

## A. Regulatory Basis

The most important legal act regulating the rules of conduct and obligations of institutions, businesses and citizens is the Disaster Protection Act from December 2006, amended almost every year since then - the latest amendments are from 20.02.2015 (<http://www.mi.government.bg/bg/library/zakon-za-zashtita-pri-bedstviya-304-c25-m258-2.html>). It regulates the issues of organization and interaction among institutions at a local, regional and national level and outlines in general the structure of the departments responsible for disaster response, uniting their efforts and building a hierarchically structured Integrated Rescue System.

*Article 16 of the Law says:*

*(2) Main knowledge for the risks of disasters and the ways of behaviour and action shall be ensured upon the education for acquisition of elementary education, and knowledge for protection corresponding of the profile and the specialization of the education – upon the education for acquisition of secondary and university education.*

*(3) The Minister of Education, Youth and Science after coordination with the Minister of Interior shall approve programmes for education, teaching materials and aids for the kindergartens and the schools and plans for education and preparation in case of disasters of the managing staff and the teachers in the system of the national education.*

There are a number of regulations that complement and build upon the issue on an institutional level. Particularly the rules for conducting evacuations are described in the REGULATION of the procedure of conducting evacuation and deconcentration - SG. 103 of 28/12/2012 and adopted by Decree of CM Nr. 337 from 20.12.2012. According to the Regulation (Article 9) evacuation plans for all types of disasters have to be developed in advance at a municipal, regional and national level, and each plan has to describe in detail scenarios, routes, vehicles, responsible officials, necessary provisions and others.

Art. 27. (1) states that "the evacuation of children, the sick and the elderly is a priority". This implies the need for specific preparation of the vulnerable groups - and especially the children, which is regulated in Instruction Nr. 2 from July, 5th 2004 of the Ministry of Education and Science for preparation and training of children, teaching, administrative and support staff in kindergartens for safe behavior in disasters, accidents, crashes and fires - Article 5 to Article 9. (<http://www.kadedaucha.com/?id=1316&aid=994>)

According to the abovementioned regulations each school has to provide a detailed training plan and conduct training evacuations, which are supervised by the National Service "Fire Safety and Protection of Population", by the local municipality, as well as the police. Each school keeps a record of conducted training evacuations.

## **B. Emergency planning**

The main part of the prevention process is devoted to adequate emergency planning.

DG Fire Safety and Civil Protection develop the National disaster protection plan, which includes plans for:

- Floods;
- Earthquakes;
- Snow storms;
- Petrol products spill;
- Fires;
- Industrial accidents;
- Nuclear accidents;
- Biological contamination;
- Terrorist acts.

DG Fire Safety and Civil Protection conducts trainings on external programs (volunteers, units of the Integrated Rescue System, experts from Headquarters for coordination in case of disasters), trainings of the population, organizes and conducts national and international exercises and scientific and methodological activities.

Municipalities develop plans for disaster protection.

As of 09.2008 Bulgaria has a modern nationwide System for early warning and announcement in case of disaster. The system has 2 subsystems:

- Subsystem 1 for notification of authorities and Single Life-Saving Integrated Rescue System squads in case of disaster- with a capacity of up to 28 000 officials with a possibility to include all managerial levels - from the President to the lowest local level.
- Subsystem 2 (The Siren system) for early warning and notification of the population, which covers 30% of the population of the country and 5% of its territory - the ten biggest cities.

A big constraint is that 70% of the population and 90% of the territory of the country still use the old early warning and announcement system

## **C. The National Program for disaster protection – main accents**

- The education is carried out in several forms: class system (in a special weekly period dedicated to the class), after class and extracurricular activities.
- The education model is based on modern methodology using interactive forms, methods and means.
- Ensuring and expanding the possibilities for education of people with disabilities and chronic diseases.

## **D. Training in the public education system**

School curricula, education material and relevant trainings include disaster risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices as part of the national educational curriculum for primary, secondary and higher education.

Teacher's books contain methodology for effective and modern methods for education on disaster protection. There are Teacher's books for every stage of education – elementary, secondary and high school.

### **Training at kindergartens**

In kindergarten disaster protection training is delivered in the 2nd and 3rd kindergarten group (4 and 5 year olds), as well as preschool (6 y olds), and is provided for according to a statutory instrument issued by the Ministry of Education and Science (Instruction No. 2 dated 5 July 2004 on the Preparation and Training of Children, the Teaching, Administrative and Auxiliary Staff in Safe Behaviour in the Event of Disasters, Accidents, Catastrophes and Fires).

