

# Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Greece



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Europe



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This is one of the 53 country profiles covering developments in nutrition, physical activity and obesity in the WHO European Region. The full set of individual profiles and an overview report including methodology and summary can be downloaded from the WHO Regional Office for Europe website: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/nutrition-country-profiles>.

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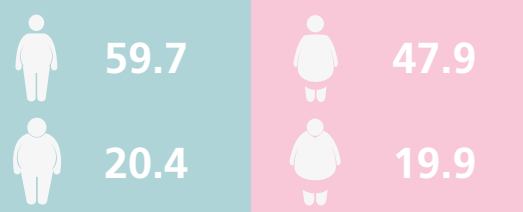
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	
Total population	11 359 000
Median age (years)	41.4
Life expectancy at birth (years) female   male	82.0   77.0
GDP per capita (US\$)	26 504.0
GDP spent on health (%)	10.2

## Monitoring and surveillance Overweight and obesity in three age groups

### Adults (20 years and over)

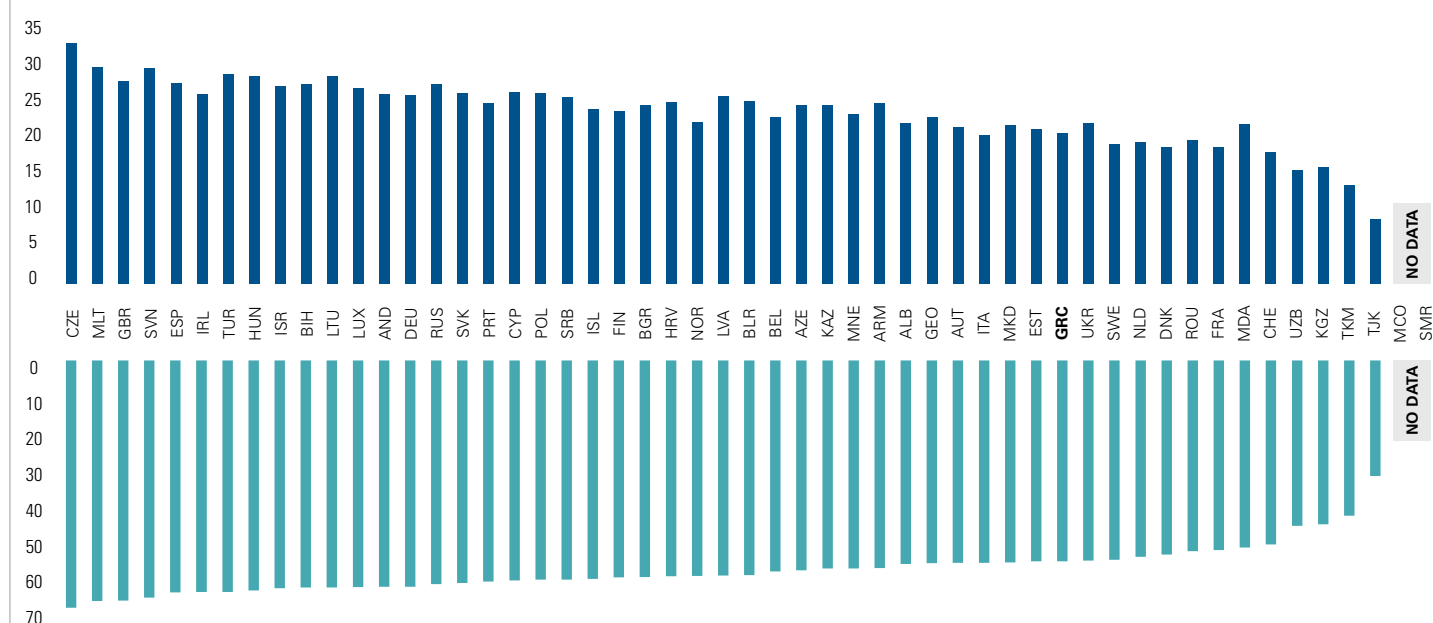
Intercountry comparable overweight and obesity estimates from 2008 (1) show that 53.7% of the adult population (≥ 20 years old) in Greece were overweight and 20.1% were obese. The prevalence of overweight was higher among men (59.7%) than women (47.9%). The proportion of men and women that were obese was 20.4% and 19.9%, respectively. Adulthood obesity prevalence forecasts (2010–2030) predict that in 2020, 32% of men and 30% of women will be obese. By 2030, the model predicts that 44% of men and 40% of women will be obese.<sup>1</sup>

