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Relationship Between Financial Crisis, Suicide and Social Parameters in Greece

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Introduction

Suicide constitutes one of the major public health problems worldwide. The aim of this study is to examine the possible correlation of suicide rates in Greece with some social indices during the financial crisis.

Material and methods

Our study includes all suicide rates recorded in Greece during the time period 2001-2011 (EL.STAT). We assessed the standardized suicide rates (number of suicide cases per 100.000 inhabitants, SSR). We obtained data from EL.STAT. regarding the following social indices: unemployment, population at-risk-of poverty or social exclusion and material deprivation.

Results

During the period 2001-2011 a total number of 4.133 cases of suicide were recorded. Male suicides were 3.424 (82.8%) and female suicides were 710 (17.2%). The mean SSR for the period study (2001-2011) was $3.37 \pm 0.37 / 100.000$ inhabitants. The mean male SSR was $5.64 \pm 0.64 / 100.000$ and the mean female SSR was $1.15 \pm 0.22 / 100.000$. Our analysis has clearly demonstrated a positive correlation between unemployment and total SSR ($r=0.64$, $p=0.03$), as well as between unemployment and male SSR ($r=0.68$, $p=0.02$) for the period 2001-2011. During the period of economic crisis (2008-2011) an even positive correlation between unemployment and male SSR was observed ($r=0.96$, $p=0.03$). Yet, during the period of economic crisis a positive correlation between population at risk of poverty or social exclusion and total SSR ($r=0.96$, $p=0.03$) as well as between material deprivation and male SSR ($r=0.99$, $p=0.01$) was revealed.

Conclusions

The results of this study show that the effect of economic crisis and recession in Greece on social parameters is evident.