



# MS in Greece



## WHAT IS MS?

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a complex neurodegenerative disease affecting approximately 21,000<sup>1</sup> of the 10.4 million<sup>2</sup> people in Greece.

Each person will experience this unpredictable disease differently, but common symptoms often include pain, fatigue, reduced mobility and cognitive dysfunction.

There is currently no cure for MS; however, optimal treatment and support have a significant effect on disease progression and quality of life for people with MS.



PAIN



FATIGUE



REDUCED MOBILITY

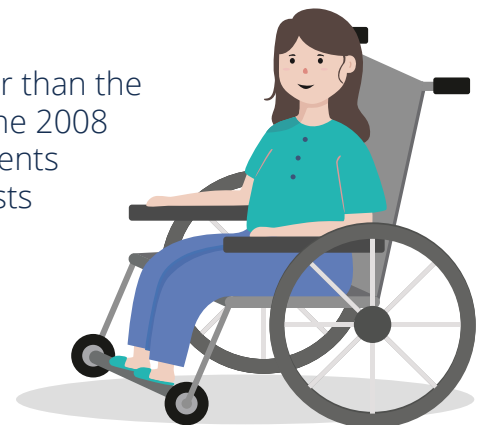


COGNITIVE DYSFUNCTION

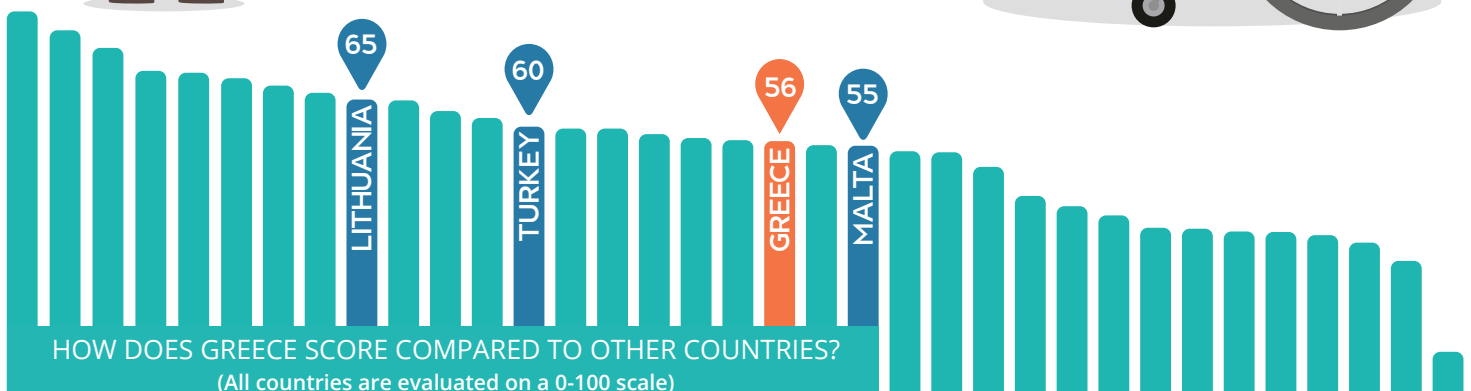
## COUNTRY CONTEXT

Healthcare provision in Greece is mixed – with coverage provided by a public national health service, a social insurance provider and private providers.<sup>3</sup>

Per person spending on healthcare is much lower than the European Union (EU) average, driven in part by the 2008 economic crisis. Accordingly, out-of-pocket payments for pharmaceuticals, nursing and private specialists can be significant.



COUNTRY RANKING





# WHAT DID THE BAROMETER FIND?

Greece has increased monthly access to physical rehabilitation, as well as providing good access to other types of rehabilitation in two MS-focused units in Athens and Thessaloniki. The government also provides full coverage of costs for approved and prescribed disease-modifying drugs (DMDs) and has recently approved two new DMDs for use. However, important gaps in care for people with MS persist:



**NO**  

MS DISEASE PLAN

There is no disease plan for MS.

**NO**  

NATIONAL MS REGISTRY

There is no national registry for MS.

**LIMITED** 

PUBLIC REHABILITATION FACILITIES

There are very limited public rehabilitation facilities and no MS centres outside of Athens and Thessaloniki.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

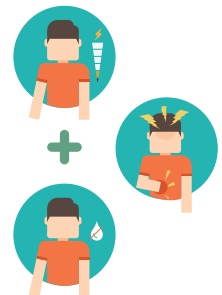


Develop a national neurological disease plan which includes a comprehensive approach to MS, with an adequate budget for implementation.



Establish publicly funded MS centres with full access to a multidisciplinary team and specialist rehabilitation in each region.

Expand disability assessments for people with MS to include invisible symptoms such as fatigue, pain and incontinence.



More information can be found at [www.emsp.org](http://www.emsp.org) or contact [info@gmss.gr](mailto:info@gmss.gr) and [poamskp@otenet.gr](mailto:poamskp@otenet.gr)

EMSP would like to thank the sponsors which have financially supported this project including Almirall, Biogen, Bristol Myers Squibb, MedDay, Merck, Mylan, Novartis, Roche, and Sanofi Genzyme. EMSP retains editorial control of the Barometer.



1. Bakirtzis C, Grigoriadou E, Boziki MK, et al. 2020. The Administrative Prevalence of Multiple Sclerosis in Greece on the Basis of a Nationwide Prescription Database. *Frontiers in Neurology*; 10:3389/fneur.2020.01012:  
2. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2019. *World Population Prospects 2019*, Online Edition. Rev. 1. Available from: <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/>  
3. OECD/European Observatory on Health Systems Policies. 2019. *Romania: Country Health Profile 2019. State of Health in the EU*, OECD Publishing, Paris/European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, Brussels