

Interreg



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IPA Greece – North Macedonia

Project Presentation

Healthcare open and inclusive for all
(iCARE)

September, 2025



PROGRAMME

Interreg (VI-A) IPA CBC Programme
“Greece – North Macedonia 2021 – 2027”

POLICY OBJECTIVE

A more social Europe

PRIORITY

Support and upgrade of
Health and Social Services

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering
resilience of health systems, including primary
care, and promoting the transition from
institutional to family- and community-based care

INTERVENTION FIELD

Measures to improve the accessibility,
effectiveness and resilience of healthcare systems
(excluding infrastructure)

4

3

4.5

160



Beneficiaries from Greece

National Confederation of
Disabled People
www.esamea.gr



3rd Regional Health Authority
www.3ype.gr



Municipality of Prespes
www.prespes.gr



Beneficiaries from North Macedonia

Municipality of Resen
www.resen.gov.mk



Coordination of the
Organizations for Voluntary Services
www.cosv.org





accessibility a common problem

When it comes to enjoying a walk in the city, an escape to nature or visiting healthcare facilities and seeking professional care, many of us still face significant **obstacles** and **barriers**



accessibility

a common problem

Everyone has the **right** to preventive healthcare and medical treatment.

Yet for people with disabilities healthcare is often hard to access, too expensive, far away and subject to long waiting times.

27% of the population is limited due to health issues or disability

15% are relatives or guardians of such persons

69% face accessibility obstacles
44% can't find services in their area
43% find it at higher costs
40% find it in low quality
38% travel to meet their needs
32% can't find/access information
4 times more likely to have unmet healthcare needs



economic
crisis



population
ageing



chronic
conditions

HEALTHCARE:
an emerging thread
to societies & economies



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iCARE

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iCARE

a shared vision

A set of joint actions to transform
health and social care across the
Greece-North Macedonia CB area.

To address discriminations & inequalities
and ensure **accessible** and **high-quality**
care for underserved populations in risk.

A healthcare worker with curly brown hair, wearing green scrubs and a stethoscope, is assisting an elderly woman with white hair in a wheelchair. They are both looking out a large window, with the woman's hand resting on the worker's arm. The scene is brightly lit by natural light.

it's... a (social)
need



no matter our origins,
no matter our age,
no matter our disability,
no matter the circumstances,
we **all** deserve to be treated **right**

A healthcare worker with curly brown hair, wearing green scrubs and a stethoscope, is assisting an elderly woman with white hair in a wheelchair. They are both looking out a large window, with the worker's hand on the wheelchair's handle.

it's... an (institutional) obligation

- ▶ The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 25 – Health, Article 9 – Accessibility)
- ▶ The European Disability Strategy 2021-2030 and the European Accessibility Act
- ▶ The Greek National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024-2030 (Pillar 3- Access to health)
- ▶ The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2023-2030 of North Macedonia

A healthcare worker in green scrubs is assisting an elderly woman in a wheelchair. The woman has white hair styled in a braid and is looking out a window. The healthcare worker is standing behind the wheelchair, holding the backrest. The background is a bright, out-of-focus window.

it could be an... (economic) **opportunity**

135 million people

one in four people adults in the EU

As for the private healthcare sector, all these people, characterized by a wide range of different needs and access preferences, make up a particularly **large market** which, due to existing conditions, is **currently underserved**

from inequality to quantity & quality

The project will further focus on two pilot cases, one in **Prespes** and one in **Resen**

These two Municipalities, along with NCDP, will work together on improving and extending their help at home services, transforming them into “healthcare at home”

- ▶ healthcare personal specialized in serving people with disabilities
- ▶ more friendly and accessible to individuals with chronic conditions and disabilities
- ▶ more and improved services (preventive health services, diagnostic pre-assessment, guidance, prescription services, etc.)



information & accessibility innovation

iCARE also focuses on installing state-of-the-art solutions for supporting citizens with special access needs and preferences, both:

- ▶ **prior** their visit to healthcare providers
(by making available reliable information about available infrastructures and services in the region that can meet their needs/preferences)
- ▶ **during** their attempt to access a service of their choice
(by making available novel information, wayfinding, mobility and transportation support resources, based on means designed for all and 'smart' solutions)



raising awareness & knowledge uptake

Furthermore, the project includes:

- ▶ publicity and raising awareness activities target to the **general public**
- ▶ special workshops and seminars for **care professionals**
- ▶ specialized seminars for improving self-management skills of **citizens in risk**



project objectives

- .1 To foster health literacy and digital health literacy and promote self-management
- .2 To design innovative practices for improving healthcare accessibility for vulnerable groups and for tackling health inequalities
- .3 To improve the capacity of health professionals to accommodate efficiently the needs of the people with disabilities and/or chronic conditions
- .4 To establish new mechanisms focused on services of preventive care, comfort and counselling at home, including in rural and isolated areas
- .5 To promote networking and joint strategies for developing inclusive healthcare and social care sans frontiers



WP3

Improved access to primary healthcare for all

- ▶ Electric **vehicles** & **power stations** for primary health services in the home (Prespes & Resen)
- ▶ **Telemedicine** & **telecommunication** equipment to deal with medical emergencies of the population of the Prespes Municipality



WP4

Skills acquisition & capacity building

- ▶ Study on inequalities and underserved access citizen needs
- ▶ Accessibility information about healthcare systems
- ▶ Exchange of good practices & skills acquisition
- ▶ Accessible healthcare guidelines
- ▶ Accessible information sources for citizens



WP5

Pilot programmes and exercises

- ▶ Pilot healthcare services at home (Resen)
- ▶ Pilot social e-services for remote & isolated citizens (Prespes)
- ▶ Crisis situation scenarios & exercises (Jointly)
- ▶ Initiatives for the promotion of health and well-being for all (cross-border)

Information & publicity

- ▶ communication strategy and assigned manager
- ▶ project website (connected with project outcomes)
- ▶ social media (YouTube, Instagram, facebook, X)
- ▶ 2 videos (sign language, subtitles, audio) + photos
- ▶ posters, banners and publications
- ▶ 4 public events (awareness/engagement, results)
- ▶ promotional materials





This cross-border collaboration will create an **inclusive healthcare model**, free of discriminations and accessibility obstacles, adapted to the unique needs of Prespes and Resen areas

iCare shall set a **replicable standard** for healthcare access in underserved areas; for reaching, screening and supporting effectively individuals in risk





The iCARE project builds on **synergies** with past EU-funded projects that focused on healthcare accessibility for vulnerable groups

iCARE extends the **Cross4all project*** by integrating lessons learned, especially in relation to tools for assessing healthcare accessibility, to tools to enable citizens in to create personal electronic health records for cross-border use and to inclusive e-health services

This continuity enables iCARE to **leverage proven methods**, avoid duplication, and strengthen impact within the region

(*) Interreg Greece-North Macedonia 2014-2020 project



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PROJECT

Healthcare open and inclusive for all (iCARE)

BUDGET

€892.220,98

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