

Greece

Demographic information (Hellenic Statistical Authority, <http://www.statistics.gr>, Data from 2001)

- Inhabitants: 10,964,020
- No. of citizens 65+: 1,831,540
- No. of citizens 75+: 660,095
- No. of people with long-term care needs: estimated at approximately 338,000

Characteristics of health, social and long-term care delivery

Greece has a National Health System since 1984, which operates mainly at the secondary health care level, whilst primary care is provided by the health centres in rural areas and different social security funds in urban areas. Long-term care does not exist as an individual sector, but falls within the social care sector and consists of institutions that provide services and care to people with disabilities and other long-term illnesses. LTC in Greece is the primary responsibility of and provided mainly by the family, who use paid services when they are unable to provide the necessary hands-on care. Over the past decade, there has been increasing use of privately employed migrant care workers, although there has also been some increase in the use of private residential care. State/public services are supplied when the older person has no family support and low income and consist mainly of residential care and an expanding network of municipally run Help-at-Home services, although these have major funding problems. Church and NGO organisations also provide essential services (residential and home-care).

Background information on key-issues:

Prevention and rehabilitation in LTC

The percentage of older people in the Greek society, as in the rest of Europe, is getting higher and higher (WHO, 2009; Fujisawa and Colombo, 2009). Prevention, public health programs and care have

prolonged life, transferring the age of sickness to a later age (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). In 2007 the proportion of older than 65 years in the total population was 18.6% amounting to more than 2,082,000 inhabitants (Eurostat 2008). Life expectancy at birth, in Greece in 2008 is 79.52 years being one of the highest in Europe (WHO, 2008). Since 1998, the total number of residents aged 65 years exceeds the total population from 0 to 15 years. The leading causes of death of older people in Greece are cardiovascular and ischemic heart diseases, cancer and respiratory infections, whereas in the sixth position come injuries.

Long-term population projections for 2050 indicate a further increase in the proportion of older people in Greece, and a significant increase in the proportion of the population aged over 80 years estimating that 58.8% of the population of Greece is expected to be at retirement age in proportion to working age population in the year 2050, and 13.1% is expected to be over 80 years old (Huber, 2007).

[\(more ...\)](#)¹

The role of informal care in LTC

Greece, or the Hellenic Republic as it is officially called, lies at the southernmost end of the Balkan Peninsula, covering an area of 131.957 km² and bordered to the northwest by Albania, to the north by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and by Bulgaria, to the northeast by Turkey, to the east by the Aegean Sea, to the south by the Mediterranean Sea, and to the west by the Ionian Sea. Greece's topography is highly diverse. The numerous islands in the Aegean and Ionian Seas occupy about one-fifth of its territory and much of the land is mountainous and rugged, less than a fourth is lowland, and about one-fifth is forested.

Greece's population according to the 2001 census was 10,934,097, giving an overall population density of about 82,86 persons per km². The capital is Athens, with a population of about 3,894,573 documented citizens. During the 1990s there were substantial inflows from Albania (50% of all migrants), and other Eastern European countries e.g. Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and Russia. Other groups include Pakistani, Afghanistani, Bangladeshi etc., with total estimates being 200,000 for illegal migrants and approx 700,000 with some kind of legal residence permits and a further 150,000 in a grey area whose legal status is not clear. [\(more ...\)](#)¹

Governance and financing of LTC

Health care in Greece has historically developed into a multi-tier and mixed system of provision, a mosaic of public and private providers of services covering the members of occupational social insurance organizations. Health care provision is mainly focused on acute treatments, whereas preventive and primary care as well as supportive long-term care services are underdeveloped, with the latter until recently not being included in the concept of health provision but classed as social care. [\(more ...\)](#)¹

¹ This will then become a link to your national report.