

## P-1035 - LONG-TERM PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF A WILDFIRE DISASTER IN GREECE

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**Introduction:** Research across a range of disaster types has identified that psychological disturbances are common in the aftermath. The consequences of these disturbances can be long lasting.

**Objectives:** This study assessed the long-term mental health effects of a wildfire disaster which happen in a rural area of Greece in 2007.

**Aims:** a) to assess the course of psychopathology associated with the disaster, b) to evaluate if there are differences in psychological distress between victims and controls 3 years after the disaster.

**Methods:** The population for this cross-sectional study was a random sample of adult population (18-65 years old) of victims and controls who had been assessed 2½ years before. The measured variables were: a) demographics b) Symptom Checklist 90-Revised (SCL-90-R).

**Results:** 530 participants (301 victims and 229 controls). Attrition rate: 13.8%. Psychological distress was significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) lower 3 years after the disaster compared to initial assessments. However, victims of the wildfires still had more distress compared to controls. Similarly, the number of caseness (as it is defined by the SCL-90-R) was significantly higher in the victims' group compared to controls'. In contrast, there was a significant reduction of the rates of caseness in both victims and controls compared to initial assessments.

**Conclusions:** Most psychological problems decreased from the initial (6 months after the disaster) to the second survey (3 years after) among affected from the wildfires participants. Although their psychological problems decreased, victims still had more psychological problems (e.g. anxiety, somatisation, phobias) than the participants in the control group.