



## **BuildERS project addressing social vulnerabilities in crises**

  
**Kati Orru, Friedrich Gabel, Tor-Olav Naevestad and BuildERS colleagues**

**Kati.Orru@ut.ee**

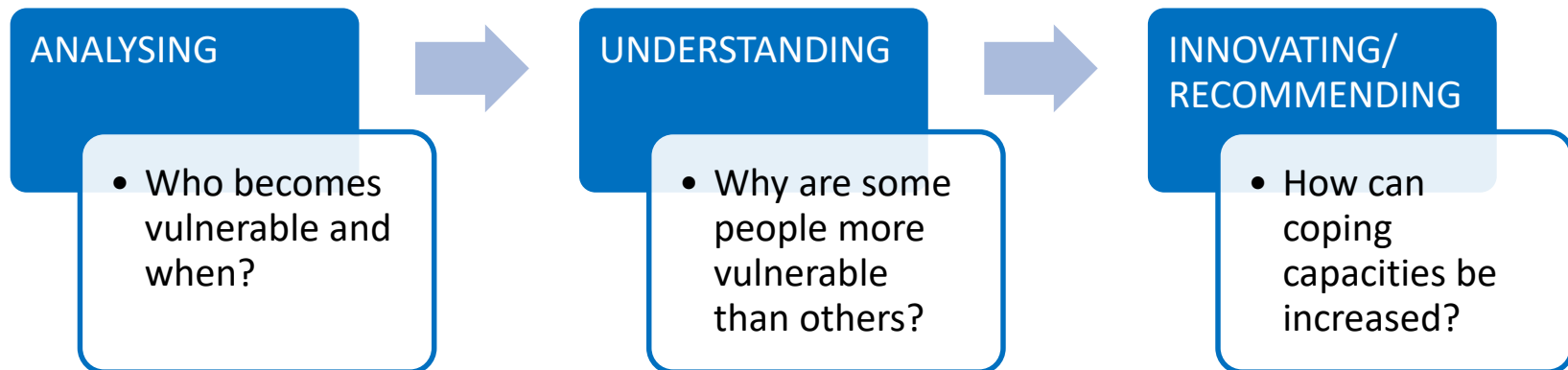
**University of Tartu**



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# The role of vulnerability in BuildERS project

- **BuildERS project aims to improve the overall resilience of European societies by reducing the vulnerability of those most vulnerable.**
- **Vulnerability - lack of capacities to cope with crisis related risks to health, safety and property.**
- **BuildERS approach:**



# Who becomes vulnerable and when?

## Survey of socially marginalised and homeless people in Europe

Experiences in hazard situations, including climate hazards; factors of vulnerability and coping (physical and mental resilience, social support, risk awareness)

