

# EONS Cancer Nursing Index 2022-2025©

## National profile: Greece

The EONS Cancer Nursing Index (ECNI) was developed by the EONS Advocacy Working Group to illustrate the development and status of this profession in Europe. The index (with scores from 0-100) covers the following dimensions: Education and Career Development, Patient and Occupational Safety, Recognition, Working Conditions and Impact and Workforce statistics.

The first ECNI survey, conducted in 2020, gathered responses from more than 650 cancer nurses across 42 European countries. ECNI 2020 offered a unique overview of the status of cancer nursing across Europe, highlighting both common challenges and country-specific variations. The data have since been presented at multiple international meetings and used to support advocacy for improved education, safety, and recognition of cancer nurses. In 2022, the ECNI 2022 update gathered responses from 630 nurses in 29 countries. This iteration placed greater focus on local workplace settings and included additional questions addressing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and staffing levels. The ECNI 2025 builds on the 2022 findings with a special focus on working conditions and safety in cancer nursing, both key concerns raised in previous editions.

The Index is based on:

1. EONS Survey on Patient and Occupational Safety (anonymous survey among cancer nurses, 2025 respectively)
2. Work force statistics (obtained from ec.europe.eu/Eurostat and OECD in 2023).

A scoring system was developed to reflect the level of development for the different Index dimensions/items. For items with a variety of responses from the same country, the most frequently reported response was used. The purpose of the Index is primarily not to rank some countries as better than others, moreover, to illustrate cancer nursing profiles, differences and areas in need of development. The Index could be used to aid the development of cancer nursing in each country as well as for general European progress. The ECNI offers a snapshot of the status in cancer nursing across Europe, reported by the profession. The results largely depend on number of and profiles of responses from each country.

More information on ECNI including national profiles for each county can be found on

<https://www.cancernurse.eu/ecni>

| Dimension/item                                                | Maximum score | Score 2022 | Score 2025 | Comments |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------|------------|----------|
| OVERALL SCORES                                                | 100           | 53         | 71         |          |
| EDUCATION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT<br>(5 items presented below) | 23            | 16         | 19         |          |
| Specialist education at university level                      | 5             | 5          | 5          |          |
| Master programs in cancer nursing                             | 4             | 4          | 5          |          |

|                                                                                                                              |           |           |           |                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Professors in cancer nursing                                                                                                 | 4         | 4         | 4         |                                                                                                      |
| Advanced cancer nursing roles established                                                                                    | 4         | 0         | 2         |                                                                                                      |
| EONS Cancer Nursing Framework recognized and supported                                                                       | 5         | 3         | 3         |                                                                                                      |
| <b>PATIENT AND OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY<br/>(8 items presented below)</b>                                                         | <b>36</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>26</b> |                                                                                                      |
| Safety guidelines (hazardous drugs) available                                                                                | 5         | 2         | 5         |                                                                                                      |
| Guidelines during pregnancy (hazardous drugs)                                                                                | 5         | 2         | 2         | Implementation remains variable across workplaces.                                                   |
| Pregnant and /or breastfeeding women assigned other tasks that don't involve direct contact with cytotoxic/radioactive drugs | 5         | 2         | 5         |                                                                                                      |
| Systematic testing for occupational exposure (surface swipes)                                                                | 3         | 0         | 0         | Systematic occupational exposure monitoring remains unavailable.                                     |
| Access to cytotoxic spillage kit and PPE                                                                                     | 5         | 1         | 5         | All responding nurses reported that cytotoxic spillage kit and PPE are available at all workplaces.  |
| Introductory training before administer hazardous drugs                                                                      | 5         | 2         | 2         | Various responses for 2025<br>Mandatory training not consistently implemented across all workplaces. |
| Nurses preparing cytotoxic drugs                                                                                             | 5         | 4         | 4         | Preparation of hazardous drugs by nurses reported very rarely.                                       |
| Speak-up or whistle blower policy implemented for all members of staff                                                       | 3         | 2         | 3         | Policies appear established in most workplaces.                                                      |
| <b>RECOGNITION (4 items presented below)</b>                                                                                 | <b>18</b> | <b>8</b>  | <b>7</b>  |                                                                                                      |
| Does the country have a national cancer plan that includes nursing care?                                                     | 3         | 0         | 0         |                                                                                                      |
| Does your workplace/center have Board positions dedicated for cancer nursing?                                                | 5         | 1         | 2         |                                                                                                      |
| To what extent is nurse-led cancer care implemented in your workplace/center?                                                | 5         | 2         | 0         | Limited implementation reported in 2025 responses.                                                   |
| Does the country have a cancer nursing society?                                                                              | 5         | 5         | 5         |                                                                                                      |
| <b>WORKING CONDITIONS AND THE IMPACT ON CANCER CARE (4 items presented below)</b>                                            | <b>20</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>19</b> |                                                                                                      |
| Level of adherence to European Working Time Directive (EWTd)                                                                 | 5         | 4         | 4         |                                                                                                      |
| Risk of negative consequences if asking for alternative duties pregnancy/breast feeding                                      | 5         | 2         | 5         |                                                                                                      |
| To what extent hospital beds are closed due to cancer nursing shortages                                                      | 5         | 4         | 5         | 'It never happens'                                                                                   |
| To what extent cancer treatments were delayed due to cancer nursing                                                          | 5         | 4         | 5         | 'It never happens'                                                                                   |