### PREVALENCE OF OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY (%) AMONG GREEK ADULTS BASED ON WHO 2008 ESTIMATES



Source: WHO Global Health Observatory Data Repository (1).

### PREVALENCE OF OBESITY (%) (BMI ≥30.0 KG/M<sup>2</sup>) AMONG ADULTS IN THE WHO EUROPEAN REGION BASED ON WHO 2008 ESTIMATES



### PREVALENCE OF OVERWEIGHT (%) (BMI ≥25.0 KG/M<sup>2</sup>) AMONG ADULTS IN THE WHO EUROPEAN REGION BASED ON WHO 2008 ESTIMATES

Notes. The country codes refer to the ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 country codes. Data ranking for obesity is intentionally the same as for the overweight data. BMI: body mass index.

Source: WHO Global Health Observatory Data Repository (1).

<sup>1</sup> Report on modelling adulthood obesity across the WHO European Region, prepared by consultants (led by T. Marsh and colleagues) for the WHO Regional Office for Europe in 2013.

The Regional Office is grateful to the European Commission (EC) for its financial support for the preparation of this country profile and the development of the nutrition, obesity and physical activity database that provided data for it.

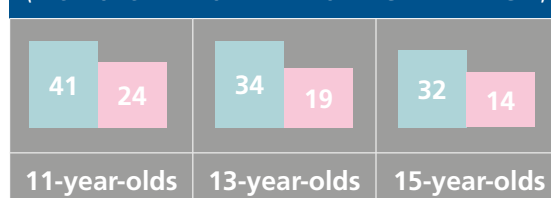
## Adolescents (10–19 years)

In terms of prevalence of overweight and obesity in adolescents, up to 41% of boys and 24% of girls among 11-year-olds were overweight, according to data from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey (2009/2010).<sup>2</sup> Among 13-year-olds, the corresponding figures were 34% for boys and 19% for girls, and among 15-year-olds, 32% and 14%, respectively (2).

## Children (0–9 years)

No data are available from the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI) 2007/2008 round. Greece, however, joined the second COSI data collection round during the school year 2009/2010. Intercountry data analysis is under way.

### PREVALENCE OF OVERWEIGHT (%) IN GREEK ADOLESCENTS (BASED ON SELF-REPORTED DATA ON HEIGHT AND WEIGHT)

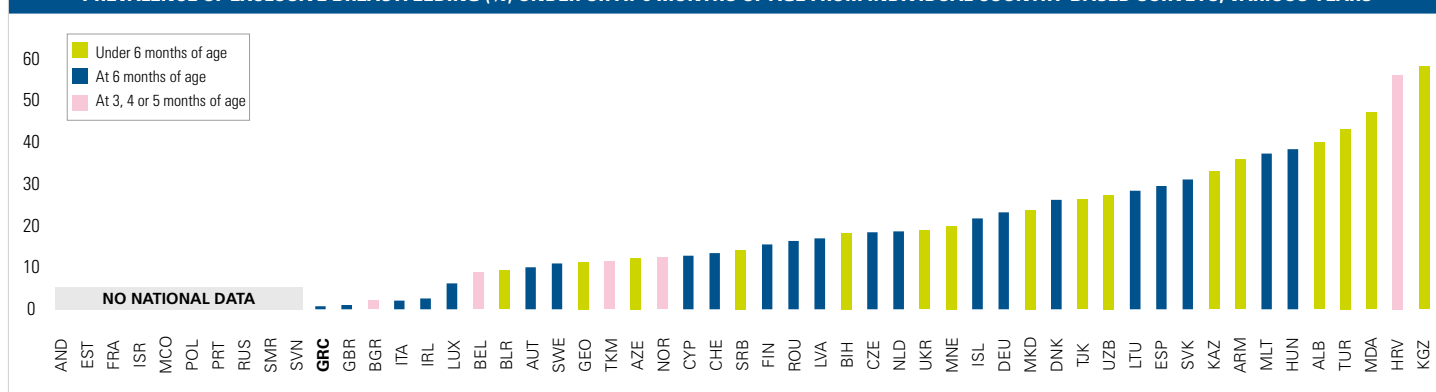


Source: Currie et al. (2).

## Exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months of age

Nationally representative data from 2009 show that the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding at 6 months of age was 0.4–0.9% in Greece.<sup>3</sup>

### PREVALENCE OF EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING (%) UNDER OR AT 6 MONTHS OF AGE FROM INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY-BASED SURVEYS, VARIOUS YEARS



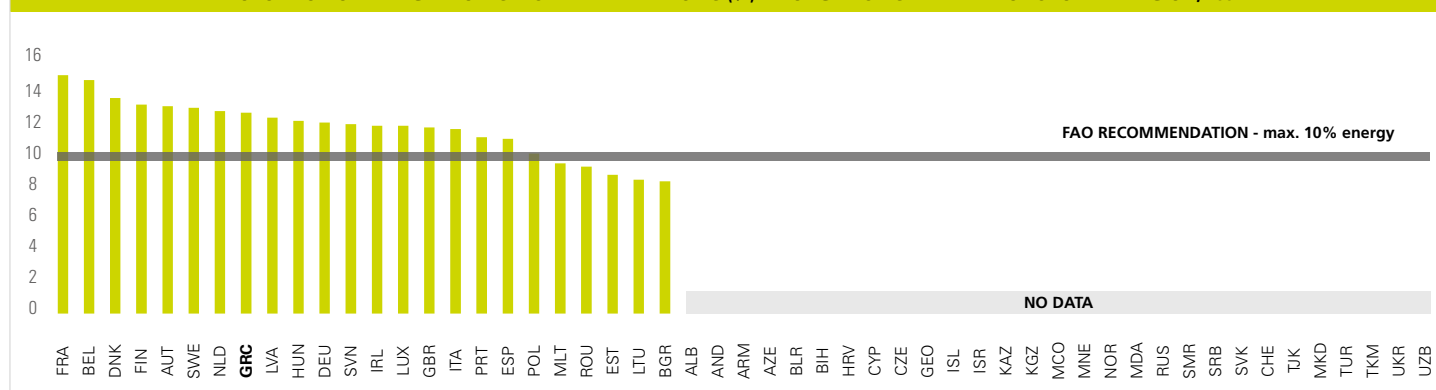
Notes. The country codes refer to the ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 country codes. Data were derived from country-specific publications on surveys carried out in this field, not as part of a European-wide survey. Due to different data collection methods of the country-specific surveys, any comparisons between countries must be made with caution.

Source: WHO Regional Office for Europe grey literature from 2012 on breastfeeding.

## Saturated fat intake

According to 2007 estimates, the adult population in Greece consumed 12.3% of their total calorie intake from saturated fatty acids (3).

### PROPORTION OF ENERGY FROM SATURATED FATTY ACIDS (%) AMONG ADULTS IN THE WHO EUROPEAN REGION, 2007



Notes. The country codes refer to the ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 country codes. Ranking of data was carried out so that country data at the right-hand side of the graph – with values below the FAO recommendation – fall within the positive frame of the indicator. FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

