

Cooperation Programme INTERREG V-A Greece-Bulgaria 2014 – 2020

“Policies for Enhancing Access to Health Services in Deprived Areas”

The Healthy Municipality

MIS Code: 5011021

Population Socioeconomic Characteristics and Operating Health Infra structure

Deliverable 3.2.1 - 3.5.1

ANNEX I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thessaloniki, 2018

INTRODUCTION

This study “Population socioeconomic characteristics and operating health infra structure” was prepared by the Department of Economics of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the Agency for Transnational Training and Development TRANSCOOP AMKE in the context of the project “Policies for Enhancing Access to Health Services in Deprived Areas”: “The Healthy Municipality” implemented as a project of the INTERREG V-A Cooperation Programme Greece - Bulgaria 2014 – 2020, MIS code 5011021.

The aim of the project is to plan prevention policies in the health sector, as well as to pilot implement them in primary local administration, particularly in detached areas, thus contributing to the enhancement of the provided health services to the inhabitants of these areas and to the overall enhancement of their living standards.

The participating organisations in the project are:

- Regional Development Agency of Rhodope S.A. (GR), as coordinating partner
- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki - Special Account for Research Funds - Department of Economics (GR)
- Municipality of Arriana of the Regional Administration of Rhodope (GR)
- Municipality of Iasmos of the Regional Administration of Rhodope (GR)
- Agency for Transnational Training and Development TRANSCOOP AMKE (GR)
- Regional Health Inspectorate of Haskovo (BG)
- Association of Rhodope Municipalities (BG)
- Municipality of Krumovgrad (BG) and
- Municipality of Momchilgrad (BG).

In the context of this project, pilot actions are planned to be implemented in the Municipalities of Arriana and Iasmos, in the Regional Unit of Rhodope in Greece, as well as to the Municipalities of Krumovgrad and Momchilgrad in Bulgaria.

Moreover, the project aims to establish, after its completion, a cross-border network of Local Administration institutions, Administration and the research community, committed to investigate problems and propose suggestions in health prevention, thus contributing to the essential improvement of living conditions of the inhabitants and the development of these areas.

It has to be mentioned that the conclusions and methodological tools of this project are designed in a way that will allow transferability to any other area of the two involved countries or beyond.

The aim this study of is to describe and examine the health service system along with the most important socio-economic factors that may affect the health status of the inhabitants of the Municipalities of Arriana and Iasmos of the Regional Unit of Rhodope of the Region of

Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, in order to support the design of proper prevention policies in the health sector in these two areas.

