

Lung Cancer in Greece



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Introduction

Greece is a South European country, located at the east part of the Mediterranean basin and the southern edge of the Balcan Peninsula, with a population of 10,720,000 in 2019. In the past decade, Greece's mixed economy has gradually recovered from the financial deficit crisis that burst out in 2009 and led to the supervised funding of the country from the European Union (EU) and International Monetary Fund for several years. With a nominal per capita income of U.S. \$31,413 in 2019 (adjusted to purchasing power parity), Greece has now reached approximately two-thirds of the EU-28 average.¹ Nevertheless, the economic depression has significantly affected health care investments and funding. The Greek health care model is mixed, with the public sector mainly financed through compulsory social insurance, covering approximately 90% of the population, whereas a substantial number of beneficiaries also profit from private insurance funding, which is gradually growing. Federal health spending per capita was U.S. \$2384 in 2019 and ac-

counting for 7.8% of the country's gross domestic product in the same year, which approaches the median annual spending for health care among the 28 countries of the EU.¹ With the average life expectancy climbing up to 81.3 years in 2017, the country's needs for investment in public and private health care have been expanded in parallel, rendering the challenge for improving outcomes even greater.² Greek men can now anticipate 78.9 years and women 83.9 years of longevity, which is slightly above the EU-28 average of 78.3 and 83.7 years, respectively. Consequently, Greece's health development index has risen from 0.753 in 1990 to 0.870 in 2017, placing the country in the very high human development category, ranking 31st among 189 countries and 20th in the EU-28 according to the United Nations Development Program.² The unique anthropogeography of Greece, with many large and countless small islands, presents an additional challenge in terms of equal health care provision because some of the smaller islands are not easily accessible, especially in winter months.

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