



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR &
ADMINISTRATIVE RECONSTRUCTION
GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR CIVIL
PROTECTION

Civil protection in Greece International Assistance Future Perspectives

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Civil protection in Greece

Basic legislation

- Law 2344/95
 - Founding of the General Secretariat for Civil Protection
- Law 3013/02
 - Improvement of Civil Protection
- Ministerial Decision 1299/03
 - General Civil Protection Plan “Xenokratis”
- Ministerial Decision 3384/06
 - Supplementation of the “Xenokratis” Plan with the Special Plan for “Human Losses Management”

Civil protection in Greece

Definitions (Law 3013/02 and “Xenokratis” Plan)

- Civil protection aims to protect the life, health and property of citizens from natural and technological disasters that cause emergencies in peacetime. In the same context is included the ensuring of material and cultural goods, natural resources and the country's infrastructure, in order to minimize the effects of disasters
- Destruction means any rapid or slow evolution natural phenomenon or technological event in land, sea and airspace, which causes widespread adverse effects on humans and on the human or natural environment
- Risk means the likelihood of a natural phenomenon or technological incident or other disaster combined with the intensity of disasters that may cause to people, goods, the natural resources and infrastructure in a region

Civil protection in Greece

Definitions (Law 3013/02 and “Xenokratis” Plan)

- General destruction: a destruction that affects more than three regions of the country
- Low intensity regional disaster: a disaster, for responding to which resources and means of the region's civil protection suffice
- High intensity regional disaster: a disaster, for responding to which it is necessary to deploy resources and civil protection means from other regions or from central and decentralized agencies and entities

Civil protection in Greece

Definitions (Law 3013/02 and “Xenokratis” Plan)

- Low intensity local disaster: a disaster, for responding to which resources and civil protection means within the prefecture level (Regional Unit) suffice
- High intensity local disaster: a disaster, for responding to which it is necessary to deploy resources and civil protection means from other prefectures, Regions or from central and decentralized agencies and entities

Civil protection in Greece

Civil protection Authorities and Institutions

- Central and decentralized Authorities
- Local Government Authorities (both levels, local and regional)
- Public Agencies/ public utilities (Public Power Corporation, Hellenic Telecommunications Organization, National Meteorological Service, Earthquake Planning and Protection Organization, National Center for Emergency Care)
- Hellenic Fire Corps
- Hellenic Coast Guard
- Hellenic Police
- Hellenic Armed Forces
- Civil protection personnel at central, regional and local level
- Civil protection voluntary organizations

Civil protection in Greece

The decentralized system of civil protection in Greece

- Civil protection institutions at central level
 - Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction
 - General Secretariat for Civil Protection
- Civil protection institutions at decentralized level
 - Decentralized Administrations of Greece
- Civil protection institutions at local level
 - Regions/ Regional Units
 - Municipalities

Civil protection in Greece

The role of the General Secretariat for Civil Protection

- Study, design, organize and coordinate actions aiming at disaster prevention, preparedness and response to natural, technological and other disasters or emergencies
- Information/ public awareness
- Treatment of all phases of preparation, mobilization and coordination of civil protection actions
- The central contact point of Greece with other countries within and outside the EU and international organizations for civil protection

Civil protection in Greece

The civil protection volunteer organizations

Basic foundation: Article 5 paragraph 1 of the Constitution

- The creation of the Civil Protection Volunteers System reflects the willingness of the State to follow the needs of the era for the organization of society in networks and to highlight the potential effectiveness of voluntary organizations when intervening in cases of emergency
- The task of the civil protection volunteers is to provide assistance to the responsible government agencies in their mission to protect life, health and property of citizens from natural and man-made hazards in peacetime
- The civil protection volunteer organizations registry and the specialized civil protection volunteers registry

International assistance

Legal basis: Article 27 paragraph 2 of Law 3536/07

The request of governmental agencies for assistance from other authorities, services and agencies either domestic or foreign, in order to respond to any kind of disaster is submitted exclusively via the General Secretariat for Civil Protection

