*

- Šio interviu tikslas – surinkti duomenis mano magistro darbui, kurio darbinis pavadinimas yra „*Nacionalinio krizių valdymo centro (NKVC) ilgalaikių gebėjimų ugdymo modelis įvairioms krizėms valdyti Lietuvoje*“.
- Šis interviu yra savanoriškas ir Jūs jame dalyvaudami žodžiu duodate sutikimą įrašyti šį pokalbį ir informaciją, kuria dalinatės, panaudoti šiame konkrečiame magistro darbe.
- Interviu bus anonimiškas ir informacija bei citatos, kurias panaudosiu savo darbe, bus anonimiška ir visi duomenys bus nuasmeninami.
- Kai tik norėsite, galite neatsakyti į klausimą, taip pat galite pokalbį nutraukti bet kuriuo momentu.
- Paprašius, aš galiu pateikti šio interviu transkripciją.
- Ar duodate žodinį sutikimą, kad šis pokalbis būtų įrašytas ir kad viskas, ką pasakysite, gali būti panaudota šio tyrimo procese? (*Jei ne, ar galiu užsirašyti, ką sakote per šį pokalbį, ir panaudoti informaciją savo tyrimui?*).
- Jei sutinkate, nurodykite savo vardą, pavardę, pareigas, organizaciją, kurioje dirbate, ir šiandienos datą.

### **Klausimai:**

- **Bendrosios informacijos klausimai**

- A) Kokioje organizacijoje Jūs dirbate ir kokios yra Jūsų pareigybės šioje organizacijoje? B) Kaip organizacija, kurioje dirbate (kurioje dirbote), prisideda prie ekstremalių situacijų, krizių ir/ar ypatingų situacijų švelninimo, valdymo ir/ar atsako į jas Lietuvoje?

– Kokia yra Jūsų asmeninė patirtis reaguojant į ekstremalias situacijas, krizes ir/ar ypatingas situacijas Lietuvoje?

– Jūsų nuomone, kaip Lietuvos valdžia ir jos organizacijos įveikė praeitas krizes (pvz., COVID-19 pandemiją, padidėjusią migraciją iš Ukrainos)? Ar buvo viešai diskutuojama ar išsakyta visuomenės kritika apie tai kaip buvo suvaldytos pastarojo meto krizės Lietuvoje? Ar Jūs manote, kad ši kritika buvo teisinga?

– Kaip Jūs apibūdintumėte kas tai yra krizė? Kas yra klasifikuojama kaip krizė Lietuvoje? Kokius formalius kriterijus koks nors įvykis turi atitikti, kad tai būtų skaitoma kaip krizė ar ekstremali situacija Lietuvoje?

- **Bendroji valdymo sistema ir krizių valdymo sistema**

– Jūsų nuomone, kaip galite apibūdinti, kokios yra bendros Lietuvos valdymo sistemos ypatybės? Kaip Lietuvos Vyriausybė priima sprendimus, koordinuoja visuomenės sektorius, t.t.? Ar galėtumėte pateikti keletą pavyzdžių? (demokratija, hierarchija, sprendimų priėmimo autonomija, visuomenės sektoriai, geografinės demarkacijos, teisinė sistema).

– Kaip apibūdintumėte Lietuvos valdžios atsakomybę krizės metu: prieš piliečius, valdžios darbuotojus ir užsienio partnerius? Ar atsakomybę reglamentuoja įstatymai? Jei galite, duokite pavyzdį.

– Kaip apibrėžtumėte, kaip Lietuvos vyriausybė reaguoja į krizes: kokios vyriausybės institucijos reaguoja į krizę ir koks jų vaidmuo? Kas koordinuoja atsaką į krizes, kas paskirsto išteklius, kas perduoda, dalinasi informacija su žiniasklaida ir visuomene (informacijos mainų sistema), kas stebi nuolatinius krizės pokyčius ir turi stebėjimo sistemą? Taip pat, ar yra konkrečių institucijų ir asmenų, kuriems yra atiduotos analitinės ir sprendimų priėmimo užduotys krizės metu?

- **Pajėgumų plėtra/ gebėjimų ugdymas (Capacity Development)**

- Kaip apibūdintumėte esamą NKVC struktūrą, ar pareigos priklauso konkrečiam asmeniui ir/ar pareigoms, ar tai priklauso funkcijai? Ar sistemos pajėgumas yra tvarus? Ar lengvai galima pakeisti žmones skirtingose pareigose/pozicijose? Ar vieno komandos nario netektis reikštų iššūkius ir informacijos bei žinių praradimą?

