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Abstract (poster session)

Biomedical research productivity in Greece: effect of the financial crisis

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Objectives: Greece has been suffering a major financial crisis since 2009. We hypothesized that the financial crisis has also affected the productivity of biomedical research conducted in Greece. **Methods:** We searched the PubMed and Scopus databases for journal articles with a Greek affiliation and compared them with the respective global values for the period 1995 to 2011 (until November 10). **Results:** Analysis of the PubMed database revealed a stable increase in biomedical research productivity in Greece from 1995 to 2006 (from 0.26% to 0.70% of global productivity; $p < 0.05$ for most comparisons of successive yearly periods), which was followed by 4 years of stable relative productivity ($0.70 \pm 0.01\%$). This was succeeded by a considerable decline in 2010 (0.65%; $p < 0.001$) and 2011 (0.64%). The analysis was also performed using data from Scopus database, which yielded similar results. Our findings suggest that the plateau phase of relative biomedical research productivity in Greece in 2006-2009 was interrupted by an abrupt decline in 2010, extending throughout 2011. This decline in relative biomedical research productivity coincided with the financial crisis that started in Greece in 2009 (with a 1-year lag period). **Conclusion:** Although the impact of the current financial crisis on the observed decrease in relative biomedical research productivity in Greece in 2010-2011 cannot be precisely defined, one may at least postulate that it has played a considerable role. It may be expected that the direct effects of the decrease in research funds will be more evident in the subsequent years. The observed decline in research productivity in 2010-2011 may also be a result of the considerable psychological stress that accompanies a financial crisis and also affects researchers. In conclusion, a decline in relative biomedical research productivity in Greece was observed, starting shortly after the initiation of the financial crisis, the precise contribution of which, however, is unclear.