The training programmes, training materials and aids for kindergartens and schools, as well as plans for training and preparation for disaster protection for the managerial staff and teachers in the public education system are endorsed by the Minister of Education and Science after consultation with the Minister of MI (Article 16 (3)) of the Disaster Protection Act.

The program for preparation for action during disasters, accidents, emergencies and fires for children under school age from national, regional, private and foreign kindergartens includes:

- “Earthquake – behavioral rules” (III Group);
- “Familiarizing with the work of specialists protecting people from natural disasters”;
- “Expanding children’s perception of the work of specialists protecting people from natural disasters. Earthquake – behavioral rules”.

### **Training in the basic and secondary education system**

Training in disaster protection in the basic and secondary education system in the Republic of Bulgaria is statutorily regulated by the Disaster Protection Act. According to Article 16 (1) of the Disaster Protection Act, training in disaster protection and in providing first paramedical aid is provided in the public education system and universities. The training for attainment of basic education provides basic knowledge of the disaster risks and appropriate modes of behaviour and action, while the training for attainment of secondary and higher education provides knowledge of protection corresponding to the profile and specialty of study.

Disaster protection training in the public education system (the schools) is delivered according to an instruction endorsed by the Minister of Education and Science in 2002, which provides for training extending over 5 academic hours annually. This study time also includes two all-school drills for implementation of the school disaster protection plan.

#### **Educational materials:**

- for children in kindergarten - a coloring book "About the disasters – main rules for kids", containing 10 rules for reaction in case of different disasters as well as educational boards and maps.
- educational boards and posters for children in secondary school.

#### **Extracurricular forms of disaster protection training**

The National Training Centre organises supplementary extracurricular forms, in which children and young people learn the rules and actions for behaviour in the event of disaster.

The following are traditionally organised and held every year:

- Contest for Schoolchildren "Disaster and Accident Protection"

A contest for schoolchildren "Disaster and Accident Protection" takes place in a different town of Bulgaria each May. The principal object of the contest is to test the level of knowledge, skills and habits of action in the event of disasters and accidents, acquired in the course of study, as well as to motivate the contestants and the audience to prepare further for response to emergency situations. Twenty-eight teams enter the contest, one from each administrative region in Bulgaria, which, after a heated competition at the municipal and regional level, reach the final stage. The contest is divided into a theoretical and practical part.

The theoretical part includes a test of the contestants' knowledge of the subjects studied within the syllabus of action in the event of disasters, accidents and catastrophes for 1st - 8th graders. The individual test is taken by all contestants. Their scores on the test form the arithmetic mean for the team. The object of the practical part is to check the contestants' knowledge, practical skills, agility and resourcefulness through competitive games.

- National Children's Drawing Competition "MISSION: RESCUER"

National competition for children's drawings MISSION RESCUER, held together with the Ministry, of Education and Science, National Palace of Children and the International competition MISSION RESCUER, held under the auspices of EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement.

The National Children's Drawing Competition "MISSION: RESCUER" is organised at an exceedingly high level and enjoys great popularity with children attending all schools countrywide. Thematically, the competition covers the content studied in secondary school on action in the event of disaster and accident, giving first aid, self-aid and mutual aid.

Taking part are children from across the country aged 6 to 18, regardless of social status, divided into three age groups and categories. Essentially, the children's drawings are based

on the preparedness and adequate response to emergency situations and focus on the image of the rescuers who fight disasters on a daily basis, help the victims and save human lives.

## **E. Other forms of training**

### **Educational theatre**

For each school year, the National Training Centre plans a number of performances of the “educational theatre” that uses artistic means to teach essential knowledge of appropriate action in the event of disaster. These performances will consolidate and further develop the disaster protection knowledge, skills and habits covered by the compulsory syllabus for kindergartens and schools. They will be implemented within the framework of public-private partnership with Bulgarian theatre companies.

### **Website for children**

A website for children on the Internet was launched on May, 30<sup>th</sup> 2008. The idea is to use the IT revolution for a more interesting and attractive presentation of disaster protection training so that it can be more easily comprehended by children. The site is addressed to children aged 5 to 15, and the separate sections are geared to the age specifics of the intended users. In this way children can learn at home with the help of their parents and friends. The website will be evolving as a means of entertainment (various training logical and situation games will be developed and uploaded) and as an aid to the syllabi in the public education system.