

ISCRAM

The Situation Report



#RefugeesWelcome:

How smartphones and social media empower refugees and EU citizens and bring change to European policies

By Tina Comes and Bartel Van de Walle



This week, the European Union's interior ministers have made a long awaited but controversial decision [to impose mandatory refugee quota](#) on its member states. This decision enables a distribution of 120,000 refugees across European countries. An important factor in coercing the EU to make this decision is the

multitude of grass roots responses that have emerged all over Europe, initiated by citizens who were no longer willing to watch in disbelief how their governments trailed to act. United under hashtags such as [#RefugeesWelcome](#) or [#TrainofHope](#), initiatives to welcome refugees sprung up across Europe. Thousands of improvised actions of humanity sent the strong message to the European leaders that solidarity is a European core value not to be forgotten, ignored or tampered with.

The refugees preparing new routes to circumvent barriers, as well as the helping citizens have one thing in common: they make extensive use of smartphones and social media. Early September, the British newspaper The Independent ran an article with a remarkable title just a few weeks ago: "[Surprised that Syrian refugees have smartphones? Sorry to break this to you, but you are an idiot](#)". Through their smartphone, refugees can stay in touch with their families and connect with other making the same journey. They use Google maps and GPS to find their way forward, and [Facebook, Whatsapp groups or Viber to stay updated](#) on any new barriers or problems that lie ahead. [Three studies of the REACH initiative](#) on the situation in Greece, confirm that the main source of information is social media updates, followed by word of mouth and information from families already in the final destination.

The benefits of social media are equally clear to the helping European citizens. Many have created Facebook groups with calls to action, to deliver aid ranging from food and socks, books and radios, to sleeping bags and tents that they transport to wherever refugees are arriving or stranded. Several of these initiatives quickly outgrew their original small scale intent. The volunteer group [SOS roszke](#) in Hungary, for instance, is struggling with communication and sorting problems, and suffers from understaffing. It is not surprising therefore that further "specialization" in the aid offerings has started. Platforms such as [Fluechtlinge Willkommen](#) or [Aider les Refugees](#) offer AirBnB-like housing for arriving refugees.

Universities are tuning in: in Belgium, the Free University of Brussels created the position of a [refugee coordinator for the university](#), while the rector of the Catholic University of Leuven dedicated [his entire opening speech](#) for the Academic year 2015-2016 to the responsibility of universities for the refugees. In Germany, [Kiron University](#) was founded as the first online university enabling refugees who have lost their certificates to enroll in a full program, offering accredited degrees, while the [Refugee Law Clinic](#) at the Humboldt University in Berlin offers free courses and advising to refugees. Several UK universities offer [scholarships to refugees](#), and more universities follow their lead.

To map the activities of universities in the response to the refugee crisis we have launched an online survey on goo.gl/cwktP. Please complete and share!

This is a boxed text block. You can use it to draw attention to important content.

There are many lessons to be learned from Europe's unexpected refugee crisis. The dissent among countries and parties has left many European citizens bedazzled, confused, angry and frustrated. Many of them have stopped waiting for political action, and have used social media to step up and mobilize their network. For refugees, smart phones are lifelines that provide essential information about the conditions they will be facing. Information and communication technologies are thus empowering the people – the people of Europe exercising humanity and solidarity through volunteer efforts where governments lag behind, and the refugees themselves, claiming the right for a life in peace and safety. The ideal of global citizenship is hence becoming reality, reshaping aid, and fundamentally shifting politics.



2015 Best Student Paper Award Winner

Miguel Ramirez de la Huerga

Title: A Scenario-based approach for analyzing complex cascading effects in Operational Risk Management

The paper entitled "*A Scenario-Based Approach for Analyzing Complex Cascading Effects In Operational Risk Management*" was presented at the last ISCRAM 2015 conference is part of the research work related to the thesis works of Ph. D. Student Miguel Ramirez de la Huerga. This research deals with the risks in industrial environments and the use of scenario-based methods as part of decision support systems. In industry we can find many examples related to disasters and accidents of all types and severities. The literature about accidents is very large and we can find a variety of papers about it. The most prominent topics are the Natural Accident Theory (NAT) and High Reliability Theory (HRT). Moreover, the use of scenario-based methodology has been used on several papers to analyze, predict and evaluate the effects of a set of events or a possible emergency situation. The scenarios had been applied in different environments and analysis, from natural disasters analysis to critical infrastructure studies, with the aim of analyzing causes and consequences, from the Crisis development to the Resilience analysis. This research has successfully validated the use of CIA-ISM (Cross Impact Analysis - Interpretative Structural Modeling) attached to the traditional techniques of risk analysis as an improvement in organizational systems decision-making, when used in an environment where multiple variables without sufficient historical and statistical data to use other methods such as Bayesian analysis tree. In the paper Turoff's approach of cross-impact analysis, to calculate the correlations (impacts) between the variables (events), based on a subjective probability (experts opinions) and previous data for risk analysis of the company (Hazop) was applied. This makes the calculation of the working model possible and then creates a

