

Hellenic National Water Safety Program: Prestigious Organizations Support the Secretariat General of Public Health -Ministry of Health



HELLENIC NATIONAL WATER SAFETY PROGRAM

Εθνικό Πρόγραμμα Ασφάλειας στο Νερό



The "Hellenic National Water Safety Program" was launched by the Secretariat General of the Ministry of Health. A Chance for Children Foundation that was founded by the Creator of Baywatch, the International Swimming Hall of Fame, the Princess Charlene of Monaco Foundation, the International Awards Giuseppe Sciacca, the Hellenic CDCP, the National School of Public Health, the Hellenic Federation of Underwater Activity, the Pan-Hellenic Union of Qualified Sport Scientists and the Union of Greek Athletes with Extraordinary Achievements, support the program to raise public water safety and lifesaving sport awareness.

Drowning and other aquatic injuries represent a serious public health problem worldwide. In Greece, more than 400 people lose their lives annually by drowning. Also, several accidents take place due to other causes (e.g., permanent paralysis after a spinal injury due to diving, a serious injury or death after collision of a bather with a power boat etc).

As part of the National Plan for Accident Prevention, the Secretariat General of Public Health at the Ministry of Health (SGPH), launched the "**National Water Safety Program**". Its aims are to preserve the public health from aquatic injuries by raising awareness on water safety and lifesaving sport (see sportlifesaving.blogspot.gr). The program includes 8 educational modules (that lead to a certificate upon successful completion), educational material for summer camps and other organizations, poster, leaflet, and a public statement announcement. The program is available [HERE](#):

<http://www.moh.gov.gr/articles/ethniko-programma-asfaleias-sto-nero/hellenic-national-water-safety-program>

The program that was launched by the SGPH of the Ministry of Health, is supported by 10 organization who commented. **Yiannis Baskozos (Secretary General of Public Health - Ministry of Health)**, said: *"For first time, Greece organizes a national program with zero cost, that aims to fight the aquatic injuries, having the support of international organizations. The Secretariat General aims to serve as the guarantor of aquatic safety this summer"*. **Greg Bonann** (Creator of the TV series **Baywatch** and Co-Founder with Tai Collins of **A Chance for Children Foundation**), added: *"Stathi, we thank you for all your hard work. Our Foundation endorses your efforts to promote water safety and drowning prevention. Thank you!"* **Dr. Vicky Bafataki** (Secretary General, **International Awards Giuseppe Sciacca**), said: *"With this National Program, Greece contributes to the fight against drowning. This initiative should have been taken a long time ago. Congratulations!"* The Princess Charlene of Monaco Foundation that was founded by **H.S.H. Princess Charlene**, added: *"The Princess Charlene of Monaco Foundation is pleased to support actions which aim is to promote water safety programmes. Its primary objective is to save lives by fighting against drowning. Its missions are to raise public awareness about the dangers of water, teach children preventive measures and how to swim. Efforts to carry this struggle must continue unabated."* **Bruce Wigo** (President/CEO, **International Swimming Hall of Fame**), said: *"We endorse the effort to fight drowning in Greece."* **Dr. Thanasis Giannopoulos** (President, **Hellenic CDCP**), underlined: *"It is part of our mission to be on the front line for everything that involves accident prevention and I believe that this program will help the reduction of drowning. The various activities of the program will raise public awareness."* **Prof. Alkis Vatopoulos** (Dean **National School of Public Health**), added: *"It is impossible for a naval country like Greece to lack a National Program. Our School supports its activities and believes that they will contribute to the preservation of public health."* **Dr. Michales Vlastarakos** (President, **Pan-Hellenic Union of Medical Doctors**), said: *"We respond with pleasure in this effort to promote your activities."* **Vaggelis Rakantas** (President **Hellenic Federation of Underwater Activity**), said: *"Safety is prerequisite for everything we do. Through lifesaving sport, we will make sure that people will learn how to be safe."* **Dr. Nikos Tripodis** (President **Pan-Hellenic Union of Qualified Physical Educators**), said: *"Such initiatives are necessary to guarantee safety in our country."* **Mrs. Marina Toutountzi** (President **Union of Greek Athletes with Extraordinary Achievements**), reported: *"This wonderful effort will teach us to respect the water so we can enjoy it safely."*

Scientific Creator of the program is, **Stathis Avramidis**, PhD, Advisor of Accident Prevention-Health Education (SGPH-Ministry of Health), employee of the Hellenic CDCP and Director of Lifesaving Sport **EOYΔΑ**: *"Bob Burnside, world winner recipient of the Paragon Water Safety Award at the International Swimming Hall of Fame, had told me that if we could dream something, we can do it. He was right... Greece got a National Program! The prestige of the Greek and international organizations that support it, make it illustrious. I thank the scientific committee that approved it, the 'Baskozos team' and the organizations that will implement it."*

Watch here the video of the program: "[Greek](#) Beware of Drowning".

Information: Stathis Avramidis, PhD, elagreece@gmail.com.