# Country summary: Greece

## COVID-19 cases

Greece has recorded 9,280 cases with 238 related deaths[[1]](#footnote-1). Greece did not disaggregate data by disability status. The latest reports are made available daily, in Greek[[2]](#footnote-2).

## Emergency, lockdown, and confinement

Greece did not declare an emergency status[[3]](#footnote-3); however, a nation-wide lockdown was declared from 16 March to 4 May 2020[[4]](#footnote-4).

During lockdown, people with disabilities were not allowed to have therapy sessions (such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc.)[[5]](#footnote-5).

No exceptions or targeted benefits were allocated to persons with disabilities.

## Involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities

DPOs were not consulted by the government during or after the emergency. However, the National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA) was quite active in advocacy efforts, taking the following actions:

* Letter to the Prime Minister: Prolonged isolation of children with disabilities and their families will have disastrous results[[6]](#footnote-6).
* Immediate and safe return of persons with disabilities to normalcy: the continued suspension of the operation of the structures has brought the families of persons with disabilities to its knees[[7]](#footnote-7).

## Communications and announcements

Sign Language Interpretation was provided during daily briefings by the infectious diseases expert and the deputy minister of civil protection; captioning was not available[[8]](#footnote-8). National TV provided lessons on COVID-19, and sign-language interpretation was also available, however interpreters had to volunteer their time to interpret[[9]](#footnote-9).

Both actions, and subsequent interpretations provided, were a consequence of advocacy from the national disability movement, more specifically the deaf movement demanding accessibility of institutional information.

Announcements hardly ever mentioned persons with disabilities, only referencing them when specific questions were posed by journalists[[10]](#footnote-10).

## Institutions and closed settings

During the lockdown, no visitors were allowed in institutions and residents were not allowed to go outside[[11]](#footnote-11).

## Health care

Limited information is available on health care provisions regarding persons with disabilities. No apparent specific policy targeting or protecting persons with disabilities.

The National Bioethics Commission released a document on the bio-ethical dimension of responsibility in responding to COVID-19[[12]](#footnote-12).

## Social Protection

Disability-related services were suspended for the entire duration of the lockdown. Disability assessment committees were suspended, but disability benefits and disability pensions were automatically extended[[13]](#footnote-13).

ESAMEA advocated for the following:

* Call to ensure that persons with disabilities do not lose their benefits[[14]](#footnote-14).
* Call to ensure that persons with disabilities and chronic illnesses can stay home[[15]](#footnote-15).
* Call for immediate measures to protect vulnerable groups[[16]](#footnote-16).

## Other comments

On employment, ESAMEA noted the following:

The Greek Government offered small benefits to employees who worked in different types of companies and were closed during the lockdown. Both in the public and private sector, there was the possibility of working from home or in back office jobs for persons with disabilities or chronic illnesses. However, not all persons with disabilities or with chronic illnesses received similar treatment. For example, while persons with “unregulated diabetes” could stay home, persons with other types of diabetes could not. This was an issue that caused great frustration within the diabetes community and within the scientific community, in general[[17]](#footnote-17).

1. Anadolu Agency, COVID-19 cases see fresh spike in Greece, 26 August 2020, available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/covid-19-cases-see-fresh-spike-in-greece/1954353> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Daily reports available at: <https://eody.gov.gr/epidimiologika-statistika-dedomena/ektheseis-covid-19/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Information available in Greek at: <https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Nomothetiko-Ergo/Anazitisi-Nomothetikou-Ergou?law_id=1bd1b0a6-1046-4ae2-baad-ab840154207f> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. in.gr, Greece in quarantine: Mitsotakis declares nationwide lockdown as of 6am tomorrow, 22 March 2020, available at: <https://www.in.gr/2020/03/22/english-edition/greece-quarantine-mitsotakis-declares-nationwide-lockdown-6am-tomorrow/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Information from National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA), 17 September 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. ESAMEA, 19 May 2020, available in Greek at: <https://www.esamea.gr/pressoffice/press-releases/4809-o-paratetamenos-egkleismos-ton-paidion-me-anapiria-kai-ton-oikogeneion-toys-tha-exei-olethria-apotelesmata-epistoli-ston-prothypoyrgo> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. ESAMEA, 11 May 2020, available in Greek at: <https://www.esamea.gr/pressoffice/press-releases/4788-2020-05-11-08-39-21> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Information from National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA), 17 September 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Information from National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA), 17 September 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Information from National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA), 17 September 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Information from National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA), 17 September 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The bioethical dimension of individual responsibility in response to COVID 19, 17 March 2020, available at: <http://www.bioethics.gr/images/pdf/GNOMES/Recommendation_coronavirus_FINAL_GR.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Information from National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA), 17 September 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. ESAMEA, 11 March 2020, available in Greek at: <https://www.esamea.gr/pressoffice/press-releases/4670-katepeigon-aitima-gia-symperilipsi-stin-pnp-tis-paratasis-tis-isxys-ton-apofaseon-kepa-asye-anye-kai-ton-epidomaton> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. ESAMEA, 16 March 2020, available in Greek at: <https://www.esamea.gr/pressoffice/press-releases/4680-ston-prothypoyrgo-gia-tin-prostasia-ton-eypathon-omadon-menoyme-spiti> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. ESAMEA, 6 March 2020, available in Greek at: <https://www.esamea.gr/pressoffice/press-releases/4660-mesi-lipsi-metron-gia-tin-prostasia-atomon-eypathon-omadon-apo-ton-koronoio> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Information from National Confederation of Disabled People (ESAMEA), 17 September 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)