|                                                                                                                             |   |   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| WORK FORCE STATISTICS (1 item)                                                                                              | 3 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of practicing nurses/1000 citizens<br>( <a href="http://www.europe.eu/Eurostat">www.europe.eu/Eurostat</a> and OECD) | 3 | 0 | 0 |  |

## Strengths and recommendations for improvements

Overall, Greece achieved a total ECNI score of 71 in 2025, demonstrating substantial progress compared with previous years. Other countries with similar scores included Belgium (total score 71), Ireland (total score 73), and United Kingdom (total score 67). The results suggest important advances in several dimensions of cancer nursing in Greece, particularly in Patient and Occupational Safety, Education and Career Development, and Working Conditions and the Impact on Cancer Care.

Scores for Education and Career Development improved further in 2025. Specialist education, master’s programmes, and professors in cancer nursing continued to be reported, reflecting sustained academic development within oncology nursing. Progress was also reported regarding the establishment of advanced cancer nursing roles, suggesting emerging development of advanced practice and expanded clinical leadership opportunities. Continued efforts are needed to further disseminate and integrate the EONS Cancer Nursing Framework into clinical and educational settings.

Patient and Occupational Safety showed one of the strongest improvements in the Index. Positive findings included wider availability of hazardous drug safety guidelines, improved protection for pregnant or breastfeeding nurses, increased access to cytotoxic spillage kits and PPE, and very limited involvement of nurses in the preparation of hazardous drugs. Speak-up or whistleblower policies also continued to be reported. However, systematic occupational exposure monitoring and mandatory introductory training before administering hazardous drugs remain areas requiring further development.

Scores for Working Conditions and the Impact on Cancer Care also improved considerably. Respondents reported strong adherence to the European Working Time Directive, very limited closure of beds due to nursing shortages, and minimal delays in cancer treatment related to cancer nursing shortages. Improved workplace support for nurses requesting alternative duties during pregnancy or breastfeeding was also reported.

Recognition of cancer nursing presented a more mixed picture. Positive developments included increased representation of cancer nurses in leadership positions and the continued presence of a national cancer nursing society. However, nurse-led cancer care was not consistently reported, and Greece still lacks a national cancer plan explicitly including nursing care.

The Workforce Statistics dimension remained unchanged, reflecting the relatively low number of practicing nurses per 1,000 inhabitants compared with many other European countries.

Overall, the ECNI 2025 findings present a positive and encouraging picture of the continuing development of cancer nursing in Greece, while also highlighting important priorities for future improvement in recognition, workforce development, and occupational safety.

*EONS Advocacy Working Group, 2026*