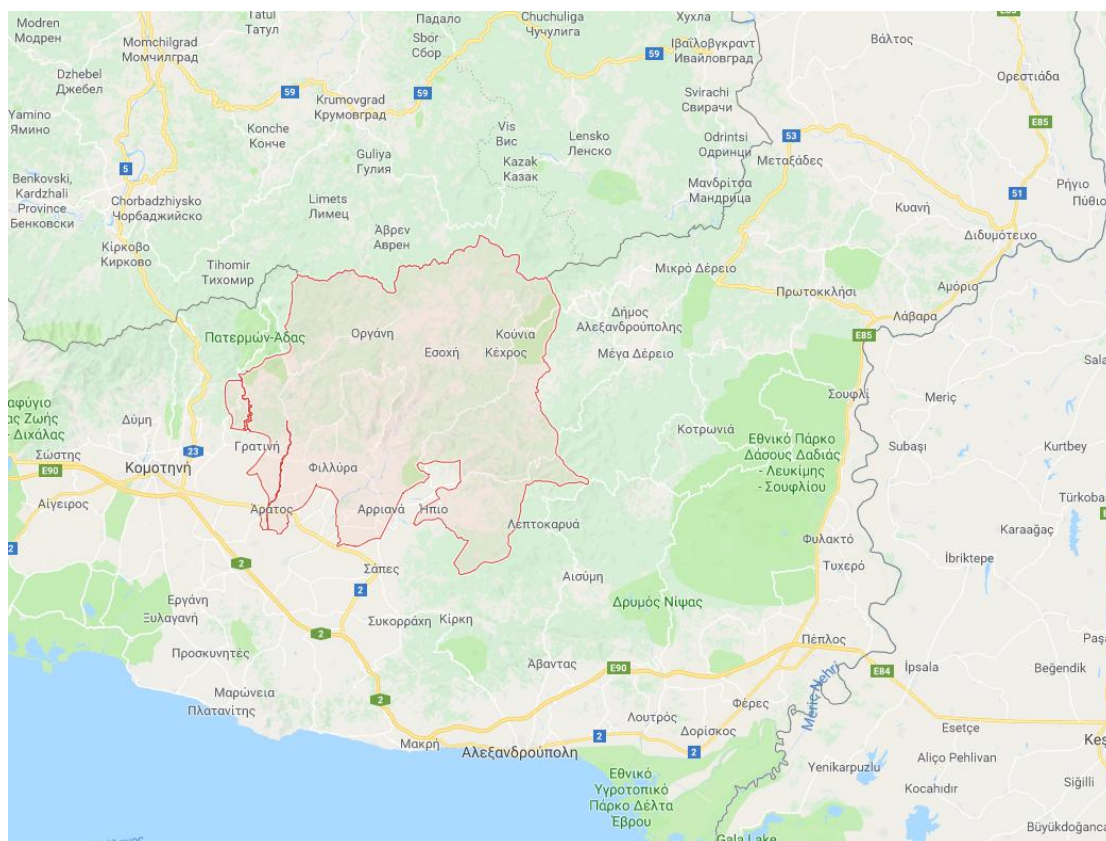
According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2018), the main determinants of health are:

- *"Income and social status - higher income and social status are linked to better health. The greater the gap between the richest and poorest people, the greater the differences in health.*
- *Education – low education levels are linked with poor health, more stress and lower self-confidence.*
- *Physical environment – safe water and clean air, healthy workplaces, safe houses, communities and roads all contribute to good health. Employment and working conditions – people in employment are healthier, particularly those who have more control over their working conditions*
- *Social support networks – greater support from families, friends and communities is linked to better health. Culture - customs and traditions, and the beliefs of the family and community all affect health.*
- *Genetics - inheritance plays a part in determining lifespan, healthiness and the likelihood of developing certain illnesses. Personal behaviour and coping skills – balanced eating, keeping active, smoking, drinking, and how we deal with life's stresses and challenges all affect health.*
- *Health services - access and use of services that prevent and treat disease influences health*
- *Gender - Men and women suffer from different types of diseases at different ages."*

In this context, the main characteristics of the Municipalities of Arriana and Iasmos of the Regional Unit of Rhodope, the socio-economic components of their population and the systems for the provision of health services that the inhabitants can access are described and an assessment of their effectiveness is attempted, in order to reach conclusions about the design of prevention policies in the certain area.

1. Presentation of the area

1.1 Municipality of Arriana



Municipality of Arriana is one of the 4 Municipalities of the Regional Unit of Rodopi of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace and it is located on the borderline with Bulgaria. It was established as a Municipality under the "Kallikratis" programme, by the merger of the formerly existing Municipalities of Arriana and Filyra and the Communes of Organi and Kehro. The Municipality covers an area of 771,2 sq. km and its population according to the 2011 Census is up to 16,577 inhabitants. The Municipality headquarters is in Filyra.

Municipality of Arriana is divided in 4 "Municipal Communes" that correspond to the 4 formerly existing Municipalities and Communes that were merged. Each Municipal Commune is further divided in "Communities" that correspond to the former "subdivisions" of the Municipalities that were abolished. The now existing Communes of the Municipality used to be autonomous Communities and Municipalities before the Kapodistrias programme that preceded the Kallikratis programme.

- Commune of Arriana. This Municipal Commune used to be the whole Municipality before it was merged with the other 3 former Municipalities under the Kallikratis programme. It was established as a Municipality with headquarters in Arriana under

the Kapodistrias programme by merging former Communities of the area. Its population is 5,589 inhabitants.

