



General data

POPULATION, 2023
10,405,588

PHYSICIANS / 1,000 INH, 2021
6.36

Socioeconomic data

COUNTRY INCOME LEVEL, 2022
High income

GDP PER CAPITA (US\$), 2023
23,400

HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% GDP), 2021
9.17

UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE, 2021
77



WHO FRAMEWORK FOR PALLIATIVE CARE DEVELOPMENT

- ④ EMPOWERMENT OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES
- ③ POLICIES
- ② RESEARCH
- ① USE OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES
- ⑥ EDUCATION AND TRAINING
- ⑤ PROVISION OF PC



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National Association: Hellenic Society for Pain Management and Palliative Care; Greek Society for Palliative Care.

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Report validated by consultants: Yes

Endorsed by National PC Association: Yes

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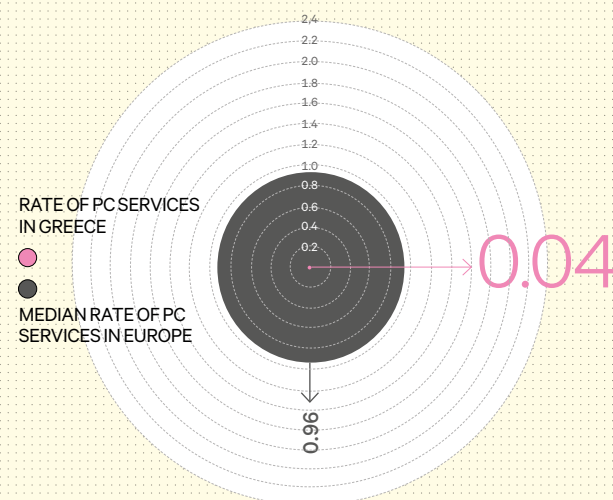
Greece

F Provision of PC (Specialised Services)

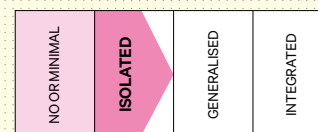
Total number of Specialised PC services **4**

Rate of PC services per 100,000 inhabitants **0.04**

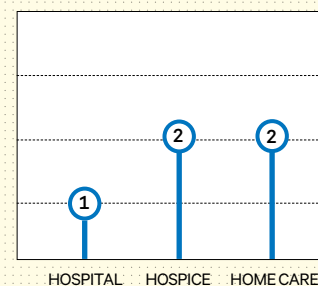
Greece in the context of European region



Geographic distribution and integration of PC services



Level of development of different types of PC services



Paediatric PC Services

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION AND INTEGRATION



TOTAL NUMBER

1



Greece

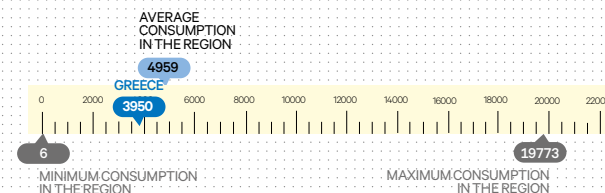
D Use of essential medicines



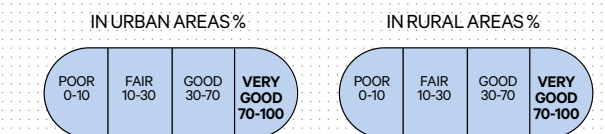
Opioids consumption (excluding methadone)

3,950
S-DDD/MILL INHABITANTS/DAY

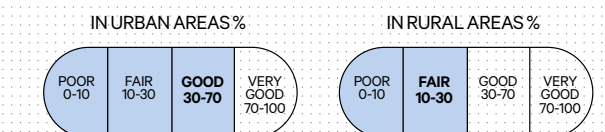
Greece in the context of European region



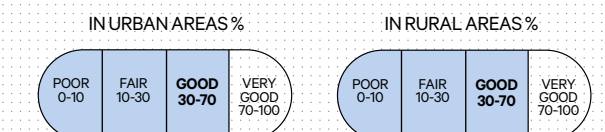
Overall availability of essential medicines for pain and PC at the primary level



General availability of immediate-release oral morphine at the primary level



General availability of different opioids and in different formulations at the primary level



