

# New light on Southern European healthcare systems in the economic crisis

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Very few matters draw as much public attention as the ongoing debate surrounding national healthcare services. When we speak of even the most basic access to medicines and cures - particularly sensitive topics during times of economic crises - political interference and private interests have dominated much of the discourse.

In their revealing article for South European Society and Politics, Maria Petmesidou, Emmanuele Pavolini and Ana M. Guillén trace the common trajectories followed by four South European countries – Portugal, Greece, Spain and Italy – during the crisis. By measuring public dissatisfaction and studying the dichotomised processes behind certain [healthcare practices](#), the investigation produces startling evidence regarding the transformative process in both the funding and provision sides of the Southern European health systems.

One academic, who peer-reviewed the article, was clearly affected by the results of the research:

Part of what was alarming was that it was a confirmation of exactly what I have feared will happen as healthcare systems become marketised: the access of poorer people to good healthcare will decrease... When I described the Greek content of the paper to my wife... she said, 'People need to know about this stuff. It shouldn't just be hidden away in research journals.'

Imbalanced methods to bridge gaps in [healthcare](#) access, shortages in

funding and research, divisions in equality; are the public systems of these four major European states in danger of withering away to nothing?

**More information:** "South European Healthcare Systems under Harsh Austerity: A Progress–Regression Mix?" Maria Petmesidou, Emmanuele Pavolini, Ana M. Guillén. *South European Society and Politics* [DOI: 10.1080/13608746.2014.949994](https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2014.949994)

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