



How to Choose a Mental Health Professional in Greece?

A Practical Guide



Youth Leadership
Programme

WHAT TO CHECK BEFORE YOU START

When looking for a mental health professional in Greece, it is important to make sure that the person you choose is **qualified, safe, and legally recognized**. Below is a step-by-step guide.

“Without clear regulation, access to mental health support can become unsafe rather than supportive.” — Psychologist

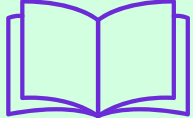
Professional license



- ➔ Psychologists must hold a valid license issued by the Ministry of Health / Regional Authorities.
- ➔ Psychiatrists must be licensed medical doctors with a recognized specialty in psychiatry.
- ➔ Degrees obtained abroad should be officially recognized (e.g. through Hellenic National Academic Recognition and Information Center ([DOATAP](#))).

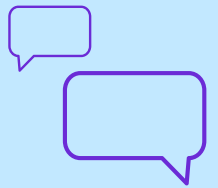


Specialization and training (not a legal obligation, but super to have)


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- Ask about training in a specific therapeutic approach (e.g. cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic, systemic).
 - Ask whether they have experience with the issue you are seeking help for (e.g. anxiety, depression, trauma).
 - Ongoing supervision and continuing education are important signs of professional practice.

First session

Many mental health professionals offer an initial session free of charge or at a reduced cost. During support, young people should feel safe, respected and understood, without fear of judgement or pressure. If the relationship does not feel comfortable or supportive, it is entirely appropriate to discontinue and seek another professional.



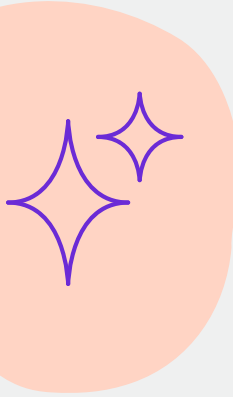
Cost and transparency



Always ask clearly about fees (typically 30–80€ per private session), session duration, cancellation policies, and the availability of online appointments. Mental health professionals should be transparent about costs from the outset.



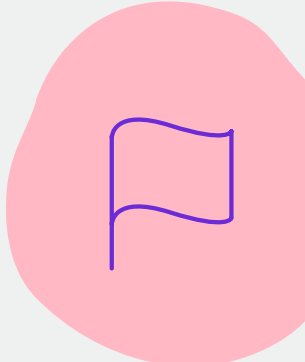
Compatibility



Reviews on platforms like DoctorAnytime, PsychologyNow, or Google can provide useful insights, while personal recommendations from trusted friends or family can also help in choosing a professional.

However, every therapeutic relationship is unique. A third party's judgment is based on their own personal needs and may differ from your own experience. Ultimately, you are the only one who can judge the "chemistry" and sense of safety you feel with a professional.

Red flags

- ➔ Promises of "quick solutions" in 2–3 sessions.
 - ➔ Pressure to commit to long-term therapy without explanation.
 - ➔ Refusal to explain the therapeutic method.
 - ➔ Lack of respect for your personal boundaries.
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PSYCHOLOGIST – PSYCHOTHERAPIST – PSYCHIATRIST: WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE IN GREECE?

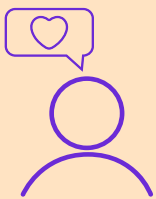
The definitions below reflect the current legal and professional framework in Greece.



Psychologist: Holds a university degree in Psychology (4 years, often with postgraduate studies) and is licensed by the Ministry of Health. Provides psychological assessment, counseling, talk-based therapy, and psychological testing, but cannot prescribe medication.



Psychotherapist: Not a separate licensed profession in Greece. Psychotherapy is an additional specialized training (3–5+ years) for psychologists or psychiatrists. The title is not legally protected, and proper training is required to practice ethically.



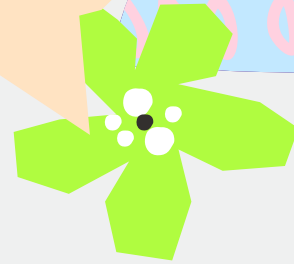
Psychiatrist: A medical doctor (6 years of medical school + 5 years of psychiatric specialization) who can diagnose mental health conditions, prescribe medication, and may also provide psychotherapy. Especially important for severe symptoms or when medication is needed.



WHO TO GO TO AND WHEN (QUICK GUIDE)

"The right form of therapy is the one that works for you."

— Psychologist



➔ Start with a psychologist or psychotherapist for anxiety, low mood, stress, relationship difficulties, or trauma (talk therapy).

➔ Consult a psychiatrist if:

- ➔ medication may be needed,
- ➔ symptoms are intense or worsening (e.g. severe panic, suicidal thoughts, mania),
- ➔ you want combined medication and psychotherapy support.



PUBLIC INSURANCE (NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES- EOPYY (EOPYY)): WHAT IS COVERED?

Psychiatrist

- ➔ Covered by EOPYY when visiting contracted private psychiatrists (co-payment usually 15–25%).
- ➔ Public hospitals and Community Mental Health Centers (KΨY) provide services free or at very low cost.

Psychologist / Psychotherapist

- ➔ Not directly covered by EOPYY.
- ➔ However, if you first visit a psychiatrist (public or private) and receive a written recommendation for psychotherapy, you may apply for partial reimbursement for sessions with a private psychologist.
- ➔ This is based on an EOPYY circular issued in 2023, which remains in effect, but reimbursement is limited in number of sessions and amount.
- ➔ In practice, the process is bureaucratic and the compensation is often partial.



Coverage rules may change, and young people are encouraged to confirm details directly with EOPYY or service providers.

Parental Consent for Minors (Under 18)

In general, for minors under 18 years old, parental consent is required for psychological or psychotherapeutic services, in line with the Civil Code and professional ethical guidelines.

General rule

- ➔ Written consent from both parents is usually required, or from the parent with legal custody.

Exceptions

- ➔ In school settings (e.g. school psychologists, Educational Support Units): initial informational or supportive meetings may take place without parental consent, according to a 2023 circular. More structured interventions require consent.
- ➔ In cases of divorce or parental conflict: written consent from both parents or a court decision may be required.
- ➔ In emergency situations (e.g. risk of self-harm, abuse, or serious danger): professionals may proceed without parental consent to protect the child, in accordance with the law.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Youth Leadership Programme is funded by **Rare Impact Fund** to amplify the voice of young people within Mental Health Europe and beyond, fostering a movement of young leaders who drive cultural and social change. By transforming the narrative around mental health, young leaders will challenge stigma and advocate for tangible support in schools, care settings, and the wider community.

Active participation of young people in policy development and sociopolitical processes is essential for building a just and equitable society where everyone's mental health can thrive. For 2025–2026, the project will focus on implementing various engagement activities led by youth leaders at both European and local levels, with the goal of supporting the mental health of children and young people aged 12–25.

This practical guide was developed by Youth Ambassador Aikaterina Sidiroglou as part of the Youth Leadership Programme. It serves as a complementary resource to the resource guide on mental health support on Chios Island. While the resource guide maps accessible, youth-friendly, and low-barrier local services with a focus on Chios, this guide provides essential national-level information explaining how to find a qualified professional, what to look for, and what their rights are. Together, they aim to empower young people across Greece by helping them understand their options, navigate the system confidently, and access non-judgemental support that meets their needs. The information provided might be subject to change.



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