- Commune of Filyra. It is the "Kapodistrian" former Municipality of Filyra, with its headquarters in Filyra (which is also the headquarters of the new Municipality). Its population is 8,014 inhabitants.
- Commune of Organi. It used to be the Community of Organi that is now the homonymous Local Commune. Its population is 2,825 inhabitants.
- Commune of Kehro. It used to be the Community of Kehro that is now the homonymous Local Commune. Its population is 1,558 inhabitants.

In Table ANNEX I-1 communities and settlements are presented, along with their population.

95% of the inhabitants are muslim and consist of Turkish-speaking muslims in lowlands and inhabitants of the highlands that mainly speak the Pomacic language.

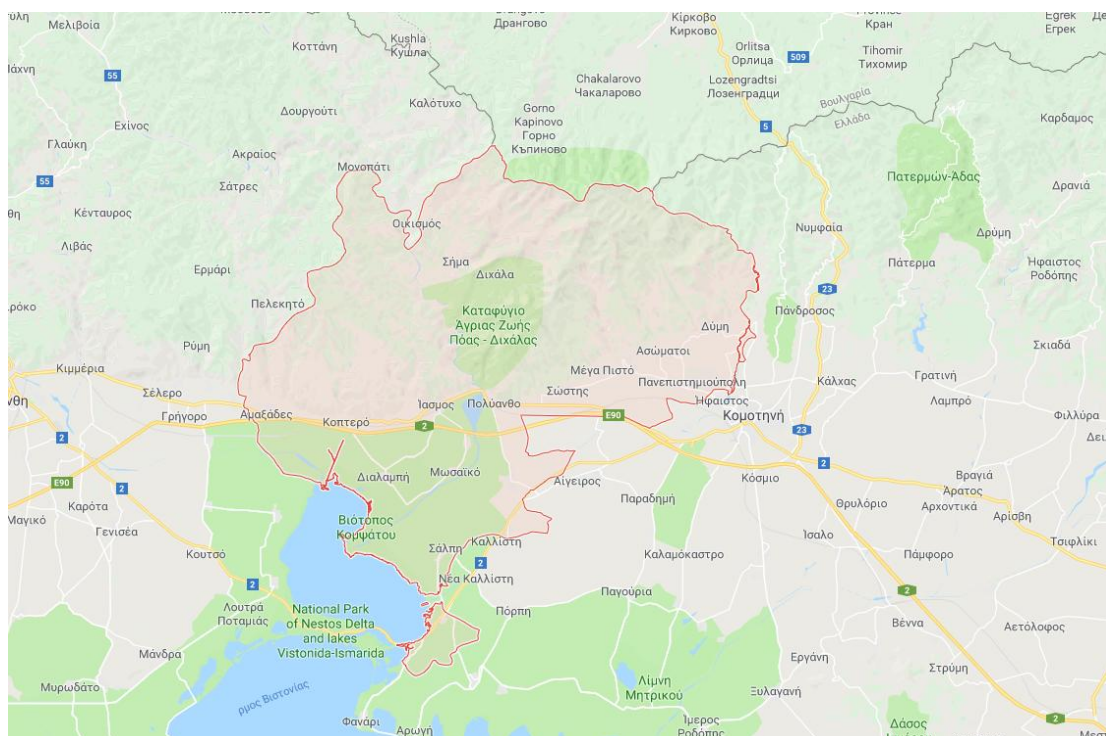
Table 1. Communities and settlements of the Municipality of Arriana (2011)

	Population		
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF ARRIANA	5.589		
Local commune of Agiohori		226	
Local commune of Arriana		1.147	
Local commune of Darmeni		314	
Local commune of Dilina		307	
Local commune of Ipio		265	
Local commune of Kinyra		171	
Local commune of Lykio		1.016	
Local commune of Mikro Pisto		433	
Local commune of Mystaka		419	
Local commune of Neda		246	
Local commune of Nikites		94	
Local commune of Plagia		294	
Local commune of Skaloma		318	
Local commune of Strofi		339	
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF KEHROS	1.558		
Local commune of Kehros		1.558	
Kehros			147
Ano Kampi			41
Vourla			44
Kampos			164
Kato Kampi			20
Kerasia			135
Mikros Kehros			167
Monastiri			79
Tsouka			67
Hamilo			150
Haradra			118
Hloi			426
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF ORGANI	2.825		
Municipal commune of Organi		2.825	
Organi			511
Ano Kardamos			126
Vyrsini			403