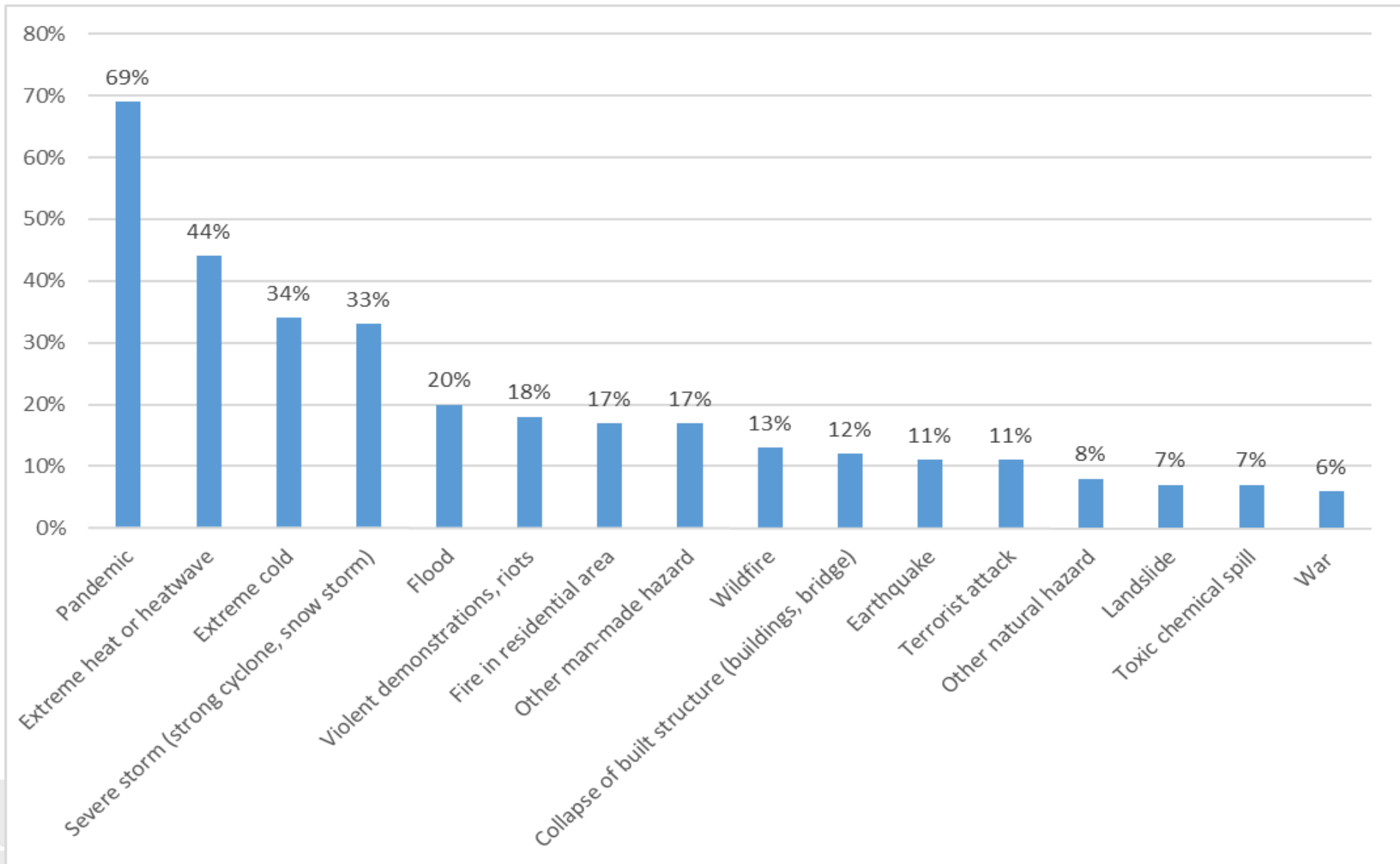
Study population:

homeless, refugees, clients of soup-kitchens and rehabilitation centres in cities in Europe;  
≥ 18 years, 14 countries, 320 interviews