- Mokymai: kaip dažnai ir kokiuose mokymuose, simuliacijose ir panašiai Jūs dalyvaujate? Kas juos rengia? Ar jie vyksta Lietuvoje ir ar kitose šalyse?

Kokios pagalbos, paramos, mokymų Jūs tikėtės iš NKVC? Kaip Jūsų manote, kaip šis centras gali sustiprinti jūsų darbą?

- **Natūralus sprendimų priėmimas:**

– Kokia sprendimų priėmimo grandinė Lietuvos krizių valdyme srityje? Kas kam atsiskaito, kas kam vadovauja ir pan.? (administracinė kontrolė).

A) Kiek savarankiškumo Jūs turite priimant sprendimus ir duodant nurodymus/ įsakant veiksmus, susijusius su krizės švelninimu, valdymu ir reagavimu į ją?



B) Kas Jūsų pareigose yra kitas asmuo/institucija aukščiau ir žemiau sprendimų priėmimo procese? Kokią įtaką jie daro Jūsų sprendimams ir ar jie Jus riboja arba suteikia Jums galių veikti savarankiškai?

-Iš Jūsų asmeninės patirties, kaip dažnai Jums teko priimti ar Jūsų stebėjote, kaip kiti krizių metu priima ad hoc (skubius) sprendimus? Kaip dažnai pastebėjote, kad sprendimai krizių metu buvo priimami taikant apmokytą ir parengtą sprendimų priėmimo/reagavimo metodą?

-Ar Lietuva siekia užsienio šalių patarimų kaip priimti sprendimus, koordinuoti atsako veiksmus krizių metu? Ar tik fizinės, materialios pagalbos? Duokite pavyzdį.

- **Raportai, informacijos pasidalinimas ir išminktų pamokų panaudojimas:**

- Įvykus ekstremalioms situacijoms ir krizėms, kokie yra atskaitų procesai, ar rašote raportus, ar kažkas įvertina Jūsų sunaudotus išteklius ir panašiai?

- Kaip yra surenkamos išmuktos gerosios ir blogosios pamokos? Ir ar jos yra panaudojamos, pavyzdžiui, ar jos pavirsta mokymų medžiaga, ar jos pavirsta į kažkokius konkrečius poįstatyminius aktus, ar dar kažkaip kitaip tos pamokos yra panaudojamos?

- **Klausimai NVOs**

- Ar Jūs, visos nevalstybinės organizacijos turite kažkokią organizaciją ar sistemą, kuri jus koordinuoja krizių metu?

- Kiek Lietuvos vyriausybė Jus informuoja, ar užtektinai ir ar laiku prieš, per ir po krizių?

- Savanorystės kultūra, kaip ji atrodo Lietuvoje? Ar žmonės nori savanoriauti? Ar valstybė mato juos kaip išteklius? Ar įtraukia juos į mokymus ir pasiruošiamuosius darbus? Duokite konkrečių pavyzdžių?

- **Klausimai Savivaldybėms**

- Koks yra ryšys, atsakomybių pasidalinimas tarp nacionalinio lygio ir savivaldybių pasiruošiant krizėms, joms vykstant ir po jų?

- Kokie yra Jūsų savivaldybės gebėjimai ir ko trūksta - įrangos, mokymų, žinių, specialistų, pinigų?

- Kaip Jūs bendradarbiaujate su kitomis savivaldybėmis, kaip vyksta informacijos pasikeitimas, kuriais atvejais pasitelkiate kitų savivaldybių pagalbą?

- Visuomenės mokymai, kaip Jūs skleidžiate informaciją? Ar jaučiate, kad visuomenė kaip pasiruošti galimoms nelaimėms ir ekstremalioms situacijoms?

