

PRESS RELEASE

Athens, April 24th 2025

The Waste Processing Unit in Messinia is now fully operational

The Waste Processing Unit in Kallirroï, Messinia, has officially entered commercial operation, marking the full implementation of the integrated, sustainable urban solid waste management system across the Peloponnese region.

The facility is part of the Peloponnese Region's Integrated Waste Management Project, implemented and operated by GEK TERNA Group. Representing a total investment of €167 million, the project includes three Waste Processing Units, the largest located in Arcadia (Palaiochouni), and the others in Laconia (Skala) and Messinia.

The Messinia unit processes 60,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste annually, significantly reducing the volume sent to sanitary landfills in alignment with both European and national strategy for circular economy.

In parallel, it generates "green energy" that is fed into the national power grid. The facility is estimated to produce 6,000 MWh of electricity annually sufficient to power approximately 1,500 households.

Utilizing state-of-the-art technology, the unit ensures a minimal environmental footprint while also reducing waste management costs for citizens.

The waste management unit was officially presented at a special event attended by the Minister of Environment and Energy, Mr. Stavros Papastavrou, the General Secretary for Waste Management Coordination, Mr. Manolis Grafakos, the Governor of Peloponnese Mr. Dimitris Ptochos, members of parliament, mayors and representatives of the Local Government.

"The total, now integrated project, creates a new reality in waste management in the Peloponnese, compared to 2019, when the Region of Peloponnese had only one legal landfill in operation and many illegal landfills, for which our country was paying fines to the European Union. In fact, at that time, 21 out of the 65 fines we paid for illegal landfills were related to the Peloponnese region. Today, there are 13 units operating in the country—three of them in the Peloponnese—while another 24 are under construction," emphasized Mr. St. Papastavrou during his speech, also highlighting that the project serves the entire population and visitors of the Peloponnese Region and is a Public-Private Partnership (PPP). He also noted that this is the result of a methodical and comprehensive effort made by the Government, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, and the Regional Authorities for waste management over the past six years. *"This is the culmination of a long-term strategy, primarily thanks to Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who inaugurated the Waste Management Unit in Arcadia in 2023. It is also due to my predecessors, with Mr. Th. Skylakakis inaugurating the second Unit in Laconia*

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exactly one year ago, in April 2024. The Regional Authorities and the Ministry of Environment and Energy officials played a crucial role, and it is thanks to their efforts that we have successfully reached this point. With infrastructures such as the one we are inaugurating today in Messinia, the country not only has the necessary conditions to meet the goals set by Europe for waste management but also enters a new virtuous cycle of waste management,” he concluded.

On his part, the Regional Governor of Peloponnese, Mr. Dimitris Ptochos, noted: *“The full operation of the unit in Kallirroï marks the completion of a large and difficult cycle for the Region of Peloponnese. We are definitively leaving behind a past associated with management weaknesses, environmental wounds, and unbearable fines. We are entering a new era where waste management is carried out with modern, flexible, and efficient methods, benefiting citizens and the environment. This infrastructure is much more than a technical project. It is a political tool, a means of protecting public health, and a driver for development. It is the result of strategic planning carried out with institutional continuity, consistency, transparency, and cooperation. And for that reason, it belongs to everyone who worked, contributed, and believed in its success. The Region of Peloponnese now has at its disposal the most modern waste management system in the country. And on this solid foundation, we can now plan the next step: strengthening recycling, adopting good and innovative practices, circular economy, even more ambitious environmental goals. Because the next day calls us to give value to what we build – with actions, knowledge, evidence, and continuous responsibility. In closing, I would like to warmly thank the Government, the Minister of Environment and Energy, Mr. Papastavrou, the Deputy Minister of National Economy and Finance, Mr. Papathanasis, and the former Minister of Environment and Energy, Mr. Skylakakis, for their contribution to the completion of the project.”*

