

## Security research relevant to forest fires

Portugal is an active participant in the Horizon 2020 security research programme. This is particularly true for their ministries of Justice, Administration and Defence, which participate in 20 projects for 2.5 million euro in EU contribution. They cover a range of areas, from violent radicalisation, to law enforcement training or the fight against terrorism. This is particularly laudable.



An area of security research of particular importance for Portugal is the area of forest fires. Portugal has been ravaged by forest fires, leading to over a hundred deaths this year alone. EU Security research has launched several projects related to forest fires. The "AF3-Advanced Forest Fire Fighting" achieved high level of integration between existing and new systems to improve the efficiency of current fire-fighting operations and enhance the protection of human lives, the environment and property. HOME has also launched this year a practitioner network on fire-fighting called "Fire-in", which will help the Commission identify new research priorities. Other H2020 projects also cover forest fire risk management in their portfolio, namely DRS1-2016 projects.

A particular problem in Portugal related to the forest fires concerns the communication networks for fire-fighters. The fires actually destroyed most of the relay-poles for communication. This led to a breakdown of the communication networks, which in turn complicated massively the work of the fire-fighters. EU security research is developing several solutions for future secure communication tools aimed, among other aspects, at compensating such breakdowns.

Science-policy interfacing is essential for gathering experts and relevant stakeholders from across Europe in order to identify knowledge and innovation gaps and formulate robust recommendations to improve risk management in the fire-prone areas of Europe. Fire-related research and innovation (R&I) activities will continue to be supported during the last programming cycle (WP 2018-2020) under different parts of H2020.