## Appendix 3 – Original quotes in Lithuanian

| Quotes      | Original quote in Lithuanian   | English translation of the original quote   |
|-------------|--|---|
| P2, quote1  | <i>„kada tu transliuoji sprendimą ir nurodai dėl ko taip, galbūt sprendimo vykdytojas iškart pasakys: Vade žiūrėkit, dar yra ir taip ir taip, ir tuo metu tu gali keisti tą sprendimą šiek tiek (...) svarbus, kad tiek sprendėjai, tiek vykdytojui būtų aišku.“</i>   | <i>“when you communicate the decision and explain why is that so, it might be that the person who has to execute the decision might say: Chief look, now [the situation] is this and this, and at that moment you might change the decision a little bit (...) important that both the decision maker and the executor everything is clear.”</i>  |
| P9, quote2  | <i>„Bus nauji formalūs bendravimo keliai ir atsiras kiti keliai keliui, kur mes tiesiogiai spręsim, taupant laiką, tam tikrus klausimus.“</i>  | <i>“There will be new formal communication ways and other ways will appear, where we will directly solve, saving time, those specific questions“</i>  |
| P7, quote3  | <i>„matomės dažniau, nei matome savo šeimos narius.“</i>   | <i>“more often than we see our family members”</i>  |
| P8, quote4  | <i>„reikia orientuotis į visuomenės parengimą, kiek įmanoma daugiau žinių perduoti į visuomenę, nes ypač tos didelės nelaimės, tokios kaip karas, čia yra kritinis išgyvenimo momentas visuomenei. Tos tarnybos, kurios yra čia keli tūkstančiai žmonių, tai jie čia nieko nepadarys. (...) Visuomenės pilietiškumas, gebėjimai, galimybės veikti tokiose situacijose yra kritinis.“</i> | <i>“we must focus on preparing the society, give the society as much knowledge as possible, because especially those big disasters such as war, they are critical survival moment for the society. Those institutions which have several thousands of people, will be unable to do anything. (...) The citizenship, abilities, and capabilities of society to act in such situations are critical.”</i> |
| P12, quote5 | <i>„tegul NVO daro tai, ką jie geriausiai išmano“</i>  | <i>“let the NGOs do what they are good at”</i>  |
| P10, quote6 | <i>„Nėra struktūrinių raportų sistemų, kai yra ekstremali situacija, visi veikia, bet niekas neprašo parašyti ataskaitos, o kai kurios ministerijos prašo užpildyti klausimyną.“</i>   | <i>“There are no structural reporting systems, when there is an emergency, everyone acts, but no one is asked to write a report, and some ministries ask to fill in a questioner.”</i>  |
| P8, quote7  | <i>„rizikos valdymo sistema, jinai sako, kad Jūs turėtumėte racionaliai derinti tas rizikas, bet iš kitos pusės, ta</i>  | <i>“risk management system, it says that you should rationally combine those risks, but</i>   |

|              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
|              | <i>finansinė, sakykim paskatos, ją iškreipia.’’</i>   | <i>on the other hand, those financial incentives, let's say, distort it’’</i>   |
| P7, quote8   | <i>„kai tu esi viena iš institucijų, prie Vidaus reikalų ministerijos, tu niekuom nesiskiri nuo mūsų, ką tu mums pavadovausi. (...) Dabar yra logiškai, kai padarė vyriausybei krizių valdymo centrą, nu tu jau nepasišakosi, yra rimta institucija, su rimtais įgalinimais, tai ta prasme, tai teisingu keliu eina iš tikrųjų.‘‘</i>   | <i>‘‘when you are one of the institutions working under the Interior Ministry, you are no different from us, how can you manage us. (...) Now it is logical when the Crisis Management Centre was created under the government, now no one can go against it, this is a serious institution, this is a right path indeed.’’</i>   |
| P5, quote9   | <i>„Nu tada belieka tik tokia, nu hierarchija, vieni žiūri ką daryti, kiti: daryk taip. Nu ir viskas, bet jeigu kažkas nepavyksta, tada atsakomybė tada bus tam, kuris čia taip liepė’’.</i>  | <i>‘‘Then there is only this, hierarchy, some are looking at what to do, the others: do like this. And that is it, but then if something does not work out, the responsibility will be with the one who gave the order’’</i>  |
| P10, quote10 | <i>‘‘Aišku kalbėti galima ten vienaip, bet realybė kitaip parodo. Politika yra politika pas mumis, valdžios atstovai kitaip ir kalbėt negali, kad mes visada esame viskam pasiruošę. Bet realybė turbūt kartais parodo, kad tam tikrose vietose reikėtų ir daugiau ir tų pastangų, ir ta teisinė bazė aišku dar yra pakankamai komplikuota pas mus. Va dabar keitėsi įstatymai, bet jie dar realiai nekoreliuoja su poįstatyminiais... Poįstatyminių teisės aktų dar nėra po šiai dienai, daugelyje sričių. Tai jau tas rodo, kad truputėlį, galbūt, kai kas yra chaotiškai daroma.‘‘</i> | <i>‘‘Of course, you can talk one way, but reality shows otherwise. Politics are politics with us; government representatives can not tell otherwise than that we are always ready for everything. However, the reality probably sometimes shows that in certain places, more efforts are needed and that legal base is obviously still complicated enough here. Well, now the laws have changed, but they still do not really correlate with the by-laws... To this day, there are no by-laws in many areas. This already shows that a little, maybe something is being done chaotically.’’</i> |
| P9, quote11  | <i>„Ir tas raštas, ratais kvadratais kol apeis, užtruks laiko. Bet aš visuomet žinau, ko aš noriu ir iš ko aš noriu, ir aš visada galiu paskambinti (...) tam tikri veiksmai, jie yra aprašyti</i>  | <i>‘‘[official] request goes in circles and squares; it takes time. But I always know what I want and from whom I want it, and I can always call (...) certain actions, they are described in the laws, and they must be</i>  |