	Population		
Drania			170
Kalyvia			84
Kardamos			190
Kato Vyrsini			173
Kovalo			89
Kymi			403
Myrtsiki			433
Smigada			243
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF FILYRA	8.014		
Local commune of Agra		300	
Local commune of Ano Drosini		119	
Local commune of Aratos		1.124	
Local commune of Ardia		55	
Local commune of Arhontika		333	
Local commune of Vragia		473	
Local commune of Dokos		1.029	
Local commune of Drosia		257	
Local commune of Drymi		318	
Local commune of Esohi		357	
Local commune of Kato Drosini		111	
Local commune of Lampros		518	
Local commune of Neo Kallyntirio		224	
Local commune of Nevro		165	
Local commune of Omiriko		326	
Local commune of Passos		686	
Local commune of Patermes		111	
Local commune of Ragada		366	
Local commune of Skiada		110	
Local commune of Filyra		1.032	

Source: Ministry of Interior, http://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/f0ff9297-f516-40ff-a70e-eca84e2ec9b9/kallikraths_kwdikologio1_31_5_11.xls

1.2 Municipality of Iasmos



Municipality of Iasmos is one of the 4 Municipalities of the Regional Unit of Rodopi of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace and was established under the Kallikratis programme. It came from the merger of the Municipalities of Iasmos and Sostis and the Community of Amaxades that were pre-existing in the area. The headquarters of the Municipality are in Iasmos. It covers an area of 485.3 sq. km and it is by 3/5 highlands and 2/5 lowlands. Its population is 13,810 inhabitants according to the 2011 Census.

Municipality of Iasmos is divided in 2 "Municipal Communes" and a "Local Commune" that correspond to the 2 Municipalities and one Local Commune that were merged under the Kallikratis programme. Every Municipal Commune is divided in further "Communities" that correspond to the former "subdivisions" of the Municipalities that were abolished. The now existing Communes of the Municipality used to be autonomous Communities and Municipalities before the Kapodistrias programme that preceded the Kallikratis programme.

Municipal Commune of Iasmos. The Municipal Commune (and former Municipality) of Iasmos consists of 5 Communities (former municipal subdivisions) and has a population of 6,614 inhabitants according to the 2011 Census. It covers an area of 200,4 sq. km².

Municipal Commune of Sostis. Before the merger, it used to be the Municipality of Sostis and it consists of 7 Communities (former municipal subdivisions). Its headquarters are in Sostis and its population is up to 6,685 inhabitants.

Municipal Commune of Amaxades. It includes the Community of Amaxades, which is the oldest Community of Rodopi. Its population is 1,591 inhabitants.

In Table 2 communities and settlements are presented, along with their population. The economic

The economically active population of the Municipality of Iasmos is 5,600 άτομα. Unemployment is up to 10.7%. Primary sector (agriculture and livestock) employ about 75% of the economically active population. Christians and Muslims coexist in the Municipality of Iasmos.

Table 2. Communities and settlements of the Municipality of Iasmos (2011)

	Population		
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF IASMOS	6.614		
Municipal commune of Iasmos		6.614	
Iasmos			2.732
Galini			330
Dialampi			628
Ippiko			85
Koptero			837
Melitena			42
Mosaiko			188
Polyarno			7
Tageo			10
Local commune of Amvrosia		952	
Amvrosia			592
Mikro Palladio			44
Palladio			316
Local commune of Salpi		803	
Salpi			679
Glykoneri			124
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF SOSTIS	6.685		
Municipal commune of Sostis		750	
Municipal commune of Asomati		3.024	
Agiasma			361
Asomati			786
Dymi			431
Thamna			550
Panepistimioupoli			380
Rizoma			265