graphical representation of the model using ISM. This combination of methods and data makes building a dynamic scenario possible. It shows the event relationships and also categorizes the events, and shows the direct, indirect and cascading effects. After this analysis, with the use of a web tool (www.ciass.org), some predictions were made about the initial model through just changing the probabilities of the events. This allows the researcher to assess different situations in order to take better decisions when faced with a situation of crisis and even establishes hypothetical scenarios to train emergency teams. The data and the scenarios were based on a real world case, an industrial plant located at the south of Spain. The experts who were asked concluded that this combination of methodologies represents a real-life scenario and shows correctly the relationships between events. We conclude that it will be helpful as a tool for decision-making teams.

http://www.researchgate.net/publication/277330793_A_CIAISM_scenario_approach_for_analyzing_complex_cascading_effects_in_Operational_Risk_Management

<http://iscram2015.uia.no/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/10-b.pdf>



SURVEY: Humanitarian Information Failure

Andrej Verity and Nikita Bhide aim to study humanitarian information management (HIM) failure with an aim to better understand the causes of failures in HIM as well as ways to better accept and learn from failure. They are reaching out to the ISCRAM community because it includes those who likely have knowledge or experience of HIM failure and are would like to see culture change. They hope that you will be willing to share your stories and knowledge with them. They would like to ask you to complete the 15 question survey below. It should only take 15-20 minutes. By completing the questionnaire, you are taking a first step in helping to change HIM culture for the better.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1onth2bLXS-pV9G-bkRBNFdGuzpEW128RwcB1pHMAKU/viewform?usp=send_form

EVENTS

The Second International Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management in Mediterranean Countries (ISCRAM-med 2015), will be held in Tunis, Tunisia, October 28-30, 2015.

The aim of ISCRAM-Med is to focus on crises and disasters (natural or man-made) and the solutions (computer-based or not) required to be effective and efficient according to the disaster phases, types and scales. Invited keynote talks will be given by Mauro Dolce (General Director of the Department of Civil Protection, President of the Council of Ministers, Rome, Italy) on “Civil Protection Achievements and Critical Issues in Seismology and Earthquake Engineering Research”. Nissaf Bouafif Ben Alaya (Associate Professor of Preventive Medicine and Epidemiology, Faculty of Medicine of Tunis and General Director of the Observatory of New and Emerging Diseases, National observatory of new emerging diseases, Tunis, Tunisia) will give a keynote talk on Early Warning Systems in Tunisia: Evolution, Challenges and Place of Environment and Modelling. Join us to this three-day conference, where attendees will be invited to present and discuss their experiences, their recent research results, best practices, and case studies. Tool demonstrations relating to the social, technical and practical aspects of current or future ICT systems for all phases of management of emergencies, disasters and crises, will be given also.

For further details and updates, visit the conference website: <http://www.riadi.rnu.tn/iscrammed2015>

IAEM Annual Conference

**International Association of Emergency Managers Clark County, Nevada
November 13-18, 2015**

This conference will focus on expanding the spectrum of emergency management and providing training and networking opportunities. Topics include how gender matters in emergency management, disaster research put into practice, social media, and leadership examples from Fukushima and Hurricane Sandy.

The 6th International Conference on Information Systems and Technologies
Barcelona, Spain
March, 18-20, 2016

CIST'2016 (Barcelona, Spain) is a forum for researchers, developers and industrials in the information systems field and the continuance of the following event: ICIST'11 (Tebessa, Algeria), ICIST'12 (Sousse, Tunisia), ICIST'13 (Tangier, Morocco), ICIST'14 (Valancia, Spain) and "ICIST'2015" (Istanbul, Turkey). It reports progress and development of methodologies, technologies, planning and implementation, tools and standards in information systems. The conference looks also at socio-economic aspects, impacts and success factors of information systems. ICIST'2016 aims at addressing issues related to the design, development and use of information systems in organizations from a multidisciplinary perspective, and to discuss, the research, teaching and professional practice in the field. ICIST 2016 brings together leading academics and professionals in information systems from around the world. It aims at providing a platform for discussions on issues that take into consideration the social and technological aspects of information systems. The conference program includes paper presentation, keynote talks from prominent academics, Posters and Panels.

