

PRESS RELEASE  
Athens, 27/06/2022

## Do the *human right* thing Right to health — Right to life Limited access to health care services of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection in Greece

A new report by [Diotima Center](#), the [Greek Council for Refugees \(GCR\)](#) and the [International Rescue Committee Hellas \(IRC Hellas\)](#) reveals the multiple difficulties and barriers to accessing healthcare faced by people on the move in Greece. It includes reports and testimonials from applicants and beneficiaries of international protection in Greece, including their own experiences of healthcare services. The report was published in the context of the project "Do the *human right* thing - Raising our Voice for Refugee Rights", implemented under the [Active citizens fund programme](#).

The report finds that people on the move in Greece have too often faced a lack of interpretation services, experienced racism from healthcare professionals, or long waiting times for appointments resulting in minor health issues becoming much more serious chronic conditions. In some instances, medical professionals have even refused to perform procedures (for example, abortion in cases of rape), or done so without consent (such as cesarean sections).

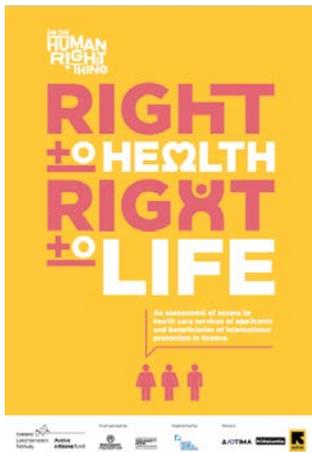
These problems are partially due to "frequent and fragmented changes in national policies and local practices", but also geographical, organisational and linguistic barriers. Moreover, a "lack of coordination between services and mechanisms leaves gaps in services", making access to vaccinations, dental, psychiatric, gynecological, obstetric and pediatric care particularly difficult.

This has a damaging impact on the wellbeing of populations who are often already mentally and physically distressed. Many have already survived traumatic experiences in their country of origin (for example, torture, war or gender-based violence) and / or during their journeys to Greece (such as exposure to danger, abuse, separation from family).

These inequalities mean that people with multiple vulnerabilities - such as pregnant women, survivors of gender-based violence, and people with disabilities, chronic illnesses or mental health issues – often fail to receive necessary medical care, while their health is at risk of further deterioration due to poor living and housing conditions, a lack of resources, legal insecurity, the risk of detention and deportation, and racism.

The report "Right to health - Right to life" provides a number of policy proposals to effectively protect and promote the rights of people on the move, and ensure their access to health on equal terms.

With the publication of this third report, the project "Do the *human right* thing" draws to an end and we invite you to the closing event to present its main



*"I gave birth at the Alexandra Hospital, by caesarean. I was alone in the hospital. Without interpretation and with no friends or family by my side. My husband was violent, so he wasn't there. But even if he were. After I gave birth, for seven whole days I did not see my son. It was a horrible experience. I had given birth, and I could not see my son. On the seventh day I saw my child. He wasn't in the incubator, he wasn't premature, there was nothing wrong with him. There is no explanation for what happened."* Iranian refugee - 7 years in Greece

actions and findings, on Thursday, 30, June, at 11:00 am, in the Amphitheater "Antonis Tritsis", at the Cultural Centre of Athens Municipality (Akadimias Str. 50). As part of the event discussions between civil society organizations and stakeholders will be held, the video "Flows of Humans/ Flows of History" made by Maria Louka and Alexandros Katsis will be presented, and refugee women and men will share their experiences. Further information here: <https://bit.ly/3OnMQtR>

*The project "Do the human right thing – Raising our Voice for Refugee Rights" is being implemented under the Active citizens fund in Greece by the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) and Partner Organizations the Center Diotima Centre, the International Rescue Committee Hellas (IRC) and Popaganda.*

*The Active citizens fund in Greece is supported through a € 13.5 m grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway as part of the EEA Grants 2014 -2021. The programme aims to develop the sustainability and capacity of the civil society sector in Greece, and to strengthen its role in promoting and safeguarding democratic procedures, active citizenship, and human rights. The Fund Operator for the Active citizens fund in Greece is Bodossaki Foundation in consortium with SolidarityNow. More information: [www.activecitizensfund.gr/en/](http://www.activecitizensfund.gr/en/)*

*The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the EEA Financial Mechanism or the Fund Operator of the Active citizens fund program in Greece (Bodossaki Foundation in consortium with SolidarityNow).*

## Information

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