	Population		
Folea			251
Local commune of Kerasea		16	
Local commune of Linos		408	
Local commune of Megalo Pisto		950	
Megalo Pisto			950
Monastery of St. Maximos Kapsokalyvitis			
Local commune of Mishos		724	
Local commune of Polyantho		813	
Polyantho			794
Krystali			10
Trikorfo			9
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF AMAXADES	1.591		
Local commune of Amaxades		1.591	
Amaxades			1.030
Ano Amaxades			533
Monahi			28

Source: Ministry of Interior, http://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/f0ff9297-f516-40ff-a70e-eca84e2ec9b9/kallikraths_kwdikologio1_31_5_11.xls

1.3 Conclusions

The two Municipalities are located in the North-eastern part of the country, in the limits of the Rhodope mountains, in the border with Bulgaria. They are municipalities of small population and large dispersion in small agricultural establishments. There is lack of urban centers and structures. Both Municipalities are covered by lowland and mountainous areas, mainly the latter. The main economic activity of the area is in the primary sector, agriculture in the lowlands and livestock on the mountainous areas.

The climate in the area is Mediterranean; in mountainous areas it is more similar to Continental climate, whereas in lowlands, weather conditions are generally milder and more humid.

Residential dispersion is also extended in the Municipality of Arriana; inhabitants are distributed in 36 Local and Municipal Communes. Density is greater in the Municipality of Iasmos, which consists of only 11 Local and Municipal Communes, some of them having a greater population density.

Both Municipalities are mainly representing the Muslim minority, especially the Municipality of Arriana that is almost entirely inhabited by Muslim population. However, the Municipalities also have internal cultural and religious differentiation, especially in the Municipality of Arriana, as the mountainous Municipal Communes (Organi, Kehro and the northern part of Fillyra in the Municipality of Arriana and some establishments in the Municipality of Iasmos) are inhabited by Pomac Muslims, whereas the lowlands of the two Municipalities are inhabited by Muslims of Turkish origin (in the Municipality of Arriana) or mixed Christian – Muslim population (in the Municipality of Iasmos).

In transport, both Municipalities have access to Egnatia, which crosses the Municipality of Iasmos, as well as the Old National Road Xanthi – Konotini. The vertical (to Egnatia) route of Nymfea to the Greek – Bulgarian border, as well as the main route of Egnatia to Komotini and Alexandroupoli are also close to the Municipality of Arriana.

Both Municipalities are served by the Railway Station of Komotini. The closest airport is the airport of Alexandroupoli.

2. Population

Both Municipalities are of particularly low population density (3-4 times lower density than the country average). Another key feature of these areas is the dramatic reduction of population, which was 7-9 times greater than the country average during the decade 2001-2011 (during this decade, the population of the Region and the Regional Unit of Rhodope saw an increase).

Table 3. Population and area of Municipalities (2011)

	Population	Area	Density
GREECE (TOTAL)	10.816.286	131.957	81,97
REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE	608.182	14.158	42,96
REGIONAL UNIT OF RODOPI	112.039	2.543	44,06
MUNICIPALITY OF ARRIANA	16.577	769	21,56
MUNICIPALITY OF IASMOS	13.810	485	28,46

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority,

http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics?p_p_id=documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ&p_p_lifecycle=2&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_cacheability=cacheLevelPage&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_count=4&p_p_col_pos=2&documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_javax.faces.resource=document&documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_in=downloadResources&documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_documentID=151611&documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_locale=el

The population is relatively aged, especially in the Municipality of Iasmos, where (compared to the country average) the birth rate is in particularly low levels, whereas aging index and dependency ratio are much higher. The trend of births in the Municipality of Arriana is also negative, but less intense than in the Municipality of Iasmos.

