

Developments and implications of the legal framework of assisted reproduction in Greece

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Numerous private clinics and a small number of clinics in public hospitals have been providing assisted reproduction services in Greece long before the enactment of the two laws (in 2002 and 2005) that constitute the country's main regulatory framework of IVF. This rather permissive regulatory framework was complemented with provisions on the clinics' operation (2015), amended towards more permissibility (a new amendment is to be voted in the next months) and contributed to a burgeoning fertility industry. The wide range of services provided (including surrogacy and PGD) and the relatively good quality and low cost of these services have included Greece among the destination countries for assisted reproduction tourism. Assisted reproduction tourism (and medical tourism overall) is seen by clinics as well as politicians and policy makers as a source of potential financial gains and development. At the same time, the public (and overtimes scientific) discourse presents assisted reproduction as a potential solution to the low birth rates of the country that has strong pronatalist characteristics. Therefore, on the one hand, the regulatory framework although it places few restrictions on the implemented methods and techniques is characterized by inconsistencies that at times may negate the legal principles that purportedly represent its foundations. On the other hand, monitoring mechanisms tend to be weak and insufficient. In this context, questions and concerns are raised regarding the protection of rights of people involved.

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