

Greece – ANED country profile

The information contained in this summary was compiled by the Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) in April 2009.

Academic networks and resources

The [General Secretariat for Research and Technology \(GSRT\)](#)

The General Secretariat for Research and Technology of the Ministry of Development supports through its programmes, the research activities of both the country's scientific research institutes and those of its productive industry.

The [Greek Helsinki Monitor \(GHM\) & Minority Rights Group](#)

GHM monitors, publishes and lobbies on human rights issues in Greece and, occasionally, in the Balkans. It has participated in and often coordinated the monitoring of Greek and Balkan media for stereotypes and hate speech.

The [Centre for Research and Technology Hellas \(CE.R.T.H.\)](#)

This is the largest research centre in Northern Greece that carries out fundamental and applied research with emphasis on development of new products and services of industrial, economic and social importance in various fields (e.g. informatics and telecommunications, biomedical informatics, biomedical engineering, pharmacogenetics, etc.)

Policy and enforcement bodies

The key national bodies with responsibility for disability law and policy implementation include:

The [Greek Ministry of Development](#)

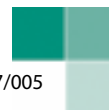
Research on disability issues is undertaken by the Ministry of Development.

[Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity](#) (Department of Social Apprehension & Social Solidarity)

[Ministry of Employment & Social Protection](#) (Department of Social Protection)

[Local Authorities](#) (Section of Social Policy & Social Protection, Office for Disability Issues)

The Disability Issues office is part of the social policy & protection section of each Local Authority. It is responsible for advising, compilation and observation of the implementation of projects that deal with decisions regarding social protection for individuals or groups of people in need, such as people with disabilities, abused women, drug-addicted persons, etc.)



Organisations of disabled people

The national organisation representing disabled people at the European level (European Disability Forum) is:

[National Confederation of Disabled People \(ΕΣΑµεΑ\)](#), which represents more than 35 full member organisations. About 43% of the executive council of the Confederation are people with disabilities.

Other significant national organisations of disabled people include:

[Panhellenic Union of Paraplegic & Physically Challenged](#)

[Panhellenic Association of Paraplegic](#)

[Panhellenic Association of the Blind](#)

[National Federation of Mobility Disabled](#)

[Greek Federation of the Deaf](#)

[Panhellenic Federation of the Nephritics](#)

[Greek Federation of Thalassaemia](#)

[Panhellenic Federation of Societies of Parents and Guardians of Disabled People](#)

[Panhellenic Federation Of Families For Mental Health](#)

National law and strategy

Greece has signed the [United Nations Convention](#) but not the [Optional Protocol](#).

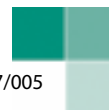
Important national laws, policies and strategies concerning disabled people include:

The Greek Constitution (article 4), which establishes the principle of equality among all Greek citizens. Article 21 refers explicitly to the fundamental rights of disabled people for autonomy, employment, and participation in social and political life, as well as the duty of the state to implement measures that safeguard those rights.

Equality Law 3304/2005 [Equal treatment irrespective of racial or nationality origin, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation](#) forbids discrimination on the grounds of disability in accessing employment as well as within the workplace, while it foresees the necessity of reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate access requirements of disabled employees.

Law 2643/98 [Provision for the employment of special social groups and other clauses](#) foresees and regulates the quota scheme of the obligatory placement of disabled people as well as other protected social groups in the public and private sector

Law 3699/2008 [Special Education for people with disability or special education needs](#) for the first time establishes special education compulsory for students with disability, as with mainstream education, while the state is obliged to provide special education on pre-school, primary and secondary education levels.



Law 2831/2000 [New Urban Planning Regulations article 26](#) ensures horizontal and vertical access in all new buildings hosting public services, public spaces for education, health and social welfare, trade and offices.

Law 3230/2004 all buildings (new and old) hosting public services are obliged to ensure accessibility for disabled people. All public services are required to operate a dedicated unit for producing, implementing and monitoring action plans on improving accessibility.

Facts and figures

Data on population indicate that:

18.2% of the country's population has a health problem or a disability, of whom more than half are over 65 years old ([National Statistical Service of Greece](#), Labour Force Survey 2002)

36.8% have cardiac problems, 14.3%, arthritics and rheumatism and 6.6% diabetes and respiratory problems. 3.5% have a health problem or disability from birth, 3.5% have been injured at work, and 2.1%; acquired disability not related to work ([National Statistical Service of Greece](#), Labour Force Survey 2002).

Data on employment indicate that:

84% of population with disability or health problem are economically inactive, against 58% of the general population. 8.9% of people with disability or health problem face unemployment against 9.6% of the general employment ([National Statistical Service of Greece](#), Labour Force Survey 2002)

Data on education indicate that:

Only 9% of all children with disability attend special education, 90% of which complete only primary education ([National Statistical Service of Greece](#), Students in Special Education 2007). It is estimated that 180.000 children with disability or special education needs are excluded from education.