- The GSCP may receive a request for assistance in cases of emergency, either through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, either by international organizations or directly from third countries following an activation of a bilateral international agreement
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is informed and, depending on the request, the competent entities, that are in place to render the assistance
- If there the request can be met, the requesting institution/ country is informed
- If the offered assistance is accepted by the requesting country, the mission is organized to the place indicated by it

International assistance

General rules and procedures

- The requesting country is responsible for the management, administration and logistics of foreign intervention teams and rescue teams and reserves the right to stop the actions of intervention teams at any time
- Host Nation Support: Any action taken at the phases of preparedness and response by a country which is receiving or sending assistance to remove foreseeable obstacles in the international assistance. It includes support to facilitate the transportation of assistance through land borders

International assistance

The means of international assistance

- The European Union - Union Civil Protection Mechanism
- International organizations (especially NATO, UN)
- Bilateral and multilateral international agreements in the civil protection field containing provisions for mutual assistance in case of natural and technological disasters
- Financial issues
 - In principle the requesting country is responsible to cover the costs of international assistance – it may be decided otherwise
 - Special rules apply for the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

International assistance

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism

- Article 196 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union - the highest legal recognition of the role of civil protection
- Decision 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism
 - Council Decision 2001/792/EC, Euratom of 23 October 2001 establishing a Community mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions
 - Council Decision 2007/779/EC, Euratom of 8 November 2007 establishing a Community Civil Protection Mechanism
 - Council Decision 2007/162/EC, Euratom of 5 March 2007 establishing a Civil Protection Financial Instrument

International assistance

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism

- The main framework for cooperation and provision of assistance in case of emergencies both inside and outside EU
- When national capacities are overwhelmed by a disaster
- Central coordinating role of European Commission (DG ECHO)
- Scope: all natural and man-made disasters including consequences of terrorist acts
- Protection primarily of people, but also the environment and property, including cultural heritage
- Participating States – EU 28 plus Norway, Iceland, Montenegro, FYROM, Serbia, Turkey

International assistance

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism – Actors

- European Commission/ DG ECHO/ B1 Unit/ European Emergency Response Coordination Center (Brussels)
- Participating States
- National 24/7 contact points appointed by the participating countries
- CECIS (Common Emergency Communication and Information System): the online platform of communication – restricted access
- Modules: civil protection teams registered to CECIS by the participating countries to be employed if offered
- The European Emergency Response Capacity “voluntary pool”
- Experts
- Other international organizations: United Nations, International Organization for Migration, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

International assistance

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism - Procedures

- Activation of the Mechanism – impending or occurred disaster
- Actions before possible activation (pre alerts, dissemination of information)
- Request for assistance through CECIS – templates
- Offer of assistance through CECIS and acceptance by the requesting state – templates

International assistance

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism – Greece's participation

- General Secretariat for Civil Protection is the single focal point for Greece for submission of requests for assistance
- The Unified Operations Coordination Center/ Civil Protection Operations Center (24/7 contact point)
- Greek modules: 9 modules
 - Hellenic Air Force (aerial forest fire fighting), Hellenic Fire Corps (medium search and rescue, ground forest fire fighting), EKAB (aerial evacuation, medical posts), Hellenic Atomic Energy Commission (CBRN investigation)
- Activations of EUCP Mechanism from Greece (indicatively): 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016
- Assistance provided by Greece through the Mechanism (indicatively): 2004 (Indonesia), 2005 (Portugal), 2009 (Albania), 2011 (Cyprus), 2016 (Cyprus, Albania)
- Exercises
- Trained experts

International assistance

United Nations Organization

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)