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|             | <p><i>įstatymuose, ir jie turi būti formalizuoti. Ar tai raštas, ar tai, įsakymas kažkokiai turi atsirasti. Bet raštas, tegu eina, bet aš žinau kam man tiesiai paskambinti ir susiskambinęs jau aš išsisprendžiu taktiškai, strategiškai, praktiškai, viską kaip kas bus. Ir realiai žmogus, kol iki jo tas raštas ateis, jis jau žino, ko aš noriu, mes jau būnam susitarę, kaip viskas bus, kaip viskas įvyks, ir tas raštas ateina tik formalumas. “</i></p>  | <p><i>formalised. Whether it is a request or an [official] order has to come about. Let the request go, but I know who to call directly and during the call, I will decide tactically, strategically, practically how everything will be. And in reality, by the time that request reaches him, he already knows what I want, we have already agreed on how everything will be, how everything will happen, and that request comes only as a formality.”</i></p> |
| P8, quote12 | <p><i>"kai sakai, kad gali būti dar didesnė nelaimė, sako: mano kadencijos metu tai gali neįvykti, tam finansavimo nebus."</i></p>  | <p><i>“when you say that there might be an even bigger disaster, they say: it might not happen during my tenure, there will be no funding for that“</i></p>  |
| P9, quote13 | <p><i>„Bet visi pamiršta vieną esminį, pamatinį valstybės, kaip darinio, dalyką, tai yra valstybė saugo savo žmogų. (...) valstybės mastu priimami sprendimai, ne tam, kad tiesiog juos reikia priimti, o tam, kad reikia apsaugoti žmogų. Ir reikia, jeigu atsirado prievolė užsisegti saugos diržą, tai vien tik dėl to, kad valstybė turi prievolę apsaugoti žmogų, nu net ir tada, kai jis ir nenori. (...) Dalis bendruomenės, visuomenės dar nu nenori to priimti, kad valstybė turi pareigą juos saugoti, kartais nuo jų pačių.“</i></p> | <p><i>“ But everyone is forgetting the key fundamental thing that the country is protecting its people. (...) on the national level, the decisions are made not just because they are needed to be made but because it is needed to protect the people. (...) Part of the community, society still don't want to take it in that the country has the responsibility to protect them, sometimes even from themselves.”</i></p>                                    |
| P9, quote14 | <p><i>„Iš esmės mes dar turime tų kartų, kurios gyveno senuoju tuo sovietiniu laikotarpiu, ir tas mąstymas išliko, nu. Ir išliko, nu a, jeigu kažkas sugalvojo, kad aš turiu turėti penkis litrus vandens pasidėjęs, konservų dėžutę, ar kažką tai, tai tu man ir duok, vat aš</i></p>  | <p><i>"Basically, we still have those generations who lived in the old Soviet period, and that thinking has remained. And it remained, well, if someone came up with the idea that I should have five liters of water, canned food or something, then give it to me, and I'll keep it. Although probably they will not</i></p>   |

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|             | <i>tada ir laikysiu. Nors greičiausiai nelaikys, suvartos anksčiau negu reikia. Tos post sovietinės kartos dar neprasisuko, bent aš manau, kad tas mąstymas, požiūris, kad valstybė neprivalo visko duoti, jį atsiranda.</i><br>“  | <i>keep it, it will be consumed sooner than needed. The post-Soviet generation hasn't turned around yet, but I think that the mindset, the attitude that the state doesn't have to give everything, is emerging”</i>   |
| P4, quote15 | <i>„Ta Lietuvos visuomenė nėra tiek daug mačiusi, kad galėtų kritikuoti kas yra teisingas atsakas, kas nėra teisingas atsakas. Nes tikrai tų krizių Lietuvoje buvo labai nedaug. Ir tai ką, kaip mes atsakom, kaip valstybė reaguoja yra tiesiog pirmi kartai ir mes nesam kokio Turkija, kur žemė dreba tris kartus per metus, ir tu jau tikriausiai turi tikriausiai jau turi žinoti, kaip reaguoti į drebėjimą. Tai dažnai ta kritika būna tokia, be sakykim stipraus suvokimo, kas yra geras, gera reakcija visuomenės. Ir dažnai būna tokia politizuota, poliarizuota.”</i> | <i>"This Lithuanian society has not seen so much that I could criticize what is the right response and what is not the right response. Because, really, there were very few of those crises in Lithuania. And that [means], how we answer, how the state reacts is simply for the first time, and we are not like Turkey, where the earth shakes three times a year, and you probably already know how to react to an earthquake. Often this criticism is like that, without, let's say, a strong perception of what a good reaction of society is. And it is often so politicized, polarized”</i> |