<http://www.ijist.net/icist2016/>

The NiTiM International Graduate Research School (www.nitim.org) is organizing the Winter School 2015

Barcelona, Spain
November 9th and 11th

This year's Summer School is affiliated with, and immediately following, the ICE/IEEE International Technology Management 2015 Conference (<http://www.ice-conference.org>).

NITIM Schools facilitate the development of doctoral research in the interdisciplinary field of Networks, Information, Technology and Innovation Management, bringing together Ph.D. candidates, researchers, professional representatives, and faculty members in a focused, in-depth, and constructive discussion of the candidate's' research proposals. This year's Winter School will address the challenges of second and third year PhD candidacy, we have framed the main school topics under two thematic priorities relevant to the research endeavors in the fields of Crisis and Disaster Management, Connected Health, Sustainable Engineering, and Business Innovation Systems & Logistics. This school offers practical insight into the strategies and expectations needed to ensure a swift and secure transition from academia to

careers in private industry, and/or continuation of academic pursuits. e.g.- *What options do I have in terms of exercising career flexibility in an academic environment? -At what point do I have make up my mind to stay in academia or go into industry? -How much can I change my path?*

Critical deadlines:

- Proposal Submission (2500-3000 words) October 12th, 2015
- Acceptance Notice October 19th, 2015
- Submission Feedback November 2nd, 2015
- Start of Consortium November 9th, 2015

Call for submissions:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FRACyc9DhNWR2ZHZSK4kHWzQ7FkSXGmY7D5fy1F3O8s/edit>

CALL FOR PAPERS

CFP: 13th Annual Conference for Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

May 22-25 2016

<http://www.iscram2016.nce.ufrj.br>

Important Dates

Long Papers, panels, workshops: *Friday, November 20th, 2015*

Short Papers, posters, demonstrations, doctoral consortium: *Friday, January 29th, 2016*

ISCAM2016 invites two categories of papers:

- Long papers presenting completed work including a description of methods, results and validation (4,000-6,000 words)
- Short papers presenting work in earlier stages, outlining concepts and discussing first results (2,000-3,500 words)

TO SUBMIT A PAPER

1. Authors must submit papers electronically through the conference system.

<https://www.conftool.com/isram2016/>

CFP: Special Issue

Moving Forward to Disaster Resilience

Journal of Technological Forecasting and Social Change

We have launched a special issue on "Moving forward to Disaster Resilience" in the journal of Technological Forecasting and Social Change. You can find the detailed description in the following link: <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/technological-forecasting-and-social-change/call-for-papers/special-issue-on-moving-forward-to-disaster-resilience/> The goal of this special issue of Technological Forecasting and Social Change is to shed light on how cities and communities can become more resilient to deal with disasters. In view of all the existing challenges, we invite researchers to submit original papers that include conceptual or empirical approaches relevant for this topic and provide new insights for theory and practice.

JOBS

Professor of Public Administration and Emergency Management

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

This position will serve as an assistant- or associate-ranked public administration professor in the Department of Political Science. Duties include teaching two courses per semester and producing scholarly work. A PhD in public administration, political science, or a related field is required. An interest in fire and emergency management is preferred.

Research Associate

The Urban Institute**Washington, D.C.**

This position will support the Institute in using social science research to further housing and community policy in the areas of economic development, resilience, response, youth development, and hazard mitigation. Duties include developing empirical research projects, fundraising, evaluating existing projects, data collection, and report writing. Project management experience, knowledge of hazards and disaster management, and a PhD in urban planning, sociology, or related fields are required. Please reference Job ID 2107 when searching for position.

DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & MISSION CONTINUITY**UC Davis****Davis, California, USA**

The Director of Emergency Management and Mission Continuity (EMMC) is responsible for overseeing a robust emergency management and mission continuity program and assuring that university activities are conducted in compliance with applicable policy and regulatory laws through the development, implementation, monitoring of prevention control strategies and initiatives, as well as by establishing collaborative partnerships with other campus units or departments. The director of Emergency Management and Mission Continuity is appointed to coordinate the UC Davis Event and Crisis Management team chaired by the Chancellor and Provost. The team consists of the complete leadership of the UC Davis enterprise.