Table 4. Dependency ratio and aging index

	Dependency ratio	Aging index
GREECE (TOTAL)	53,15%	136,65%
REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE	58,76%	143,93%
REGIONAL UNIT OF RODOPI	54,39%	136,85%
MUNICIPALITY OF ARRIANA	52,14%	130,28%
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF ARRIANA	52,37%	159,24%
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF KEHRO	49,57%	120,71%
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF ORGANI	54,38%	86,42%
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF FILLYRA	51,75%	128,85%
MUNICIPALITY OF IASMOS	62,20%	204,28%
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF IASMOS	70,60%	212,58%

	Dependency ratio	Aging index
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF SOSTIS	57,17%	235,86%
MUNICIPAL COMMUNE OF AMAXADES	55,39%	111,02%

Low educational level is characteristic, despite some improvement during the period 2001 - 2011. The proportion of illiteracy (as well as the percentage of dropping out of school) is double than the country average, as the majority of inhabitants fails to complete second grade education. The percentage of population with second and third grade education are in 1/4 and 1/5 of the country average respectively.

GDP per capita in Rhodope has become the lowest in country (slightly higher than the country average), with a record of continuous and intense reduction for many years. The contribution of the primary sector to GVA is double than the respective contribution in country level, and it is expected to be even higher for the examined Municipalities, since 83% of the occupied workforce in the Municipality of Arriana and 60% in the Municipality of Iasmos are occupied in the primary sector (with a slight reduction of these percentages since the Census of 2001).

Table 5. GDP per capita (euros)

	2000	2005	2009	2010	2011*	2012*	2013*	2014*	2015*
GREECE (TOTAL)	13,071.44	18,133.79	21,385.94	20,324.04	18,642.86	17,311.29	16,475.18	16,401.99	16,293.56
NORTHERN GREECE	10,618.61	14,139.12	16,397.95	15,616.44	14,421.83	13,403.74	12,603.02	12,528.57	12,443.89
REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE	10,074.59	13,142.33	15,271.51	15,056.91	13,320.34	12,403.11	11,498.32	11,324.31	11,164.35
REGIONAL UNIT OF RODOPI	10,497.20	12,875.49	14,608.10	13,633.92	12,515.02	11,341.36	10,422.04	9,772.95	9,532.58

* Temporary.

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority,

http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics?p_p_id=documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_Mr0GiQJsgPHd&p_p_lifecycle=2&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_cacheability=cacheLevelPage&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_count=4&p_p_col_pos=3&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_Mr0GiQJsgPHd_javax.faces.resource=document&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_Mr0GiQJsgPHd_in=downloadResources&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_Mr0GiQJsgPHd_documentID=115366&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_Mr0GiQJsgPHd_locale=eTable E2

The reduction of the active population in both Municipalities is intense (23-30%) compared to the country average (0,6%). This contributes to lower levels of unemployment, which is very low, particularly in the Municipality of Arriana, since human capital is abandoning the area.

GREECE (TOTAL)	18.73%
NORTHERN GREECE	21.22%
REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE	20.15%
REGIONAL UNIT OF RODOPI	16.77%
MUNICIPALITY OF ARRIANA	7.94%
MUNICIPALITY OF IASMOS	16.22%

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority,

http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics?p_p_id=documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ&p_p_lifecycle=2&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_cacheability=cacheLevelPage&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_count=4&p_p_col_pos=2&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_javax.faces.resource=document&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_in=downloadResources&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_documentID=230473&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_locale=el

The rural nature of these two Municipalities is also reflected residence status. Most of 80% of the houses are single-dwelling buildings, whereas the vast majority was built before 1970, which is indicative of the age of buildings and, consequently, of the quality of residence and overall living conditions of the inhabitants. Inhabitation density per square meter is significantly larger than the country’s average

67% of the dwellings in Municipality of Iasmos and 96% of the dwellings in the Municipality of Arriana use wood for cooking, whereas the relevant proportion for using wood as main source of heating is in similar levels. More than half of the houses are not insulated. 13% of the dwellings does not have a bathroom in-house, whereas the respective percentage for toilet is 80% in the Municipality of Arriana and 38% in the Municipality of Iasmos.

