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News | 12.06.2012

Greek Health Crisis

Access to medicine in freefall

Healthcare in Greece has reached a crisis point. Its organisation and delivery has been rendered almost impossible. As treatment in public hospitals has shot up due to the crisis, spending and staff levels have been slashed. The supply of life-saving drugs to the Greek market has been cut and major hospitals are running low on materials. With healthcare panic setting in, the Greens presented Commission President Barroso with a letter urging him to act to ensure this fundamental right.



Since the beginning of the economic crisis, Greece has seen an increase in demand of 30% on its public hospitals, while spending has been cut by 20% and nursing and medical staff numbers have been cut back. Pharmacists have seen the supply of drugs reduced by pharmaceutical companies leading some to refuse to provide drugs on credit. In some major hospitals patients must buy their own consumables such as blood bags and plaster, while one has suspended the operation of its cardiac surgery department. Panic is gripping the Greek population and the European Union must act. Greens/EFA co-presidents Rebecca Harms and Daniel Cohn-Bendit presented an open letter this afternoon to Commission President Barroso demanding that he use his powers to ensure that everyone in Greece has access to quality health care and medical treatment. These rights are enshrined in Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and although the delivery of healthcare is the responsibility of EU countries, there are concrete steps that the Commission can take now to guarantee Greek citizens' access to life-saving medicines. In the longer term, President Barroso must help shape the Troika priorities to take into account the solutions detailed by the Greens on how Greece can overcome the economic crisis. Only then will the Greek authorities to be in a position to realistically provide the above-mentioned rights to Greek citizens.

- Read the open letter

- A Green Investment Pact for economic and fiscal sustainability

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Jan van der Wolf



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Responsible MEPs



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