

**Question for written answer E-004340/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Elena Kountoura (The Left)

Subject: Serious deficiencies in access to specialised health services in Greek regions

In many regions of Greece, especially in island, mountainous and remote areas, the lack of stable public funding, the chronic understaffing of the National Health System and the unbalanced geographical distribution of medical resources create conditions of health exclusion. Citizens of these regions often lack timely access to specialist doctors, diagnostic tests or treatments and are forced to travel hundreds of kilometres or go to urban centres, at significant financial and psychological cost.

According to recent Eurostat data,¹ 21.9 % of Greeks stated that they did not receive medical care due to cost, distance or long waits, the highest rate in the EU. The most vulnerable groups and isolated areas are disproportionately affected.² While for 2023, Greece was in last place in terms of breast cancer screening, with a rate of only 14.5 %, ³ presenting the greatest deviation in the implementation of the European plan to combat cancer and the EU cohesion policy, which seek equal opportunities in prevention and treatment.⁴

In view of the above:

1. How will the Commission ensure the implementation of the European plan to combat cancer in remote and island areas of Greece?
2. What measures will the Commission take to reduce economic and territorial inequalities in access to specialist health services?
3. Does the Commission intend to increase funding for public health infrastructure, with an emphasis on cancer care and screening?

Submitted: 4.11.2025

¹ Eurostat (2025). Unmet medical care needs in the EU – Greece records highest rate (21.9 %) (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20250820-2>).

² Eurostat Data Browser (dataset hlth_silc_08b), Self-reported unmet medical needs by income situation (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/hlth_silc_08b).

³ See https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Cancer_screening_statistics.

⁴ Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in women and one of the most deadly in the EU. Screening contributes significantly to reducing mortality, through early diagnosis, less invasive treatments and cure rates that exceed 95 % in the early stages of the disease. However, despite the importance of early detection as a survival factor, significant inequalities and barriers to access to screening persist.