C Research

PC-related research articles



Inclusion of PC topics in National Research Calls



Existence of PC congresses or scientific meetings



E Education & Training

Medical schools with mandatory PC teaching



0/7

Nursing schools with mandatory PC teaching



4/10

PC Full Professors



1

Recognition of PC specialty



B Policies

National PC plan or strategy



Responsible authority for PC in the Ministry of Health



Inclusion of PC in the basic health package at the primary care level



A Empowerment of people and communities



Groups promoting the rights of PC patients







Advanced care planning-related policies










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Ind1 Existence of groups dedicated to promoting the rights of patients in need of PC, their care-givers, and disease survivors.	 Existence of group(s) that cover palliative care in a more integrated way or over a wider range of disease/programme areas.	There are three professional associations: the Hellenic Society for Pain Management and Palliative Care, the Greek Society for Palliative Care, and the Greek Society for Pediatric Palliative Care. Other supporting organisations include the K.E.F.I, ELLOK, AgkaliaZO, Greek Patients Association, MDA Hellas. In 2022, the Greek Parliament approved the National Strategic Framework for the expansion of palliative care (Law 5007/2022). This law established a National Palliative Care Committee, appointed by the government, including a) Patient's Association representatives, b) university professors, c) Experts in palliative care. A Strategic Plan will be published by the Hellenic Ministry of Health. Despite progress, some challenges persist like fragmented advocacy efforts, a lack of social awareness about the palliative philosophy, its role in the care of patients with chronic diseases, and the patients' knowledge about the possibilities and benefits of palliative care.
Ind2 Is there a national policy or guideline on advance directives or advance care planning?	 There is no national policy or guideline on advance care planning.	There no national policy on advance directives or advance care planning; only a document on DNR orders issued by the National Bioethics Committee (a consulting body).
Ind3 3.1. There is a current national PC plan, programme, policy, or strategy. 3.2. The national palliative care plan (or programme or strategy or legislation) is a standalone.	 Actualized in last 5 years, but not actively evaluated or audited.  A national palliative care plan is in preparation.	The first comprehensive palliative care law appeared in 2022 (Law 5007/2022), including sections on types of services, levels of care, education, national patient registry, a committee to develop a national palliative care plan (pending) and reimbursement issues. Palliative care sections are included in the National Plan for Public Health 2021-2025, issued by the Ministry of Health (strategic framework n.3: tertiary prevention, e.g. p. 19, 37 etc), although only referring to cancer patients (and survivors). A National Committee was established in the context of the Greek Ministry of Health to become a consultation board for preparing a national plan on palliative care development and currently this plan is undergoing validation/approval process. The National Palliative Care Plan (with planned indicators to monitor progress) is expected to be published soon.



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3.3. There are indicators in the national plan to monitor and evaluate progress, with measurable targets.	 Not known or does not exist.	
Ind4 PC services are included in the list of priority services for Universal Health Coverage at the primary care level in the national health system.	 Palliative care is included in the list of health services provided at the primary care level in the General Health Law.	The law on primary care reform (2017) explicit mentions palliative care as part of the basic principles of primary care and hence the services (should be) provided on this level. Palliative care services are recognised as important within the framework of the Greek National Health System, particularly following the adoption of Law 4931/2022, which establishes their legal framework. However, palliative care services are not yet fully integrated as a priority within the list of services for universal health coverage (UHC) in Greece. The inclusion of palliative care in the UHC priorities depends on the implementation of a national action plan and the operational standards, which are still pending approval and activation by the Ministry of Health. Until these steps are finalized, the availability and prioritization of palliative care remain inconsistent across the system.
Ind5 5.1. Is there a national authority for palliative care within the government or the Ministry of Health?	 There is no authority defined.	Although the deputy MoH supports PC development, there is no other entity designated for this purpose but the National Committee for PC, in compliance to article 9 of the Law on PC (Law 5007/2022) and ministerial decree A1b/G.P. /23.10.2023. This serves an advisory role (no executive) and is responsible for proposals, monitoring the implementation of action plans, and promoting the development of PC. However, the committee does not function as a fully-fledged coordinating authority, and its role is primarily focused on strategic planning and guidance (e.g. preparing a "Feasibility study for PC"). In the National Plan for the Development of PC there is a proposal for the development of department of PC in the MoH, or a unit within the department of long-term care, for the organisation, coordination and evaluation of PC.
5.2. The national authority has concrete functions, budget and staff.	 Does not have concrete functions or resources (budget, staff, etc.).	








