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*'Understanding volcanoes and society: the key for risk mitigation'*



## **Perception of Risk for Natural Hazard in the residents of Campania Region, Southern Italy**

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Residents of Campania Region are potentially exposed to a combination of natural hazards such as hydrogeological events, seismic and volcanic activity. At present, for some of these hazards, particularly volcanic eruptions, there are no recent experiences to properly assess potential consequences on population, infrastructures and environment. Once this lack of knowledge will be filled, it is even more crucial to develop a risk awareness in the population exposed. This have to be done alongside and keeping up with the development of scientific knowledge and emergency planning upgrade in order to follow up with the daily increasing men-induced modifications of the territory. In order to improve the effectiveness of communication strategies, a study of risk perception has been carried out in 21 municipalities of Campania Region. Three areas have been examined, each potentially suffering from a prevalent specific risk: seismic (Irpinia area), volcanic (Mt. Vesuvio belt area) and hydrogeological (Sorrento peninsula area) risk. The study has been realized by directly addressing residents with a specifically designed set of questions. The interviews have been submitted to statistically significant groups of residents characterized by statistically low error at an high confidence level. The groups have been selected in order to mirror as faithfully as possible the composition of population on many different levels: neighbourhoods/communities, sex, and demographic. Main results show that in each of the three considered areas, people with higher educational level are more aware of phenomena's dynamics and less worried of their consequences. Older people, on the other hand, have a better understanding of the procedure to follow in case of emergency. These differences tend to blur away in case experience of events are remote or absent, e.g. volcanic events.