Data gathering: 10/2020-08/2021

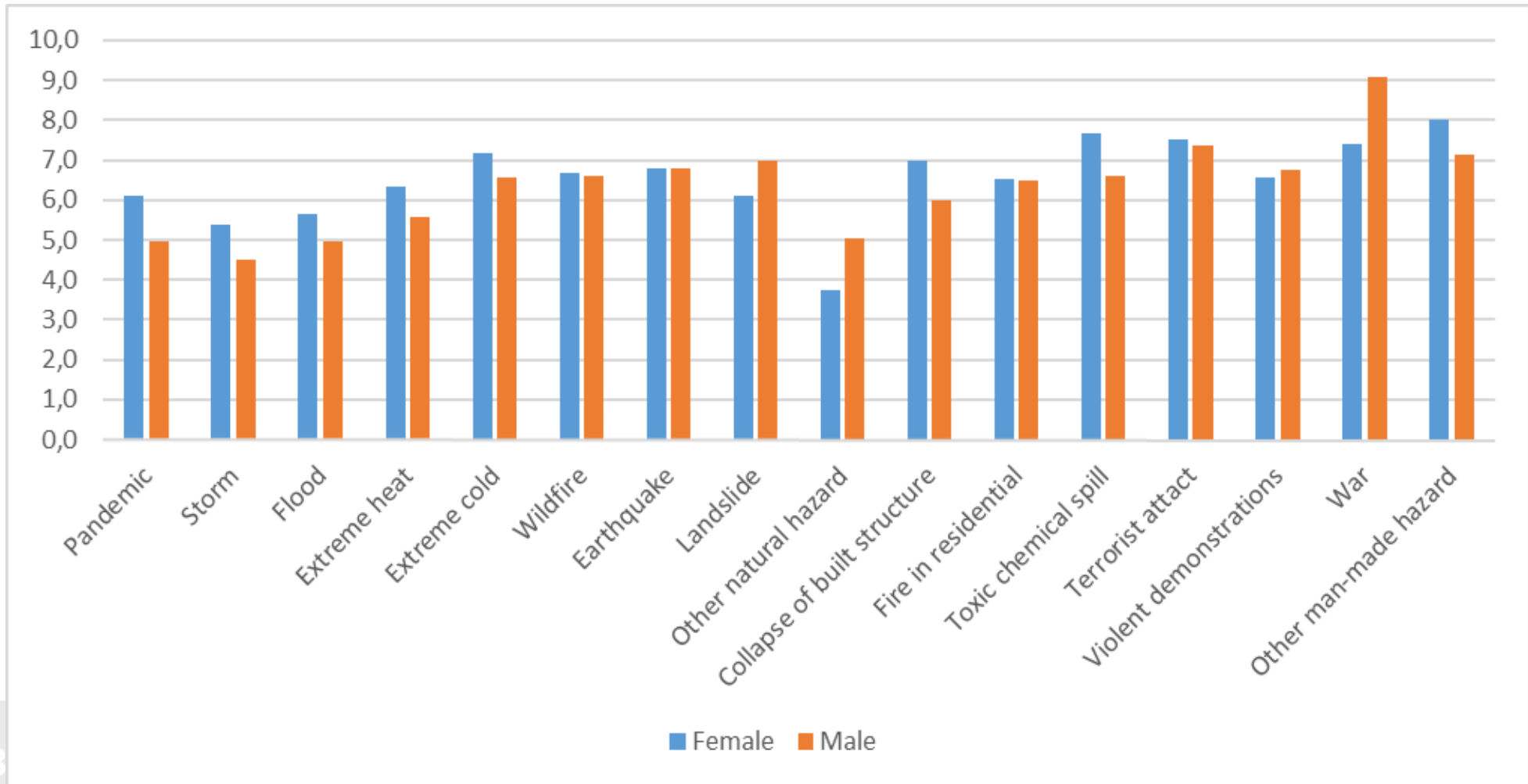


# Respondents experiences with hazards, including climate hazards in the last ten years



# How much mental/material strain did this event put on you?

1- no strain at all; 10 a lot of strain



# Experiences of climate extremes may sensitise individuals to mental health outcomes of future hazards

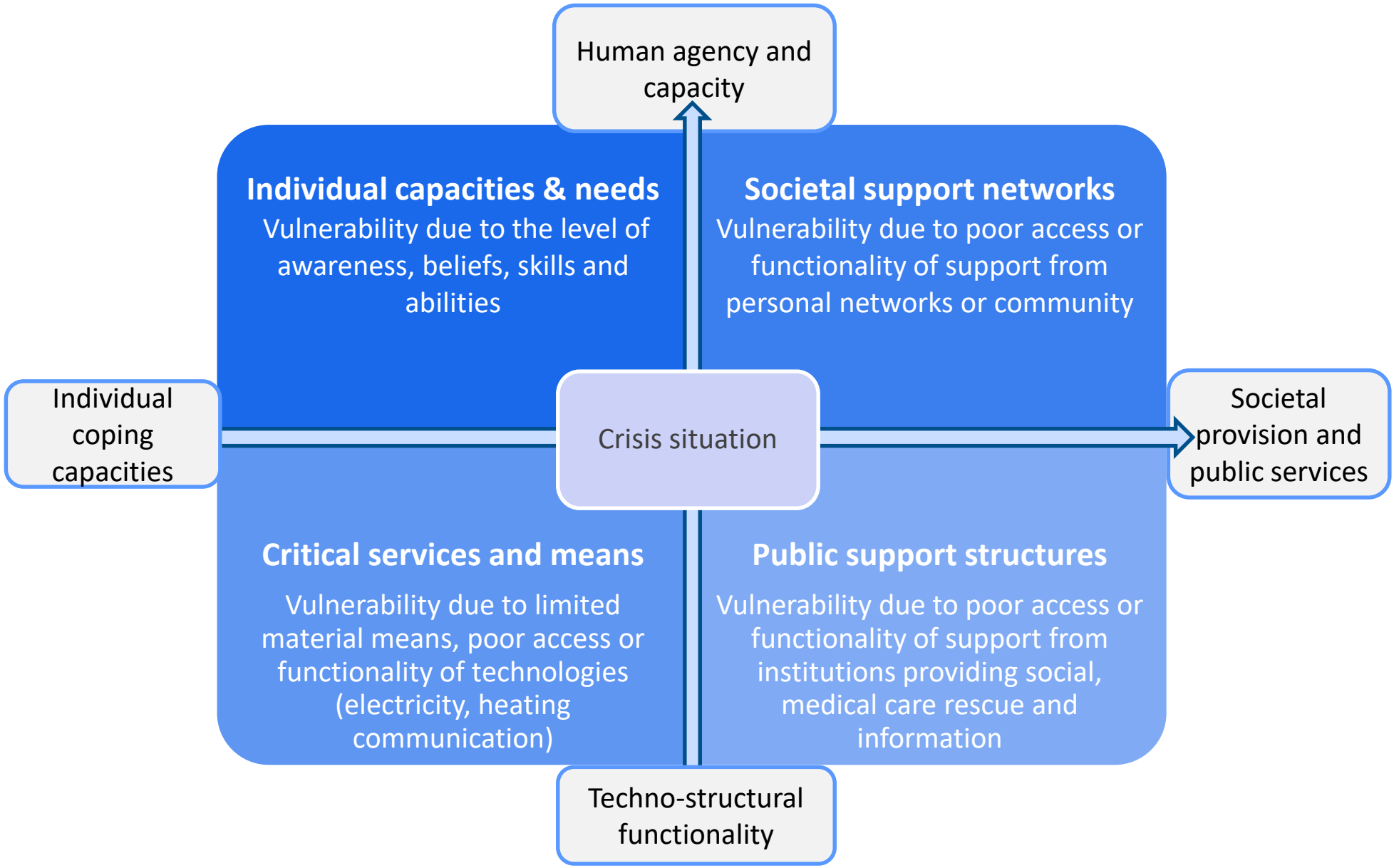
		COVID influence on wellbeing and mental health	Symptoms of PTSD because of the pandemic
Background variables	Age	-.122**	n.s.
	Sex (Male=2)	-.128**	-.178***
	Immigrant, asylum seeker, without documentation	n.s	.155**
	Consider yourself a minority	.164***	n.s
Exposure to COVID-19	Have been infected themselves	n.s	n.s
	Mean number of acquaintances being infected	n.s	n.s
	Portugal/Spain/Czech (=2, others=1)	.145***	.162***
	COVID influence on income etc.	.354***	.263***
Previous hazards	Experienced hazards: war, terror, earthquake, wildfire,	.199***	.239**
	Experienced wildfire	.124**	.215***
Living arrang.	Living on the street or temporarily arrangement	n.s	n.s
	Living in facility or centre	n.s.	n.s.
	Living in own home	.142**	.260***