Ind6 Existence of congresses or scientific meetings at the national level specifically related to PC.	 At least one national conference specifically dedicated to palliative care every year, with multidisciplinary attendance.	There is an annual national (Pan-hellenic) conference since 1998, the Pan-Hellenic Congress on Regional Anaesthesia, Pain Management Palliative Care, organised by the Hellenic Society of Pain Management and PC. The different topics are mostly on pain management (pharmaceutical or intervention-al approaches, medically oriented). The programme includes workshops specially dedicated to PC. It is oriented to educate doctors, nurses, psychologists, and caregivers. The Hellenic Society of Pain Management and PC organizes educational scientific meetings. Paediatric content is seldom and it is addressed to physicians (anaesthesiologists) although other specialties, psychologists and nurses participate. The other two Scientific PC Associations, one for adults and one for children co-organize Paediatric PC Symposia, educational trainings, etc.
Ind7:1 Estimation of the level of peer-reviewed articles focusing on PC research published in any language in the past 5 years with at least one author from the country.	 Reflects a limited number of articles published.	
Ind7:2 Inclusion of PC topics in national research calls.	 There are no national research calls at all.	There are National Research calls issued by the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation but none specific. Research is funded privately, mostly for education or financial support of PC services provided by NGOs: 1) Transformational Leadership in PC, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, 2) Empowering parents and caregivers of children with chronic diseases, Bodossaki Foundation, and 3) Nosilia supported by the Leventis Foundation.
Ind8 Reported annual opioid consumption –excluding methadone– in S-DDD per million inhabitants per day.		<div data-bbox="697 1501 1320 1921"> <div> <div>3,950</div> <div>S-DDD PER MILLION INHAB /DAY</div> </div> <div>Average consumption of opioids, in defined daily doses (S-DDD) for statistical purposes 2020–2022.</div> <div>COUNTRY VS REGION</div>  <div> <div>4959</div> <div>AVERAGE CONSUMPTION IN THE REGION</div> </div> <div> <div>3950</div> <div>GREECE</div> </div> <div> <div>6</div> <div>MINIMUM CONSUMPTION IN THE REGION</div> </div> <div> <div>19773</div> <div>MAXIMUM CONSUMPTION IN THE REGION</div> </div> </div>

Ind9 9.1. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in Urban areas that have pain and PC medications as defined in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines. 9.2. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in rural areas that have pain and PC medications as defined in the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines.	 	<p>The only not available essential medications for palliative care are hyoscine, hydrobromide and cyclizine. Methadone is only available for treatment of drug abuse; not for pain management. Either way, according to some literature, “Greece lacks internationally comparable data on key health care indicators” as mentioned in State of Health in the EU · Greece · Country Health Profile 2019 or in the Health Systems in Transition Vol 17 No5, 2017.</p>
Ind10:1 10.1.1. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in urban areas that have immediate-release oral morphine (liquid or tablet). 10.1.2. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in rural areas that have immediate-release oral morphine (liquid or tablet).	 	<p>According to Law 3459/2006 and Law 4139/2013, pharmacies, hospitals, private clinics at urban areas are eligible to distribute oral morphine. Morphine is available only in liquid form in Greece; tablets are not available. The procedure for pharmacists to acquire morphine powder and prepare liquid solution is cumbersome, since they have to travel to specific government centres. However, they are obliged and patients can get their medication at a reasonable time interval. Oramorph, a commercially available morphine liquid is available in the market lately, but it is difficult to find. Furthermore, according to same laws, pharmacists and doctors serving in the national health care system are eligible to distribute liquid morphine. Presumably, the procedure must be more difficult in rural areas due to the distance factor.</p>
Ind10:2 10.2.1. Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in urban areas that have different opioids and in different formulations. 10.2.2 Percentage of health facilities at the primary care level in rural areas that have different opioids and in different formulations.	 	<p>The diverse strong opioids are not available in different formulations and dosages and the National Drug Formulary is outdated. Morphine tablets are not available; liquid morphine for p.o. administration and morphine injections are available. Fentanyl is the only opioid which is commercially available in different forms and dosages (injectable, patches of different dosages, sublingual tablets, lozenges, nasal spray). Oxycodone is available in tablets in combination with paracetamol and in liquid form. Buprenorphine is only available in patches of different doses. Tablets or sublingual formulations are not available for pain control. Hydromorphone is not available. Methadone is only available for treatment of drug abuse. Strong opioids commercially available in urban areas are equally available in rural areas.</p>

