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Comment on nhess-2021-192

Anonymous Referee #1

Referee comment on "Evaluating the suitability of documents on the prevention of major risks intended for the general public" by Laetitia Ferrer and Corinne Curt, Nat. Hazards Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., <https://doi.org/10.5194/nhess-2021-192-RC1>, 2021

The paper focuses on the problem identifying methods for evaluating the suitability – in terms of legibility and readability – of a document provided in France at municipal level to the population for describing risk conditions in their area. The problem is connected to the topic of dissemination of risk information, and thus the question falls in the scope of the journal. Nevertheless, the analysis is focused, as previously mentioned, only on the readability and legibility of the document. The themes of reception of such a document by the population, or of contents or target-related contents, are not explicitly taken into account. At least the perspective of introducing the index in a more comprehensive evaluation should be explicitly discussed.

The methods refer to a literature far from the one of risk assessment and information. The authors cite an approach already common in other contexts, without giving details about it. It's highlighted that such an approach has not been applied to the risk information context, but it should be made clearer where the innovation stands (e.g. adaptation of the approach, identification of proper indicators, identification of sections of the document to be analyzed).

The sources for providing the definition of the indicators and defining their milestones, the authors indicate that several sources can be used. Although, a clear indication of which specific sources have been used for each indicator should be provided at least as supplement material.

Among such sources, the authors indicate a database with about fifty DICRIMs as potential sources for extrapolating the structure of the indicators [page 8, lines 207-209]. The approach is not very clear, and it can give the idea that they are based on the average scores or description of the analyzed documents. If this is the case, the specific indicator would not describe the suitability of the document, but only its ranking.

Still referring to the database of the DICRIMs, it's not clear if these are the documents used for the verification phase, thus not allowing a proper evaluation of the soundness of such a phase.

When introducing the groups of experts involved in different phases, the indication of each one's years of experience is a bit funny; it could be preferable to have a general description of the criteria adopted for selecting them.

A section dedicated to the description of the potential use of such indicators/indexes is lacking, with a focus of different potential uses for the synthetic index or the indexes relevant to the single components. In fact, it's not clear the usefulness at municipal level of one synthetic index summarizing all the evaluations.

The proposed approach makes use of a huge set of indicators (114) for the evaluation of a single document. Considering also that readability and legibility shouldn't be the only elements taken into account when evaluating the suitability of the document for informing the public, this high number of required evaluations could be detrimental for the use of the approach. Please discuss this in the new section (see previous comment); it could be helpful to have the indication of the mean time required for compiling the indicators for one DICRIM.

Page 3, line 68. The title is a bit misleading, please change with something more focused on the effectiveness of communication (e.g. Effective communication in risk management).

Page 5, line 125. Please introduce the regulatory reference defining the list of 11 mayor risks that may affect a municipality.

Page 6, Figure 3. The picture is a bit unclear. Shouldn't the definition of corrective actions follow a step of evaluation of the indicators for the specific DICRIM? Please clarify and/or modify the picture.

Pages 13 and 14, tables 4 and 5. The two grids refer to the same detection element, but there's no reference to the specific component they are linked to; adding the component could help the reader in interpreting the table.

Page 13, table 4. Please clarify "form 10" in the caption.