# What are the approaches to deal with social vulnerability to crises in Europe?

- A static view on vulnerable groups is dominating.
- Individual capacities are mainly considered as sources of vulnerability.
- Social vulnerability analysis is rarely included in risk assessments and crisis plans.
- *Ad hoc* analysis and info sources used during crisis.
- Index-based vulnerability assessments as a „black-box“

**Need for a more comprehensive understanding of factors of vulnerability and information sources**

# Novel framework for understanding social vulnerability factors in crises





# Vulnerability assessment tool to predict social vulnerabilities in crises

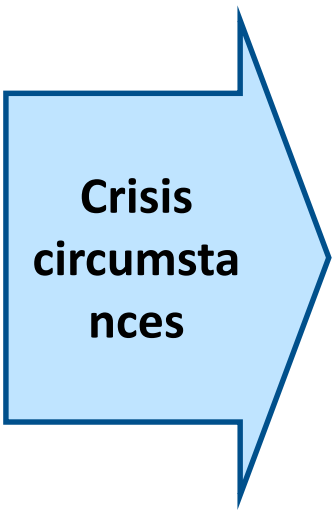
1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



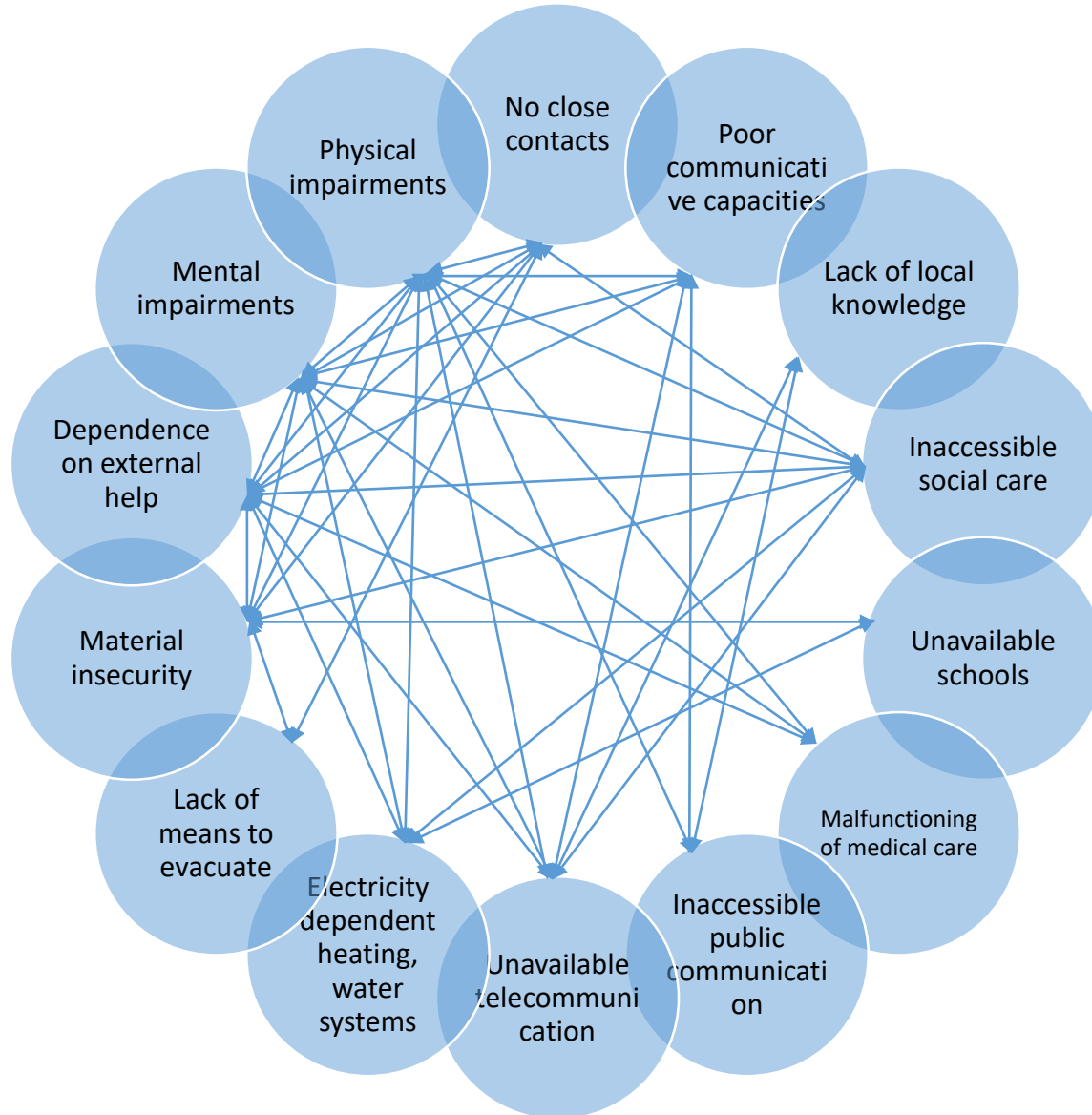
Category of vulnerability factors	Factor of vulnerability	Affected individuals	Most important intersectionalities	Scenario derivations		Information sources
				Cold	Remote areas	
Critical services and means	Electricity-dependent heating	Clients of communal heating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External help needed on everyday basis;</li> <li>Families with small children;</li> <li>Unavailability of means to evacuate, etc</li> </ul>	↑	↓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.g. Population Registry,</li> <li>Client list of service providers</li> </ul>
		Private electricity-dependent heating		↑	↑	
	...					



# Key intersecting factors of vulnerability in a storm/long-term disruption of electricity

Individual needs and capacities

Societal support networks



Public support structures

Critical services and means

# Conclusions

- Climate hazards sensitise individuals to the mental health outcomes of future crises
- Lack of consideration of dynamic and intersectional vulnerabilities in European crisis management planning
- Need to consider the vulnerabilities related to the (poor) availability, accessibility and activatability of social and medical support (informal and formal) in crises
- Novel vulnerability assessment tool helps to predict situation-specific factors of vulnerability to tailor more specific mitigation measures.



# BuildERS articles, check for more in <https://buildersproject.eu/>

Approaches to 'vulnerability' in eight European disaster management systems

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/disa.12481>

Communication-related vulnerability to disasters: A heuristic framework

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212420920314333>

COVID-19 information disorder: Six types of harmful information during the pandemic in Europe

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13669877.2020.1871058>

Handling false information in emergency management: A cross-national comparative study of European practices

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212420921001175>

Vulnerability and vulnerable groups from an intersectionality perspective

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212420920313285>

A critical appraisal of individual social capital in crisis response

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/rhc3.12236>

Linking resilience, vulnerability, social capital and risk awareness for crisis and disaster research

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1468-5973.12375>

Resilience in care organisations: challenges in maintaining support for vulnerable people in Europe during Covid-19 pandemic, Disasters

<https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12526>