Table 6. Normal dwellings by availability of toilet (2011)

	Indoor flushing toilet for sole use of household	Outdoor flushing toilet for sole use of household / No toilet or WC
GREECE (TOTAL)	95.71%	4.29%
NORTHERN GREECE	95.76%	4.24%
REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE	90.29%	9.71%
REGIONAL UNIT OF RODOPI	73.00%	27.00%
MUNICIPALITY OF ARRIANA	20.18%	79.82%
MUNICIPALITY OF IASMOS	61.82%	38.18%

Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority,

http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics?p_p_id=documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ&p_p_lifecycle=2&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_cacheability=cacheLevelPage&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_count=4&p_p_col_pos=2&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_javax.faces.resource=document&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_in=downloadResources&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_documentID=138621&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_locale=el

The percentage of houses with access to the internet is three times lower than the country average.

The two Municipalities have differences between them; the Municipality of Iasmos has a more urban nature than the Municipality of Arriana. However, the overall picture of both Municipalities is particularly negative, being some of the less developed areas in the country. Some projects designed by the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace are expected to improve the productive potential of the area, however it will take time for the completion of these projects and their impact in local GDP and inhabitants' income.

The most important characteristic of the area is the cultural and religious differentiation of its inhabitants, as they are an important part of the country's Muslim minority. This differentiation, in accordance with the absence of general integration policies for many years in the country, results to the particular characteristics of this area. Moreover, further differentiation in the intern of the examined minority result to further differentiation between individual small areas – Municipal Communes, depending on the social groups of their inhabitants.

Therefore, despite the problematic outlook reflected by the area in total, there are differentiations in the intensity of the problems, depending on the origin and cultural characteristics of their inhabitants and their consequent localization in the mountainous or lowland part of the Municipalities, their occupation, income, etc.

Concluding, the above elements indicate an area in deep economic and social crisis, which may have serious implications for the physical and mental health of its inhabitants.

3. Morbidity and mortality

The most important causes of death in the area are circulatory system diseases, neoplasms and respiratory system diseases, which is in accordance with the nation-wide trends. Particularly in the Municipality of Arriana, deaths from diseases of the circulatory system appear in greater frequency than the country's average, followed by neoplasms and diseases of the respiratory system.

In the Municipality of Iasmos, circulatory system diseases are also the most frequent cause of death, however they remain in lower levels than in the Municipality of Arriana, along with neoplasms and respiratory system diseases. Violent deaths, mainly caused by traffic accidents show high levels of frequency in this Municipality, as frequency is 50% higher than country's average.

In terms of morbidity, data is only available in Regional Unit level and indicate higher frequency in circulatory system diseases and diseases of the nervous system and sense organs.

Table 7. Patients discharged by category of diseases and place of permanent residence (per 1,000 inhabitants) 2012

	GREECE (TOTAL)	REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE	REGIONAL UNIT OF RODOPI
Total	200.61	199.83	177.57
Infectious and parasitic diseases	5.51	6.35	3.94
Neoplasms	24.96	23.15	19.64
Endocrine and metabolic diseases, nutritional deficiencies immunity disorders	4.37	3.41	2.64
Diseases of blood and bloodforming organs	3.48	2.78	2.36
Mental disorders	3.76	3.68	4.11
Diseases of the nervous system and sense organs	19.11	20.21	22.10
Diseases of the circulatory system	26.86	28.83	29.73
Diseases of the respiratory system	16.70	14.06	12.08
Diseases of the digestive system	20.49	19.83	16.07
Diseases of genito-urinary system	17.08	18.19	16.92
Complications of pregnancy, childbirth, and the puerperium	13.60	16.36	13.00
Diseases of skin and subcutaneous tissue	3.83	3.47	2.50

	GREECE (TOTAL)	REGION OF EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE	REGIONAL UNIT OF RODOPI
Diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue	8.01	7.35	5.07
Congenital anomalies	1.11	1.10	1.36
Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	2.93	2.20	1.36
Symptoms signs and ill-defined conditions	14.15	15.76	11.93
Injury and poisoning	14.66	13.12	12.78

Sources: Hellenic Statistical Authority,

http://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics?p_p_id=documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ&p_p_lifecycle=2&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_cacheability=cacheLevelPage&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_count=4&p_p_col_pos=2&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_javax.faces.resource=document&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_in=downloadResources&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_documentID=246558&_documents_WAR_publicationsportlet_INSTANCE_VBZOni0vs5VJ_locale=el

However, after examination of the data of the Regional Infirmaries in the two Municipalities, the main diagnosed diseases are mainly those of the circulatory system, diabetes and depression, for all Municipal Communes.