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<p>Ind11</p> <p>11.1. The proportion of medical schools with COMPULSORY teaching in PC (with or without other optional teaching)</p> <p>11.2. The proportion of medical schools with OPTIONAL teaching in PC.</p> <p>11.3. The proportion of nursing schools with COMPULSORY teaching in PC (with or without other optional teaching).</p> <p>11.4. The proportion of nursing schools with OPTIONAL teaching in PC.</p> <p>11.5. PC Full Professors</p> <p>11.6. Legislation/regulations concerning PC education</p>	<p>0/7</p> <p>2/7</p> <p>4/10</p> <p>3/10</p> <p>1</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p></p> <p>No medical school offers palliative care as a compulsory course. An optional lesson is taught since 1994 at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, named Management of non-malignant and malignant pain. Palliative Care of Terminally ill patients. Besides, in four nursing schools there is compulsory palliative care teaching, and in three an optional course: at the International University of Greece (Thessaloniki), at the University of Peloponnese, and at the University of Thrace. In the remaining three Universities of Ioannina, Patras and Sterea Ellada palliative care topics are part of other domains such as rehabilitation of the chronically ill patient, geriatrics, etc. There is one full professor (Doctor) in Palliative Medicine (emeritus) at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Medical School), and two nursing professors in the Nursing School of the same University. Besides, there is one professor at the Nursing Department of the Hellenic Mediterranean University.</p>
<p>Ind12</p> <p>Existence of an official specialisation process in palliative medicine for physicians, recognised by the competent authority in the country.</p>	<p></p> <p>There is no process on specialisation for palliative care physicians but exists other type of professional training diplomas without official and national recognition (i.e., advanced training courses or masters in some universities)</p>	<p>The Law on Palliative Care (Law 5007/2022) describes criteria for the education of professionals. Regarding doctors, the curriculum for a subspecialty programme needs to be defined. In the meantime, there is a 400-hour programme of theoretical and hands-on training available to PC professionals. Professionals with a postgraduate degree acquired nationally or abroad, or those already officially specialised, are considered specialists. Regarding paediatric Palliative Medicine, two paediatricians hold a relevant postgraduate degree and moreover, there is a Ministerial Decree (Γ6α/ Γ▲/16237/9.5.2022) defined the context of theoretical and clinical training of nurse trainees in the nursing specialty in Palliative and Supportive Nursing Care.</p>

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<p>Ind13</p> <p>13.1. There is a system of specialised PC services or teams in the country that has a GEOGRAPHIC reach and is delivered through different service delivery platforms.</p> <p>13.2. Are available in HOSPITALS (public or private), such as hospital PC teams (consultation teams), and PC units (with beds), to name a few examples.</p> <p>13.3. Free-standing HOSPICES (including hospices with inpatient beds).</p> <p>13.4. HOME CARE teams (specialised in PC) are available in the community (or at the primary Healthcare level), as independent services or linked with hospitals or hospices.</p> <p>13.5. Total number of specialised PC services or teams in the country.</p>	<p> Ad hoc/ in some parts of the country.</p> <p> Not at all.</p> <p> Ad hoc/ in some parts of the country.</p> <p> Ad hoc/ in some parts of the country.</p>	<p>There are four specialised palliative care programmes all in the area of Attiki, 2 provided by NGO organisations, two based on the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens: one in cooperation with another NGO and the other provided in the context of Pain and Palliative Care Outpatient Clinic of a University (of Athens) Hospital. Components of palliative care are also provided by most of the 57 Pain management Outpatient Clinics based on hospitals all over the country (though the majority provide rather general palliative care). Furthermore, private (adult) hospitals -few to date- are increasingly establishing palliative care outpatient clinics or offer palliative care to their hospitalised patients. Only one hospice exists in the country run by the Palliative Care NGO Galilee, covering some parts of the Attiki county, while there are three home care teams (1 for children and 2 for adult patients) all situated in the Attiki region. One Home Care Team for adults (certified by TuV Austria) in Attiki is offered free of charge by the Hellenic Society of Pain Management and Palliative Care; and further two are also free of charge.</p> <p>RATE OF SPECIALISED PC SERVICES/100,000 INH</p> <p>MEDIAN RATE IN THE REGION</p> <p>GREECE 0.04</p> <p>0.96</p> <p>0 1 2 3 4 5 6</p> <p>MINIMUM RATE IN THE REGION</p> <p>MAXIMUM RATE IN THE REGION 3.68</p> <p> ← SPECIALISED PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES</p>
<p>Ind14</p> <p>14.1. There is a system of specialised PC services or teams for children in the country that has geographic reach and is delivered through different service delivery platforms.</p> <p>14.2. Number of pediatric specialised PC services or teams in the country.</p>	<p> No or minimal provision of palliative care specialised services or teams for children exists in country.</p> <p> PPC TEAMS</p>	<p>Only one specialised service run by an NGO and another one is currently under preparation to run by the University of Athens Palliative Care Unit. Apart from the above NGO home palliative care program for children, components of palliative care are provided mainly in the context of paediatric oncology clinics.</p>