There is no research available yet regarding the impact of 2008 law that makes special education compulsory. The University of Athens, 2006, estimates that disabled students in higher education do not exceed 400.

Data on accessibility indicate that:

Accessibility of public services: a [report by the Ministry of Internal Affairs \(2008\)](#) revealed that only a small minority of public services operate units for producing and monitoring action plans on accessibility as required by Law 3230/2004. Most public services surveyed in one municipality were only partially accessible.

Accessibility in the workplace: out of 284 public services that employ disabled people, 19 report obstacles in performing duties of employees relating to accessibility and conditions in the workplace ([circular by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2007](#))



20% of private businesses that are required by law to employ disabled people had ramps inside the building, and another 20% provided accessible toilets (MDA,2007)

E-Accessibility: 13% of the disabled population access the internet, as opposed to 27.4% of general population.

Only 6 out of 69 central public services and 20% of local authorities surveyed had accessible websites ([Study of the Hellenic Observatory of Information Society, 2007](#))

[Data from the MeAC accessibility survey](#) (2007) showed that

None of the selected public or commercial websites passed even the accessibility evaluation

The main emergency number was not accessible by text phone,

Both public television channels provided some national language TV programs with subtitling or signing (but less than 1% volume).

The same was true for the two main commercial TV channels.

Neither of the two main banks had installed talking ATMs

Data on poverty and incomes indicate that:

The rate of individuals below poverty line was 19.6% in 2005 against EU average 16%. (EUROSTAT, 2005) The set threshold for poverty was 5649.78€ annual income for individuals and 11864.54€ for a couple with two dependent children (Ministry of Employment and Social Protection 2006).

Data on attitudes indicate that:

Most predominant feelings associated with disability are those of “empathy” and to a lesser extent “sadness”, expressed by similar levels of people with or without personal experience of disability. More of the former associated disability with “illness” and “poverty”, and much less with “isolation” and “disadvantage” ([ESAEA, 2008](#))

The [2007 Special Eurobarometer on Discrimination in Europe](#) showed that only 36% of people knew someone who was disabled (compared to 55% EU average) but 79% acknowledged that being disabled tended to be disadvantage in society (EU average 79%).

Disability discrimination was viewed as widespread by 56% (EU average 53%); 31% thought that disability discrimination was more widespread than five years ago. 43% thought that not enough was being done to combat discrimination in general in Greece (EU average 51%).

However, 89% thought that more disabled people should be in the workplace (EU average 77%) and 96% thought specific measures on equal opportunities were needed in this field.

Data on public spending indicate that:



Social Expenditure, including pensions, benefits, health and social care, was 21,13% of GDP in 2008, compared with 20,70% in 2007 ([General Secretariat of Social Security, Social budget 2008](#))

In 2006, disability benefits accounted for 4.7% of all benefits expenditure (both cash and in kind benefits) compared to an EU27 average of 7.5%, the second lowest proportion of any EU/EFTA country (European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics)

Social protection

Key features of the national system include (including adapted items from the [MISSOC](#) database December 2008):

Disability benefits

For people insured before 1.1.1993, welfare payments are financed through the contributions of employees and employers. For those insured after the 1.1.1993 there is three-party financing, by the employee, employer and state. Annual State subsidies to social insurance institutions are provided (MISSOC, 2008)

The minimum disability pension, as provided by the main social security fund under the Ministry for Employment and Social Protection, is 486,64€ per month. In addition, the supplementary, means-tested benefit of social solidarity for pensioners ranges from 100€ to 230€, according to the income of the pensioner.

304.515 people received disability pension in 2008, out of a total of 2.341.374 pensioners insured through social security funds run by the Ministry for Employment and Social Protection. In addition, 78.527 disability pensioners received a supplementary benefit of social solidarity.

6.178.332 people received health provisions while 1.306.054 people received benefits in cash and kind related to welfare (disability and maternity) through social security in 2008. ([General Secretariat of Social Security, Social budget 2008](#))

Rehabilitation and re-training

Primary healthcare and rehabilitation is free of charge under the National Health System.

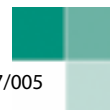
No special rehabilitation measures or benefits are available with the exception of preferential employment for certain categories of disabled people (e.g. the blind).

There is a lack of data on social enterprises and sheltered workshops

Preferential employment and quotas

Private enterprises which employ more than 50 employees are obliged to recruit 8% of employees with disabilities and other socially vulnerable groups. In the public sector, the corresponding percentage is 5%.

Long-term support and care



The system of long-term care includes direct provision of social services by local authorities (free of charge), and benefits in cash and in kind provided by social security funds or social welfare for those uninsured. Benefits in cash vary according to type of disability, and are exempt from tax. Benefits in kind may include either full coverage of cost or contribution.

Additional information

Useful sources of more detailed information about the situation of disabled people, and the policies and support available, include:

[Official Guide for Citizen with Disability](#)

This summary and more detailed country reports on selected themes are available on the [ANED website](#).