

<b>PhD Candidate:</b>	Balafouti Theodora
<b>PhD Thesis Title:</b>	Analysis and evaluation of the national regulatory and operational framework addressing obesity in children in need in Greece
<b>Advisory Committee:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Theodora Mouratidou (Supervisor), Associate Professor in Community Nutrition, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics Sciences, School of Health Sciences, Hellenic Mediterranean University</li> <li>2. Ioannis Manios, Professor of Nutrition Education &amp; Assessment, Department of Nutrition &amp; Dietetics, School of Health Sciences and Education, Harokopio University</li> <li>3. Odysseas Androustos, Professor of Nutrition and Clinical Dietetics, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, School of Physical Education, Sports Science and Dietetics, University of Thessaly</li> </ol>
<b>Abstract:</b>	<p><b>Introduction:</b> Childhood obesity is a major public health issue, with Greece having some of the highest prevalence rates globally. A significant concern is its distribution, which is based on socioeconomic and demographic factors. Recent data showed higher rates in rural and low-income areas, as well as among vulnerable populations with limited access to healthcare and health promotion services, such as Roma and migrant children. Despite national and European initiatives to prevent childhood obesity, there is limited evidence on the effectiveness of the regulatory and operational framework, particularly for vulnerable groups in Greece.</p> <p><b>Aim:</b> This study aims to analyze and assess the national regulatory and operational framework addressing obesity in children in need and identify determinants influencing its implementation and effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Methodology &amp; Sample:</b> This is a cross-sectional qualitative study, using individual interviews and focus groups based on semi-structured guides. The sample includes parents of children with disabilities, caregivers of children living in care centers, Roma community leaders, and policy implementers from the health, social protection, food, and education sectors. Additionally, a structured literature review of the existing national regulatory and operational framework will be conducted.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The expected findings could support policy development, at both local and national level, by offering evidence for the implementation of targeted interventions to tackle the problem of obesity. Furthermore, the study is expected to provide new insights into current legislation, strategies, and actions in Greece related to childhood obesity in vulnerable populations.</p>
<b>Keywords:</b>	Regulatory and operational framework, vulnerable children, obesity, qualitative study