## Appendix 4 – List of codes

| Name of the code        | Description   | Interviews | References |
|-------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| Ad hoc decision making  | Example and experience of how and when different kinds of ad hoc decisions have been made. Are there any pieces of training to practice making ad hoc decisions before emergencies and crises, etc.   | 7          | 13         |
| Bottom-up communication | Specific quotes about bottom-up communication within the CM system.   | 2          | 4          |
| CD directions & wishes  | Capacity development wishes: what is needed, what could be improved, what different public and NGO employees would like to see realised within the CM system: improvements for the system, specific trainings, increase in resources and capacity, etc. | 12         | 51         |
| Chain of command        | What does the formal CM system's chain of command look like in Lithuania, what works well and what are the gaps in the system.  | 13         | 36         |
| Citizens & volunteering | Public engagement as resources within the CM system, what works well and what does not work so well, and what is the potential of including volunteers during all the steps of crisis management. NGO   | 4          | 6          |

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|   | perspective about volunteer involvement, their experience working with them.  |    |    |
| Volunteering  | The potential to include volunteers during all the steps of crisis management. NGO perspective about volunteer involvement, and their experience working with them.   | 5  | 13 |
| Citizens' preparedness  | What it means to be prepared for different crises and emergencies, does public know how to prepare and are they prepared, what information sharing platforms are there, does the public know where to look for them, etc.   | 9  | 18 |
| Crisis & emergency situation definition   | How an expert defines crisis and emergency situations from their experience and point of understanding.   | 5  | 15 |
| Exercises, trainings, workshops and presentations   | What exercises, trainings, workshops and presentation within CM field exist, who is participating, how often, what is missing, what are the interviewee wishes and ideas for the future of CM education and preparing to respond quickly.   | 10 | 29 |
| Existing governance capacity  | How has the previous response to crisis and emergencies when, which resources has been used, for what is the government and its public organisations prepared for.  | 12 | 54 |
| Governance legitimacy and trust   | How do public employees and the public view the government and its institutions, do the public trust the government and their institutions during a crisis, are they engage and support or criticise the government and their institutions. Do the public employees trust the CM system, their own and other organisations within the system. | 11 | 33 |
| Information sharing, reporting and evaluation   | What kind of information is shared, in which directions the formal communication flow, is there a system for feedback. What kind of reports are produced, how they are used after.  | 9  | 42 |
| Institutional & organisational communication  | What are directions of communication (top-down, bottom-up, horizontal), formal and informal networks and communication, what and how information is shared.   | 9  | 31 |
| Knowledge exchange - learning cross different organisations (good practise, workshops, etc) | How is information, good and bad lessons learned shared. Formal and informal channels, what systems are there to support it, what it is missing.  | 9  | 34 |
| Legal structures  | What legal structures, laws, by-laws, policies and mandates are there to guide, shape, empower and restrict CM system and different procedures during all phases of crisis management processes.  | 10 | 26 |
| Influence on decision making  | Who and how can influence what decision are made within CM system: which institutions has power to change laws and policies, allocated resources, etc.  | 6  | 11 |
| Media, social media & public opinion  | How media is influencing public opinion, do they trust traditional media or more social media, what information comes through the different media platforms, etc.   | 5  | 11 |
| NATO  | NATO influence on the Lithuanian CM system development and activities.  | 2  | 4  |
| NCCMC structure   | How is NCCMC structured, what will be the centre's tasks, role and responsibilities, how other institutions are collaborating with the centre.  | 9  | 34 |
| NGOs & their collaboration, contribution to CM  | How NGOs contribute to different steps of crisis management, what is their perspective on existing collaborations and future possibilities.   | 8  | 45 |
| Public communication  | Through which channels, when, how and what kind   | 9  | 22 |

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|                                      | of information flows to the public, during preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation processes. |    |    |
| Reporting & evaluation               | What kind of reports are produced, how they are used after, what evaluation procedures are there.     | 1  | 3  |
| State auditing                       | How and what aspects of CM system is audited by state, what are the outcomes of these audits.         | 2  | 6  |
| Task & labour division during crisis | How different responsibilities and tasks are shared among all the actors in the CM system.            | 11 | 53 |
| The new law (NCCM)                   | Reflections on the new Crisis Management and Civil Safety Law.  | 1  | 5  |