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# Health strategies for fighting heat waves in Central Macedonia, Greece



3<sup>rd</sup> Regional Health Authority

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# Xenokrates initiative

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The civil protection programme “Xenokrates” was created to serve the needs of the Athens Olympic Games in 2004.

It constitutes the planning and activation basis of the governmental mechanism for the management of emergency cases resulting from natural phenomena, including heat-waves, in all levels of administration.

# Description

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This programme defines the involved services and actors, as well as the directing and coordinating bodies of Civil Protection Forces for the organization and the implementation of its actions.

# Description

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Following the request of the General Secretariat for Civil Protection, working groups have been created within the Ministries of Health, Internal Affairs and Defense in order to plan and implement specific project for different kinds of natural phenomena (earthquakes, forest fires, heat-waves etc).

# Aims of the programme

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- 1) Creation of a system for the effective management of catastrophic phenomena and for the protection of the environment and the protection of the citizens' life, health and property.
- 2) Identification of involved services, actors and bodies that direct and coordinate the operational forces in all levels.
- 3) Submission of important data for the estimation of particular circumstances, the evaluation of risks, the identification of places at risk and the implementation of projects.

# Aims of the programme

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- 4) Design guidelines for: strategic planning, organization and equipment of involved services, identification of operational basis, coordination of human resources and means of intervention.
- 5) Logistics for the management of challenges within the operational forces and the affected population.
- 6) Creation of a communication system and information flow among all the involved services in the field of crisis management

# Levels of emergency preparedness

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- 1) White level: standard operational status.
- 2) Green: recall of the personnel on leave.
- 3) Yellow: convening of Emergency Committee Plenary.
- 4) Red: All services in position: all levels of administration, health care personnel and services.

# Application of Xenokrates in heat-wave cases

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- 1) Full coverage by air-conditioning units of all hospital rooms, backed up by fans to break-up "cold-fields" and mix the room air properly.
- 2) Full coverage by air-conditioning units of specified "reception areas", backed up by fans to break-up "cold-fields" and mix the room air properly. Reception areas function during heat waves as shelters for the general population.
- 3) Recall of all personnel on leave to active duty.

# Application of Xenokrates in heat-wave cases

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- 4) Early stockpiling of intravenously delivered rehydration and other relevant pharmaceuticals.
- 5) Suspend all non-emergency admissions
- 6) Discharge all dischargeable patients under the age of 50
- 7) Ensure the abundant availability of ice, ice packs etc.
- 8) Regular reminding through public broadcasts to citizens to be on the alert to notify authorities of persons in need

# Added value of the Xenokrates programme

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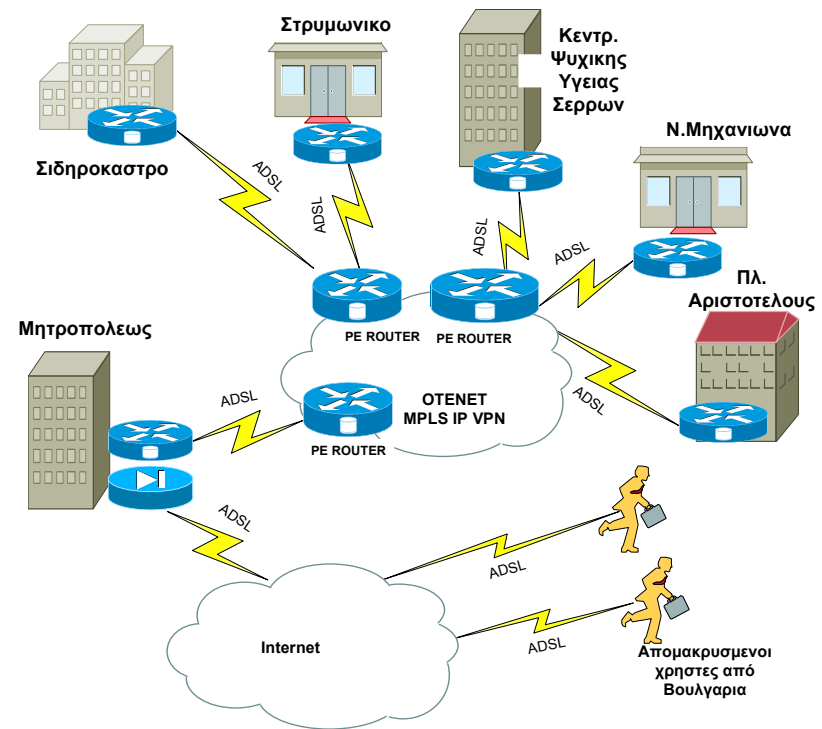
- ❖ The application of the Xenokrates programme on European level presupposes the certification under European standards.
- ❖ A quality assurance procedure is needed for implementing the programme as a best practice in European countries dealing with heat-wave problems.

# Best practices of cross-border cooperation

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- ❖ As of October 2006, a **Virtual Private Network (VPN) network**, dedicated to the exchange of a patient's minimum medical emergency data set (MMEDS), has been set up across the Greek Bulgarian border.
- ❖ It enables healthcare operators to better serve citizens of either country that voluntarily store their MMEDS on the network. Citizens store their MMEDS to ensure its availability to treating physicians irrespective of where they happen to be, when in need, and irrespective of the native language, since MMEDS are stored in either Bulgarian or Greek and English.
- ❖ The novelty of the system is that **it allows its citizen-clients to utilize their mobile phone to gain access to their MMEDS in case of an emergency** so that doctors can treat them better taking into account their condition and current medication regime.

# Best practices of cross-border cooperation





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# **THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION**

For comments and questions,  
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