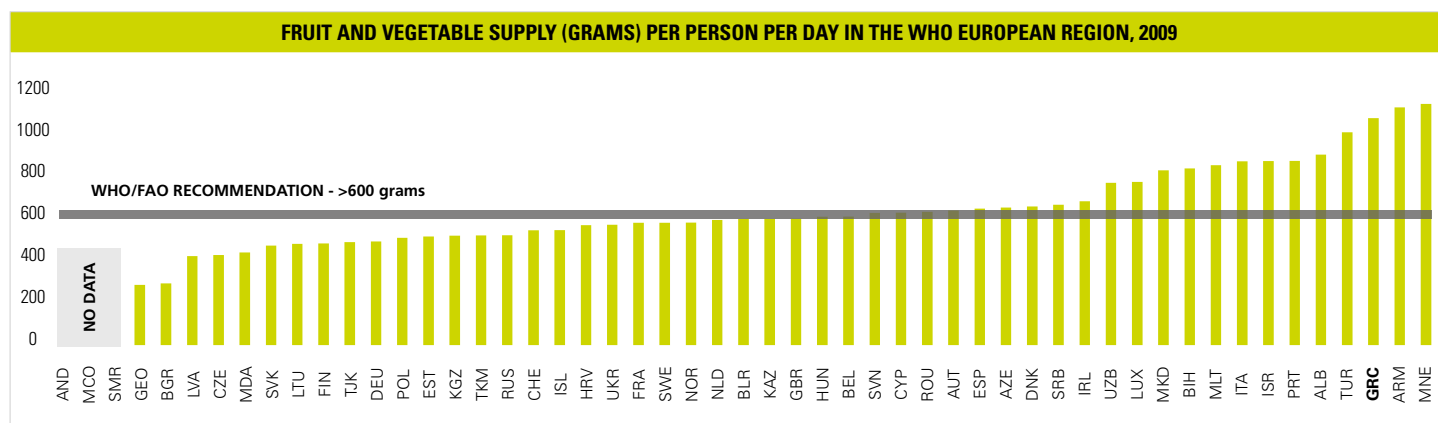
Source: FAOSTAT (3).

<sup>2</sup> Based on 2007 WHO growth reference.

<sup>3</sup> WHO Regional Office for Europe grey literature from 2012 on breastfeeding.

## Fruit and vegetable supply

Greece had a fruit and vegetable supply of 1056 grams per capita per day, according to 2009 estimates (3).

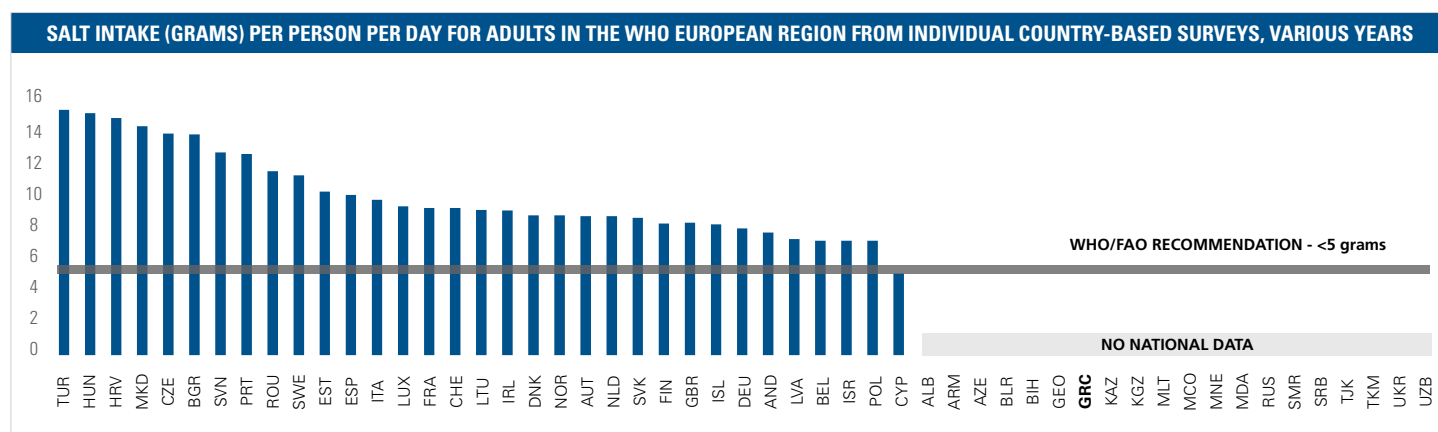


*Notes.* The country codes refer to the ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 country codes. Ranking of data was carried out so that country data at the right-hand side of the graph – with values above the WHO/FAO recommendation – fall within the positive frame of the indicator.