The Chairman and CEO of GEK TERNA Group, Mr. Giorgos Peristeris, emphasized that with the full operation of the unit, a project of national importance is completed—one that places the Peloponnese at the forefront of sustainable waste management. *“We are proud to be delivering today the third unit of the project, completing this construction milestone. I thank Mr. D. Ptochos, Mr. St. Papastavrou, and Mr. N. Papathanasis, who supported the project. I would especially like to acknowledge the former leadership of the Ministry of Environment, Mr. K. Hatzidakis and Mr. Th. Skylakakis, the former regional administrations, Mr. P. Nikas and Mr. P. Tatoulis, the General Secretary for Waste Management Coordination Mr. M. Grafakos, the Regional Waste Management Body (FoDSA), and all those who contributed, despite the opposition. Of course, I would also like to thank Mr. M. Maragoudakis and Mr. G. Agrafiotis, who, representing TERNA ENERGY, managed to bring the project to this point. This is the second project of our Group to operate in an exemplary manner, following the one in Epirus, which won the award for Best Infrastructure Project of 2018. I thank you all warmly—employees, subcontractors, consultants—for your hard work and contribution to the project’s completion”,* said Mr. Peristeris.

On his part, the General Secretary for Waste Management Coordination, Mr. Manolis Grafakos, stated: *“The commencement of operations of the Waste Processing Unit in Messinia today clearly marks a new chapter for Greece in waste management. From 21 illegal landfills, we have moved to a comprehensive regional management system that serves as a model and guide for the entire country. When we took over in 2019, only 3 units were operational and 5 were under construction; today, 13 units are operational, while 24 are under construction. This project is not just infrastructure; it is a symbol of a new era with modern, sustainable solutions for the environment and local communities”.*

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Mr. Giannis Smyrniotis, President of the Peloponnese Regional Waste Management Authority (FoDSA), stated: *“The Peloponnese is now, from end to end, the cleanest region in Greece. Today, with the full operation of the waste management units in Arcadia, Laconia, and Messinia, along with the two Waste Transfer Stations in Argolida and Corinthia, the Region is entering a new era. Looking forward to the continuation of the fruitful cooperation with all European, national, and regional bodies—a cooperation that led to this outcome in the field of waste management, transforming our region from a laggard into a pioneer—we are confident that the Peloponnese, a region with overwhelming advantages not only on a Greek but also on a European level, will soon take the place it deserves. I thank all those who contributed to achieving today’s result, the completion of this emblematic project”.*

Speaking on the technical attributes of the facility, Mr. Charalampos Charalampidis, Director of Waste Projects at GEK TERNA Group, explained that the Messinia Waste Processing Unit integrates state-of-the-art technologies that are not only modern but also highly functional, sustainable, and innovative. *“The unit’s operations are monitored online in real time, ensuring full transparency, continuous control, and daily optimization from day one,”* he noted.

A Modern Waste Management Model for Peloponnese

The Integrated Waste Management Project positions Peloponnese as one of the most advanced regions in Europe in the field of solid waste management. With an annual processing capacity of 200,000 tonnes per year, the project is developed in three Subsections—Management Units of Peloponnese Region (Arcadia, Messinia, and Laconia) and includes three Integrated Waste Management System Units (IWMSUs), specifically:

- Three Waste Processing Units
- Three Sanitary Landfill Sites
- Two Waste Transfer Stations
- Road infrastructure upgrades that improve access to the WPU and WTSs.

The strategic sites of the Waste Processing Units, Sanitary Landfill Sites, and Waste Transfer Stations have been selected to ensure that waste reception points are located within 50 kilometers of the capital city of each regional unit, significantly minimizing transport distances for municipalities.

The project leverages cutting-edge technology, achieving minimal environmental and zero energy footprint. It covers the majority of Peloponnese Regional Waste Management Plan (PEWMP), operating in parallel with, and as a complement to, local municipal recycling-at-source schemes. Furthermore, it incorporates best practices in circular economy implementation.

During the construction phase, 800 jobs were created, while 200 people are employed in the 26-year operational phase of the units. This figure does not include indirect employment generated in the region through the project’s operation (e.g., transportation, recycling trade, staff accommodation, etc.).

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