See more at: <https://chroniclevitae.com/jobs/0000901025-01#sthash.iMdkOhbm.dpuf>

Tenure Track Faculty**University of Albany, Albany, NY, USA****College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity**

The University at Albany is launching a bold new initiative in the rapidly growing and critically important area of security and preparedness. The first-of-its kind College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity was established this year, and is expected to grow over the next five years as it establishes both undergraduate and graduate academic programs. In support of this important and ambitious endeavor, the University is seeking to fill up to six tenure-track faculty positions within the following areas:

- * Homeland Security
- * Cybersecurity
- * Emergency Management
- * Digital Forensics
- * Public Health Preparedness

See more at: <https://chroniclevitae.com/jobs/0000899714-01#sthash.tSjDdty9.dpuf>

**Tenure track faculty member in the Department of Safety Management
Slippery Rock University,
Pennsylvania, USA**

Slippery Rock University is seeking applicants for a full-time, tenure track faculty member in the Department of Safety Management beginning August 2016. There is a possibility of appointment beginning January 2016 start depending on availability, enrollment and funding. The successful applicant will have the knowledge and experience needed to teach a variety of undergraduate safety courses. Courses may include: Principles of Industrial Hygiene I & II, Hazardous Materials and Waste Management, Comprehensive Emergency Management and Fire Abatement, Ergonomics, Incident Investigation, Contemporary Issues in Safety, Security, Motor Fleet, Safety Training, Safety Management, Legislative Compliance or Construction Safety (must be an OSHA authorized Trainer) as well as other assigned safety courses. - **See more at:** <https://chroniclevitae.com/jobs/0000898953-01#sthash.jDH5lVrU.dpuf>

NEW FUNDING

Drs. Andrea Tapia and Anna Squicciarini (Penn State University) and Dr. Cornelia Caragea (University of North Texas) are pleased to announce the receipt of new funding entitled “Automating Relevance and Trust Detection in Social Media Data for Emergency Response.” This award was made by the US National Science Foundation in the Area of Cyber-Human Systems. The award is for 3 years and for \$250,000.

Through this research, we seek to find mechanisms to automatically classify information within a social media data stream to be relevant (i.e., emergency related) and verifiable. We propose to develop organizationally informed analytical approaches in which we code known social media data and computational approaches to relevant and verifiable message detection from social media streams. Given a social media stream of messages, our work attempts to first identify relevant, emergency related messages and then establish the veracity of the information disseminated, using machine learning and text mining techniques. For emergency related messages, our models will generate a probabilistic estimate of the relevance and veracity of a message or a collection of messages. We aim at developing self-contained solutions to the extent that is possible, in that we will identify relevant and verifiable messages using only information available

within a microblogging platform itself.

A new grant has been awarded to several ISCRAMmers entitled, Resilience Analytics: A Data-Driven Approach for Enhanced Interdependent Network Resilience.

This is a 3 year grant through the US National Science Foundation of approximately 2 million US dollars.

The Team is comprised of:

Kash Barker kashbarker@ou.edu (Principal Investigator) University of Oklahoma
James Lambert, University of Virginia
Laura McLay, University of Wisconsin-Madison,
Charles Nicholson, University of Oklahoma
Jose Ramirez-Marquez, Stevens Institute of Technology

Partnered with:

Andrea Tapia (Principal Investigator) Penn State University
Christopher Zobel, Virginia Tech
Cornelia Caragea, University of North Texas.

Recent natural disasters have challenged our traditional approaches of planning for and managing disruptive events. Today, social media provides an opportunity to make use of community-driven data to help us understand the resilience, or lack thereof, of community networks (e.g., friends, neighborhoods) physical infrastructure networks (e.g., transportation, electric power) and networks of service providers (e.g., emergency responders, restoration crews). This Critical Resilient Interdependent Infrastructure Systems and Processes (CRISP) collaborative research integrates multiple disciplinary perspectives in engineering, computer science, and social science to address how community-driven data can help (i) understand the behavior of these interdependent networks before, during, and after disruptions, and (ii) more effectively reduce their vulnerability to and enhance their recovery after a disruption. The results will significantly improve our understanding and management of infrastructure recovery from natural disasters.

ISCRAM: The Situation Report

The monthly newsletter of the ISCRAM Association

The ISCRAM Association's primary mission is to foster a community dedicated to promoting research and development, exchange of knowledge and deployment of information systems for crisis management, including the social, technical and practical aspects of all information and communication systems used or to be used in all phases of management of emergencies, disasters, and crises.

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