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## The European Union Experiment: Health Outcomes of Economic Policies

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SWANN, Amber (Georgia State University) *The European Union Experiment: Health Outcomes of Economic Policies*. The global economic recession that began in 2007 has had repercussions around the world leaving some countries more vulnerable than others. The so-called PIIGS countries – Greece, Portugal, Italy, Spain, and Ireland – form the region in Southern Europe that was affected most and continue to suffer. In order to receive bailout packages, leaders of these countries accepted economic austerity measures that were devised by the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Commission. In Greece, the austerity requirements affected public health spending with the most damaging results. Portugal, Spain, Ireland, and Italy experienced deterioration in the public health sector as well. In this paper, based on an anthropological analysis of a literature review of published accounts and public health data, I explore the initial health outcomes of these austerity measures. I argue that public health funding is crucial to maintaining high levels of wellness and that further health research is needed to fully understand the effects of economic austerity measures on citizens' wellbeing.