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### **Introduction**

Socioeconomic instability might be related to increased suicidality and burden of mental disorders.

### **Aims**

To explore the basic implications of the economic crisis from a health policy perspective, according to recent suicide data and unemployment in Greece.

### **Methods**

A narrative review in PubMed/Medline and published data from the Greek Statistics Authority (ELSTAT) along with a hand search in selected Greek biomedical journals was undertaken, relevant to suicides, unemployment and mental health policy.

### **Results**

While for the years 2000-2010 the number of completed suicides ranged from 323 (in 2002) to 402 (in 2006), for 2011 the total number is 477 (393 males and 84 females), that is increased by 26,52% in comparison to 2010 (377), while the unemployment rate was approximately 27% during 2012. Although the annual growth rate in 2012 was -6,4, Greece is among the OECD countries with high health expenditure as a share of Gross Domestic Product (9.1 in 2011), but it doesn't have a specified budget for mental health and is mostly depended in out-of-pocket expenditure (48%). The lack of cost-effectiveness and the informal payments comprise a major source of inequity and inefficiency. Despite the current reorganization of the whole mental health care delivery system, uneven regional distribution of psychiatrists exists. Mental health care facilities as well as extramural mental health units and rehabilitation places mostly uncover rural areas.

### **Conclusions**

Prevention programs concerning mental disorders should be in the first line of Greek mental health policy, focusing in community networking and targeting in systematic assessment of interventions. A clear authority with defined responsibility for overall mental health policy and budgetary matters is needed.