

Regional European Organisation of the FDI

National Report on the activities of 2023

Country: GREECE

Association: HELLENIC DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Changes in the association and its organization

The Hellenic Dental Association held its quadrennial elections on the 9th of April 2023. A new board was elected as follows:

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|--------------------|------------------------|
| PRESIDENT: | DEVLIOTIS Athanasios |
| VICE-PRESIDENT A: | IFANTIS Athanasios |
| VICE-PRESIDENT B: | TSANIDIS Vasileios |
| GENERAL SECRETARY: | KITTAS Dimitrios |
| TREASURER: | KALLIFATIDIS Antonios |
| SPECIAL SECRETARY: | PALLIS Dimitrios |
| BOARD MEMBERS: | VARDAS Emmanouil |
| | DEDES Nikolaos |
| | DIAKOGEORGIU Nikolaos |
| | KATSOULAS Vasileios |
| | MAROUFIDIS Nikolaos |
| | MENENAKOU Maria |
| | MORAITIS Panagiotis |
| | STATHOPOULOS Vasileios |
| | TRAPALIS Ioannis |

All HDA's committees, working groups and task teams have also been renewed.

Trends and developments:

- *in professional politics*

The Ministry of Health has finally lifted the ban on the use of Nitrous oxide/oxygen inhalation sedation by dentists, following a unanimous decision by the Central Health Council. For the final implementation in dental practices only regulatory laws of terms, conditions and specifications are pending from the Ministry of Health.

A new system of taxation was recently passed in the Greek Parliament affecting negatively the majority of liberal practitioners. This new system of taxation takes the minimum wage as a reference point, considering that a liberal practitioner cannot have an income lower than an employee. QR code on invoices is now mandatory, while cash transactions are further discouraged.

- *in health and social politics*

- The Ministry of Health has launched a dental prevention programme for children called "Dentist Pass". The "Dentist Pass" programme is a support measure for the provision of preventive dental care to children aged six to twelve (6-12) years old. It is fully funded by EU sources and provides an annual check-up/scaling/fluoride application for approximately 650,000 children. Unfortunately, the original programme has a time limit and its renewal for next year has not yet been announced.

- Establishment of a special maternity benefit for self-employed professionals. Specifically, they will receive the minimum wage for 9 months during pregnancy and confinement. The relevant Ministerial Decision is expected.

- *in educational politics*

Only minor changes in undergraduate curricula reported by dental universities in 2023. 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 public health insurance 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.

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.

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 emphasises 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 at least 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 2023, we emphasised the significance of oral care at every age. This year's message of the day highlighted the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene throughout life so that we can be:
"PROUD OF YOUR MOUTH FOR A LIFETIME"

The HDA's actions for 2023 included an event attended by the WHO Regional Director for Europe, Dr. Hans Henri P. Kluge, Professor Richard Watt, Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Oral Health Inequalities and Public Health, and other prominent international speakers. Dr Aristomenes I. Syngelakis, Chief Dental Officer of the Hellenic Republic and President Elect of the Council of European Chief Dental Officers, spoke at the event.

The HDA produced promotional material and a public awareness campaign on the value of sports mouthguards. This included a brochure entitled 'Playing defence for your smile' and a text entitled 'Sports Trauma and Epidemiology'.

Under the auspices and funding of the HDA, an audiovisual anthology entitled 'We Talk We Laugh We Sing: Proud of our mouth for a lifetime' was produced, aimed at primary school and kindergarten children. The anthology aimed to raise awareness about oral health among children and contribute to its prevention and care. This objective is achieved through humorous and interactive stories that were accessible to children.

The anthology comprises two theatrical performances: 'Drakuki' by the Regional Dental Society of Thessaloniki and 'The Country of the Denture' by the Regional Dental Society of Piraeus.

Further information (activities):

What are your 3 main concerns?

1. The lack of state funding for oral health in 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). Need for reinforcement 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 severely affects the oral health of the Greek population.
3. The majority of dentists in Greece are financially weakened, due to the reduced attendance of patients who are unable to afford dental treatments, while at the same time are struggling with the uncontrollably increased 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. The definition 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. Homogenization and harmonization of dental professions in European countries in relation to European legislation. Establishment of European Single Market occupational rights. Emphasize the restrictions and implementation of the Code of Ethics regarding the advertisement of dental treatment services.
