

Regional European Organisation of the FDI

National Report on the activities of 2024

Country: **GREECE**

Association: **HELLENIC DENTAL ASSOCIATION**

Changes in the association and its organisation - No changes

Trends and developments:

- *in professional politics*

-Following a prolonged dispute with the dental lab technicians' association over whether dentists could utilize CAD/CAM devices in their practice, the matter was resolved through an administrative circular issued by the Ministry of Health **permitting undeniably** private dental practices to use CAD/CAM technology exclusively for manufacturing dental prosthetics for their **own patients**.

-The Ministry of Health authorized dentists to use facial injectables (botulinum toxin and hyaluronic acid) for therapeutic purposes at perioral area within the scope of their professional practice

- The regulatory framework outlining the terms, conditions, and specifications for the administration of nitrous oxide in dental practices has finally been came into force, nearly a year after the Ministry of Health lifted the ban on nitrous oxide/oxygen inhalation sedation for dentists, following a unanimous decision by the national Central Health Council. Training for dentists in this sedation technique is already underway.

- *in health and social politics*

The Ministry of Health did not renew the "Dentist Pass" program, a dental prevention initiative for young children. This program, fully funded by EU sources, aimed to support preventive dental care for children aged six to twelve (6-12) years old, offering an annual check-up, scaling, and fluoride application for approximately 650,000 children.

- *in educational politics*

Only minor changes in undergraduate curricula were reported by the two dental schools in 2024. The Scientific Affairs Institute, under the supervision and responsibility of the HDA, is fully operational. All certified scientific continuing education events are accredited.

- *in the insurance system (incl. the public health insurance and private insurance schemes)*

The Greek social security scheme, EOPYY, does not cover dental care for any insured citizen, and there are no contracts with private dentists. Although the primary health care system theoretically covers any type of therapeutic need free of charge, dental services are financed privately. This means that up to 99.7% of the cost must be covered out of pocket, placing the financial burden on the individual's family budget.

Corporate Dentistry position of NDA towards dental chains

For each chain that has established clinics in the region, investors must register separately with the regional dental association. Dental chains are required to abide by the same national laws and Code of Ethics that apply to individual dental practitioners.

In Greece, dental chains have not thrived, despite an attempt by one chain that opened 7 branches, and now only 2 are still operational. However, there are dental companies owned by investors.

problems with dental chains

Dental chains are publishing advertisements despite the limitations of the Code of Ethics.

Due to certain legal loopholes, regional dental associations are sometimes unable to take action against them. The HDA emphasizes the need to establish clear boundaries between advertising and information in order to protect both dentists and the public from unlawful, unfair, and misleading practices.

possible solutions

- Each dental entity must be 51% or more owned by licensed dentists.

- The investors must also adhere to the dentists' Code of Ethics, and any violations of the Code of Ethics by investors must be subject to the same disciplinary measures as those for dentists.

The HDA has been lobbying the Ministry of Health for these regulations.

Changes in fees: No changes

Information regarding promotion of the World Oral Health Day:

In 2024, the Hellenic Dental Association (HDA) declared the year as the **Year of Oral Health** and, in collaboration with local dental societies across the country, carried out a nationwide campaign to promote oral health awareness and preventive care. Marking 30 years since the first celebration of the Year of Oral Health in 1994 and 190 years since the recognition of dentists' professional rights in Greece, the initiative aimed to highlight the critical role of oral health in overall well-being.

Under the theme **"Bless your mouth!"**, HDA launched an extensive public awareness campaign, emphasizing the importance of prevention. Social media platforms featured educational content, including **"Toothie,"** a beaver mascot demonstrating proper oral hygiene practices.

On **March 20**, HDA conducted an informational campaign at **Omonia and Evangelismos metro stations in Athens**, distributing educational material on dental care. The following day, **March 21**, an event was held in collaboration with the **Municipality of Elliniko-Argyroupoli**, focusing on individuals with special needs in honor of **World Down Syndrome Day**. Throughout the year, local dental societies organized oral health awareness activities in municipalities nationwide.

The campaign also marked **World Oral Health Day 2024**, launching the global FDI's initiative **"A happy mouth is... a happy body"**. Through these efforts, HDA and local dental societies worked to reinforce the importance of preventive dental care and advocate for better access to oral health services.

Further information (activities):

What are your 3 main concerns?

1. The lack of state funding for oral health in public health spending. Public dental expenditure as a percentage of total dental expenditure in Greece is 0.3%, while in the EU it is over 30% (OECD 2021). There is a need to reinforce of the national health system through the recruitment of dentists and the upgrading of infrastructure to meet the needs of primary dental care. State contracts with private dentists should also be considered.
2. Due to prolonged economic crisis, the inability to access dental care has severely affects the oral health status of the Greek population.
3. A significant number of dentists in Greece are financially struggling, due to the reduced attendance of patients who are unable to afford dental treatments, while at the same time are struggling with the uncontrollably increasing cost of establishment, operation and maintenance of a dental practice

3 points you would like to discuss

1. Establishment of a common European points system for continuing education.
2. Establishment of a common minimum level of dental treatment services across Europe. Defining of the minimum level of dental treatment services to be provided by the national insurance systems will improve the oral health of the population and promote the safety of the patients.
3. Harmonization and standardization of dental professions in European countries in relation to European legislation. Establishment of European Single Market occupational rights. Emphasize the enforcement of restrictions and implementation of the Code of Ethics regarding the advertisement of dental treatment services.