*Source:* FAOSTAT (3).

## Salt intake

No data are available.



*Notes.* The country codes refer to the ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 country codes. Data were derived from country-specific publications on surveys carried out in this field, not as part of a European-wide survey. Due to different data collection methods of the country-specific surveys, any comparisons between countries must be made with caution. Ranking of data was carried out so that country data at the right-hand side of the graph – with values below the WHO/FAO recommendation – fall within the positive frame of the indicator.

*Source:* WHO Regional Office for Europe (4).

## Iodine status

According to the most recent estimates on iodine status, published in 2012, the proportion of the population with an iodine level lower than 100 µg/L was 0.0% (5, 6).

## Physical inactivity

In Greece, 46.6% of the population aged 15 years and over were insufficiently active (men 43.6% and women 49.4%), according to estimates generated for 2008 by WHO (1).

## Policies and actions

The table below displays (a) monitoring and evaluation methods of salt intake in Greece; (b) the stakeholder approach toward salt reduction; and (c) the population approach in terms of labelling and consumer awareness initiatives (4).

### Salt reduction initiatives

Monitoring & evaluation	Stakeholder approach			Population approach						
				Labelling	Consumer awareness initiatives					
Industry self-reporting	Industry involvement	Food reformulation	Specific food category		Brochure Print	TV Radio	Website Software	Education Schools	Conference	Reporting
Salt content in food										
Salt intake										
Consumer awareness	***	**	Maximum 2% salt content in dry matter	***				Health care facilities		
Behavioural change										
Urinary salt excretion (24 hrs)								***		

*Notes.* \*\* partially implemented \*\*\* fully implemented.

*Source:* WHO Regional Office for Europe (4).

## Trans fatty acids (TFA) policies

Legislation	Type of legislation	Measure

Source: WHO Regional Office for Europe grey literature from 2012 on TFA and health, TFA policy and food industry approaches.

## Price policies (food taxation and subsidies)

Taxes	School fruit schemes
✓ Tax on sugar content from 2013	✓

Sources: WHO Regional Office for Europe grey literature from 2012 on diet and the use of fiscal policy in the control and prevention of noncommunicable diseases; EC School Fruit Scheme website (7).

## Marketing of food and non-alcoholic beverages to children (8)

Currently, no official government measures or legislation exist addressing the marketing of food to children. In the private sector, however, a self-regulating set of rules known as the Hellenic Code on Advertising Communication Practice (9) has been established by the Hellenic Association of Communication Agencies (10) and the Hellenic Advertisers Association (11).

## Physical activity (PA), national policy documents and action plans

Sport	Target groups	Health	Education		Transportation	
Existence of national "sport for all" policy and/or national "sport for all" implementation programme	Existence of specific scheme or programme for community interventions to promote PA in the elderly	Counselling on PA as part of primary health care activities	Mandatory physical education in primary and secondary schools	Inclusion of PA in general teaching training	National or subnational schemes promoting active travel to school	Existence of an incentive scheme for companies or employees to promote active travel to work
				✓ <sup>a</sup>		

<sup>a</sup> Clearly stated in a policy document, partially implemented or enforced.

Source: country reporting template on Greece from 2009 developed in the context of a WHO/EC project on monitoring progress on improving nutrition and PA and preventing obesity in the European Union (EU).

## Leadership, partnerships and professional networks on health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA)

Existence of national coordination mechanism on HEPA promotion	Leading institution	Participating bodies

Source: country reporting template on Greece from 2009 developed in the context of a WHO/EC project on monitoring progress on improving nutrition and PA and preventing obesity in the EU.

## PA recommendations, goals and surveillance

Existence of national recommendation on HEPA	Target groups addressed by national HEPA policy	PA included in the national health monitoring system

Source: country reporting template on Greece from 2009 developed in the context of a WHO/EC project on monitoring progress on improving nutrition and PA and preventing obesity in the EU.

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