

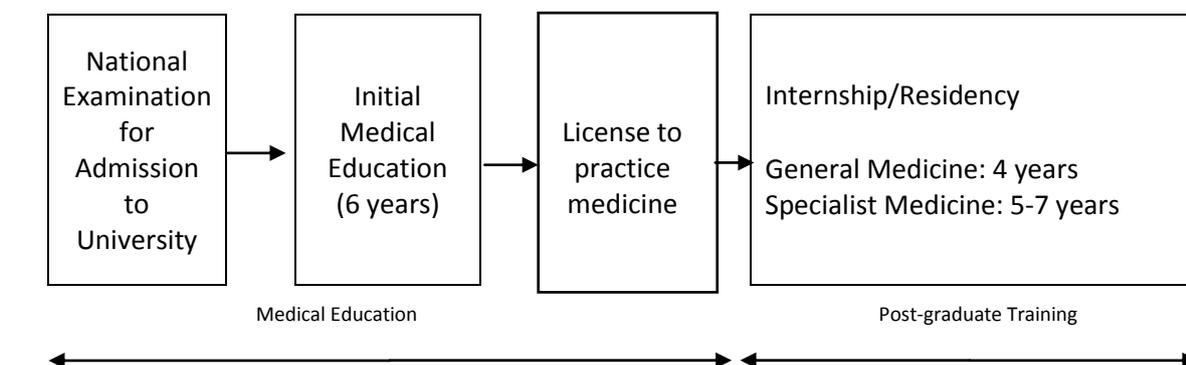


Trends in Medical Education and Training in Greece

1. Brief Overview of Medical Education and Training Pathways

- Entry to medical education in Greece can occur following the completion of high-school education and a successful national university entry exam. Admission to medical education is determined by an overall score combining the grades obtained during the final year of high school and the grades obtained in the national examination for university entry. The allocation of students to medical schools is controlled centrally, not by individual universities.
- Initial medical education in Greece last for six years. The first three years are preclinical and involve basic sciences, whereas the remaining three years involve more clinical and hospital-based training. Examinations are held twice a year, at the end of each semester. There is no overall final examination at the end of the six year period.
- The Ministry of Health is responsible for post-graduate medical training and determining the number of positions available. Once registered with the Physicians Association, application for post-graduate training is possible. The funding for post-graduate training comes from the National Health Service budget. Applications for post-graduate training are made to individual hospitals, not centrally. Post-graduate training takes place solely in public or university-affiliated hospitals. Since the numbers of training positions offered are less that the numbers of graduates, once doctors apply, they are placed on a waiting list. Acquiring a training position in the preferred specialization can be a long process of three to four years (and even longer in some specialty areas). The duration of post-graduate training varies according to the selected area of specialization. Training as a General Practitioner takes four years, whereas specialization training ranges from five to seven years. No specific quotas have been adopted by the Ministry of Health for admissions to specific specialties.
- To become a doctor in Greece, a student can therefore expect a total 10 to 13 years of higher education and post-graduate training, depending on the area of specialisation (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Medical Education and Training Path, Greece



Source: Economou, 2010.

2. Trends in Admissions to Medical Schools

- The number of admissions to medical schools is determined by the Ministry of Education. The number of students admitted to medical education has increased in recent years in Greece, going up from 895 in 2012 to 1150 in 2013 and 2014 (Ministry of Education, 2015).
- Longer time series are available in terms of the number of students graduating from medical schools. The number of new graduates generally reflects decisions about admission rates taken six years earlier. The data show that the number of new graduates from medical schools in Greece increased between 2000 and 2006 to reach a peak of 1625 in 2006, but it has since then come down to just over 1000 new medical graduates in 2012 (OECD, 2015).
- Following the completion of their initial medical degree, graduates have no national accreditation examination and full registration to the Medical Association of Greece is granted. Following registration and before a graduate can proceed to post-graduate training, it is mandatory to work for a year providing healthcare services in a rural area (Αγροτικό), either in a rural health centre or as General Practitioner at a rural area.

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