

Regional European Organisation of the FDI

National Report

Country: ***Greece***
Association: ***Hellenic Dental Association***
Venue: ***Geneva - ERO Plenary Session***
Year: ***2017***

In March 2017 all local Regional Dental Societies will acquire new Councils for the period 2017 – 2020. On the same day, new Disciplinary Boards will be elected as well as Audit Committees. In parallel, the local delegates to the HDA General Assembly for the next three years will be elected too.

The Hellenic Dental Association's Council has had various meetings with the Administration of the Ministry of Health. The Minister of Health was informed in detail by the HDA Council members, on the various problems and concerns of the dental community in Greece such as a) the complete Oral Health absence of the Health National policy, b) the establishment of the Oral Surgery as Specialty and c) the reconsideration of the status of the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Specialty not only as a Medical Specialty, but also as a Dental, in Greece.

Another crucial topic for the dental community in Greece, which the Hellenic Dental Association constantly underlines in its contacts with all national Authorities, is the fact that the Central Health provider, "ΕΟΠΥΥ", does not provide any dental service for insured citizens and there isn't in sight any intention of discussion and much more of agreement for any kind of dental healthcare coverage. The insurance funds for reimbursing dental services are zero in Greece.

The fees remain the same for the last seven years when the economic crisis appeared; but the number of dentists not being able to pay is increasing every year.

The economic crisis in Greece has led to high unemployment rates, which have forced many young dentists, among other professionals, to leave the country and seek their fortunes abroad. This brain drain is going on, as the Country still remains in a very deep recession and more and more young dentists seek employment in other countries. Unemployment also appears in the form of underemployment, as well as partial or occasional employment to another dentist. Recent statistics of the competent authorities show that only 17% of the total number of graduates decide to start an independent dental practice. Besides, the total number of active dentists is decreased in about 10% the last two years. There is a strong willing among senior dentists to reach retirement.

After 1-1-2017, according to Law 4387/15, all employees (salaried and free-practitioners) will pay their mandatory insurance contributions based on their income. If insurance contributions are not paid, then they are confiscated by the state. The charge is 31% of taxable income for dentists. If one considers that the average tax stands at 22%, then the fixed contributions to the state (tax & insurance) reach 53% of the annual income. If you calculate the fixed vocation practicing amount

and the increased annual bond, then it is considered that about 65% of the taxable income is paid to the state. Greece is the champion in taxation with the highest rates in Europe.

All monetary transactions for provided dental services in excess of EUR 600 will compulsorily be transacted through a bank account.

The established capital control measures remain. The amount authorized for disbursement by banks is EUR 420 per week, per depositor.

After 07/01/2017, all dentists should be equipped with POS.

The Hellenic Dental Association has begun a process through its Committee for the revision of the legislation on Regional Dental Societies and Association after the imposed legislative changes by our lenders, influencing dental clinic license holders (investors) and flexible dental services provision in many places.

Also, technological development, especially that of the Internet and social media have brought to the fore new forms of communication and outreach positions raising questions if they would be considered as information or advertisement. Now it is difficult, if not impossible, to follow and much more to control all these activities and decide in which category they belong. A revision of the Code of Ethics appears as a demand of adjusting to the development and reality.

The Hellenic Dental Association is going to undertake a leading, regulatory role, as well as competence, in the planning of accreditation system of Continuous Professional Development.

For the promotion of the World Oral Health Day – March 20 – the Hellenic Dental Association posted on its official website the logo and posters of the day and issued a press release. HDA addressed letters to the National Ministries of Health and Education requesting support for the promotion of the day. Its 52 Regional Dental Societies organized various events and activities in order to promote the key messages of the day and to raise awareness around the theme: Live Mouth Smart. HDA is ready to follow the FDI instructions to disseminate the WOHD 2017 message.

The Hellenic Dental Association has created fully equipped dental offices (in Amigdaleza and Piraeus hot spots hosting refugees), in order to provide oral healthcare treatment in emergency cases to refugees, with the assistance and help of volunteering dentists.