- The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) - A platform for the development of standards for SAR teams and the coordination of international operations
- The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination team (UNDAC) - It can be deployed within 12-24 hours of the disaster or emergency for information collecting, needs assessment and international assistance coordination
- The On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) - Operated by UNDAC and helps local authorities to coordinate international aid - Manages the exchange of information throughout the course of operations between the authorities and the organizations providing assistance through the virtual OSOCC
- Environment Standby Experts - Act within the United Nations Environment Programme and in case of environmental disasters in the same context with the UNDAC

International assistance

NATO

Its role in emergency management

- The Civil Emergency Planning Committee (CEPC) provides guidance on policy and planning in the event of emergencies, humanitarian crises and for specific issues
- Civil Protection Group (CPG): Established in 1951, as the Civil Defence Committee (CDC)
Its main objective is to coordinate Member States' actions in the field of civil protection and meets in different configurations (Allied/EAPS) involving, in principle, national representatives
- The civil experts network
A set of experts (NATO civil experts) support the work of groups providing advice and responding to crises management, emergency consequences and protection of critical infrastructures

International assistance

NATO

Its role in emergency management - The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre EADRCC

- Established in 1998 at the Headquarters of NATO
- It is responsible for the coordination of Member States' response to a disaster in close cooperation with UN OCHA
- It has developed the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Unit (EADRU) – it consists of staff and resources, which Member States have determined that they can deploy upon request of assistance to a country affected by a major disaster
- It is a 24/7 point of contact for the coordination of NATO Allies and Partners in disaster relief and response in cases of emergency upon request of the affected country
- It transfers any request for assistance to NATO and Associated Countries, which inform on their ability to offer the assistance the Centre and/ or the affected country

International assistance

Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

- Launched in 1992
- It is based in Istanbul with Member States Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine
- Working Group on Cooperation In Emergency Assistance – Greece is represented by GSCP
- Ad hoc Working Group on Massive Forest Fires – Greece is represented by GSCP
- Ad hoc Working Group on Seismic Risk – Greece is represented by EPPO
- Ad hoc Working Group on Floods and Torrents – Greece is represented by GSCP

International assistance

Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

Its role in emergency management

- Primary role of the Working Group and the Subgroups is mainly the exchange of views and good practices and mutual information in the management of emergencies, the cooperation in the fields of disaster prevention, preparedness and contingency planning
- The Member States have registered points of contact, including ones on 24/7 basis, for emergency notification and coordination
- A Member State may submit through BSEC a request for assistance in cases of emergency
- BSEC does not have an emergency coordination center

Future perspectives

Humanitarian crises

- The involvement of civil protection authorities to humanitarian crises interventions no new phenomenon

But:

- Growing number and intensity of humanitarian crises that combine with disasters, mainly natural but also man-made
- Differences between humanitarian and civil protection interventions (scope, communication platforms, duration of missions, mentality)
- The refugee crisis
- First ever activation of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism for a humanitarian crisis within the EU

Future perspectives

Security threats/ terrorism

- Volatile international security situation
- The growing volume and unpredictability of terrorism
- Difference in response times
- Coordination issues especially among civil protection authorities, health sector and police
- Difficulties in communications in the immediate aftermath of terrorist attacks
- Difficulties in public awareness raising/ the need to avoid panic

Future perspectives

The role of private sector

- Growing involvement of private sector in disaster risk reduction
- Risk assessments/ stakeholders
- Disaster loss and damage data bases
- The financing/ insurance sector
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030
- Other non governmental stakeholders
- Confidentiality issues

Future perspectives

Climate change

- No new phenomenon

But:

- Integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction
- Risk assessments
- Already existing civil protection plans
- Future planning
- Disasters occur in countries that are unfamiliar with
- Special needs of some countries
- Integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction into the wider sustainable development policies

Future perspectives

Budgetary restrictions

- Financial crisis
- Budget cuts
- The shrinking of public sector
- Shortages on material/ vacancies in personnel
- Competing ministerial demands
- Restrictions in outsourcing methods
- More pressure to donor countries



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Thank you for your attention!