

**Question for written answer E-002389/2024/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 144

Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR), Galato Alexandraki (ECR)

Subject: Controversial dental tourism to non-EU countries

Dental tourism to countries outside the EU poses an increasing risk to its citizens.

Unfortunately, lack of information is the root cause of the problem.

Specifically, in Türkiye, there have been dozens of fatalities among tourists and huge problems due to medical and dental tourism.

Seeking dental treatment outside the EU entails running many risks:

- untrained ‘medical’ personnel;
- failure to follow the requisite protocols, such as allowing enough time for the natural recovery of oral health and for compliance with the rules for post-operative care;
- the use of inappropriate instruments or materials.

Nearly a third of visiting patients need corrective operations after they return home, which cancels out the initial savings.

According to the British Dental Association, 70 % of patients who undergo dental treatment abroad, often in Albania, Croatia or Türkiye, develop complications such as infections and abscesses.

The UK’s Office for National Statistics estimates that the number of individuals travelling abroad for surgical operations in 2019, when it stood at 248 000, was more than double the 2015 figure of 120 000.

Proximity to countries with a lower standard of living, a propensity for fraud and an anti-Greek or anti-European mood are turning impoverished Greek citizens into victims of the most contentious forms of ‘dental tourism’.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it have any detailed data on the annual ‘dental tourism’ outflow?
2. What is the Commission’s opinion on dental tourism and the risks it entails?

Submitted: 3.11.2024