

THE “O3E” PROGRAM: RAISING AWARENESS ON NATURAL HAZARDS

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ABSTRACT #101:

Earthquakes may be traumatic events and as many other environmental emergencies, like storm or floods, may cause more damages than expected when who experiences the phenomena does not know how to behave in the fall.

Provided that it is always not feasible to rely on prediction when dealing with earthquakes or extreme meteorological events, preparedness proves to be an efficient (and certainly the most recommendable and cheap) way to face emergencies. Education and training are thus two ingredients to help citizens to perceive the scientific information formerly confined in the laboratories, in particular in the domain of the environmental risk.

The “O3E” innovative program (European Observatory for Education and Environment) is established after 10 years (1997-2007) of regional and national original programs (“Sismos of the Schools”), and from Italian and Swiss experiences concerning environment tools for education. The project, that is a cooperation between France, Italy and Switzerland, is born to promote a responsible behaviour of citizens in front of the evolution of a society where scientific information is promptly available. ARGAL (Agency for Geological Risk in the Latin Arc) operates the administrative and technical coordination.

The objective of this program is to create a school network in the Alpine and Mediterranean areas equipped with environmental sensors of an educational vocation. The data on the movement of the ground (seismometers), the temperatures and precipitations (weather stations), the flows of rivers (hydrogeology) recorded in the schools and processed by the students are collected on dedicated servers and then made available through internet to the entire educational community.

This network “O3E”, once installed, is the starting point of activities. Indeed, various general objectives are pursued:

- To promote the applied sciences and new technologies.
- To put in network the actors of Education and formation.
- To develop the sense of the autonomy and the responsibility in the young people.
- To reinforce and develop relationships with regional partners of the educational and university fields.
- To support a rational awakening for the prevention of the natural risks that can make the difference during the event in terms of safety.

With these premises, the “O3E” experience sets up a permanent educational network of citizens in the Alpine and Mediterranean areas, building an exchange of knowledge on natural risks prevention.

KEYWORDS : “O3E” program, educational network, natural hazard