

EU Austerity Killing Greece. Report Shows Suicide, Infant Death, And Mental Illness On The Rise

By [Alex Christoforou](#)

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In its Monetary Policy Report 2015-2016, the Bank of Greece highlights what many Greeks already know, EU austerity demands is pushing the country towards a healthcare disaster.

The conclusions drawn in a chapter entitled “Reforms in health, economic crisis and impact on the health of population” confirm that the physical and mental health of Greeks is deteriorating.

Economic insecurity, high unemployment, decreasing income and constant stress are the personal struggles that many Greeks now live with. Personal income belt tightening is causing many patients to cut out necessary health care treatments, while shortages in government funds is resulting in general healthcare system shortages across the country.

[Keep Talking Greece](#) summarises [the BoG report](#) and its startling findings...

- Suicides increased. “The risk of suicidal behavior increases when there are so-called primary risk factors (psychiatric-medical conditions), while the secondary factors (economic situation) and tertiary factors (age, gender) affects the risk of suicide, but only if primary risk factors pre-exist.
- Infant mortality increased by nearly 50%, mainly due to increase of deaths of infants younger than one year, and the decline of births by 22,1%. Infant mortality increase: 2.65% in 2008 and 3.75% in 2014
- Increase of parts of population with mental illness, especially with depression. Increase: 3,3% in 2008 to 6.8% in 2009, to 8.2% in 2011 and to 12.3% in 2013. In 2014, a 4.7% of the population above 15 years old declared it suffered form depression - that was 2.6% in 2009.
- Increase of chronic diseases increased by approximately 24%.

The BoG notes that “the large cuts in public expenditure have not been accompanied by changes and improvement of the health system in order to limit the consequences for the weakest citizens and vulnerable groups of the society.”

The report of the Governor of the Bank of Greece reckons surveys conducted by Greek Statistic Authorities (ELSTAT) and according to which:

- a significant increase of 24.2% of people aged 15+ suffering from chronic health problem or chronic disease.
- increase of more than 15% of people who limited their activities due to health problems in 2014.
- percentage of low-weight (below 2.5 kg) births increased by 19% in

2008-2010, and that this is associated with long-term negative effects on the health and the development of children.

Citing OECD data of 2013, the BoG underlines that 79% of the population in Greece was not covered with insurance and therefore without medical and medicine due to long-term unemployment, while self-employed could not afford to pay their social contributions.

A survey conducted in 2014 by ELSTAT showed that part of population above 15 years old was in need of medical help but did not receive it due to lack of financial means:

13% of population did not receive medical care or treatment

15.4% of population did not receive dental care of treatment

4.3% of population did not receive mental health care services

11.2% did not take the prescription medicine prescribed by doctors.

The same survey shows a decrease in private hospital admissions and increase in public hospital with the effect that public hospitals are not able to cope with the increase demands due to austerity budget and personnel cuts. Public hospital admission in 2009 were 1.6 million, and 2.5 million in 2014.

According to the survey, percentage of population that needed to receive medical-nursing care and received it in delay or not at all was:

13.1% due to long waiting list

6.1% due to long distance or transportation problems

9.4% due to lack of specialized doctors and health personnel.

The BoG report warns that the economic crisis and the devaluation of the health sector threaten to shrink the life-expectancy.

Via:

www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2016/06/16/austerity-kills-bank-of-greece-reports-greeks-health-deteriorating-life-expectancy-shrinks/

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