

Authors: Vanessa Cirulli (*), Sapienza University of Rome; Giorgia Marini, Sapienza University of Rome

Corresponding Author: Giorgia Marini, giorgia.marini@uniroma1.it, +390649910600

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Abstract: Since 2008 the economic crisis in Europe has resulted in profound social dislocations, steep rises in unemployment, adoption of austerity measures and structural reforms that drastically reduces the capacity of welfare states to effectively respond to demand for public services, especially health care services. Following previous papers by Kentikelenis (2015), Kentikelenis et al. (2014) and Karanikolos et al. (2013), we attempt to trace the origins of the economic crisis in Italy and the consequent responses of the government, examine the effect of such crisis on national health care system, and review the effects of the main austerity measures adopted in Italy (i.e., regional bailout plans, aka *piani di rientro*) on health of the Italian population and their access to public health services. Our analysis suggests that the interaction of economic shocks, fiscal austerity, and weak social protection is potentially the main cause for a health crisis in Italy. From a policy perspective, our paper shows that policy decisions about how to respond to economic crisis have uncertain and unexpected effects on public health.

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Alexander Kentikelenis; Bailouts, austerity and the erosion of health coverage in Southern Europe and Ireland, *European Journal of Public Health*, Volume 25, Issue 3, 1 June 2015, Pages 365–366.