It is also important to note that during the last years, there is a significant increase of skin disorders, mental disorders, unspecified signs and ill-defined conditions, congenital anomalies, complications of pregnancy and neoplasms.

Morbidity factors related to occupation have to be given particular importance, due to the dominant contribution of agriculture in employment in the area. This certain sector, due to its particularity that members of the family are also unofficially employed, is expected to seriously affect the health of the inhabitants in both Municipalities.

The agricultural sector in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace shows double frequency of workplace accidents compared to country's average. Workers in the agricultural sector report more musculoskeletal disorders and infections, as well as greater exposure to manual load handling, improper body postures, chemical substances and dust, as well as injury risks.

Due to the occupation of the inhabitants in livestock, as well as to the resulted living conditions (existence of livestock holdings inside establishments, uncontrolled dispose of livestock waste, etc.), the presence of diseases transmitted by animals to humans (brucellosis, honey fever, echinococcosis, etc.), even in small scale, makes drastic prevention measures (vaccinations, killing of animals, etc.), as well as measures against infectious diseases necessary.

4. Health services

The Primary Health Care System in Greece is currently under a serious reform, which has not yet been implemented in the certain Municipalities. At the present, primary health care in the Municipality of Iasmos is covered by 3 Regional Infirmaries and the Health Center of Iasmos, whereas in the Municipality of Arriana by 4 Regional Infirmaries under the Health Center of Sappes (outside the Municipality).

However, even these local facilities face serious challenges, with serious deficiencies in personnel and equipment.

Although it is not clearly recorded, it appears that traffic in local facilities is significantly affected by the accessibility of the inhabitants to visit structures outside the area, either for medical examinations or for medical prescriptions (e.g. Municipal Commune of Organi), whereas the more that accessibility to Komotini is increased the less the traffic in local facilities, especially for medical examinations. The most important example is in the Health Center of Iasmos, which is the best organized facility in the two Municipalities but has only a limited number of visits, especially emergencies that eventually have to move to the closest facility for immediate treatment.

An also important characteristic is the particularly high proportion of visits for prescription in the total visits of the local primary care facilities, except from the Health Center of Iasmos, where this proportion is relatively small.

Secondary and tertiary health care is mainly provided by the Hospital of Komotini (Sismanoglio) and to some extent by the Hospital of Alexandroupoli.

The number of doctors per 1.000 inhabitants is much smaller than the country's average (in the Municipality of Arriana it is practically non-existing). The density of Pharmacies is also particularly low.

The household expenditure of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace for health service is in much lower levels than the country's average (19%), particularly for private hospitalization, as well as for provision of external services, whereas only expenditure for pharmaceuticals appears to be higher.

Intervention of Local Administration in health includes a number of initiatives. The best established and most widely accepted with recorded positive results is the Programme "Help at Home", which is implemented by both Municipalities. It is also important that both Municipalities participate in the National Intermunicipal Network of Healthy Cities - Health Promotion, which has been established in national level.

Both Municipalities have a n "Self-contained Department of Social Protection, Education and Culture", which undertakes mainly support actions of health and administrative content, either independently or in collaboration with the responsible central structures (Ministries).

Moreover, the Municipalities undertake initiatives in the context of various programmes aiming at prevention, information, examination, etc.

Their experience of local communities is also important, as they have a good knowledge of the particularities and problems of the inhabitants, especially in an area where they are particularly intense, due to the large representation of minority social groups.

Beyond the intervention of the Municipalities, there is an important role of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace through the Public Health Administration, for regulative and supervisory intervention on the health service providers (licensing, inspections, etc.) as well as for immediate intervention through initiatives for information, free medical examinations, blood donation, etc.

Complementary to the above, activities of 1st Grade Local Administration can be mentioned in the sectors of Welfare, Mental Health and Social Integration, as well as Sports and Culture, since they contribute to the prevention and enhancement of physical and mental health of the inhabitants of the area.