

Supplementary Table S2b. 14-MEDAS scoring throughout the non-Mediterranean sample population: score values are presented as the median (IQR, interquartile range), the mean \pm SD and the distribution (N (%)) into low (≤ 5), moderate (6 – 9) and high (≥ 10) levels of MD adherence. BG: Bulgaria; NMK: Republic of North Macedonia; non-MED: all non-Mediterranean countries together.

Country (N)	Non-MED (783)	BG (440)	NMK (343)	p -value
Median (IQR)	5.00 (3.00)	6.00 (2.00)	5.00 (3.00)	
Mean \pm SD	5.58 \pm 1.82	5.80 \pm 1.80	5.30 \pm 1.80	<0.001*
Low	402 (51.3)	199 (45.2)	203 (59.2)	
Moderate	363 (46.4)	230 (52.3)	133 (38.8)	<0.001
High	18 (2.3)	11 (2.5)	7 (2.0)	
<i>Sex</i>				
Women	6.00 (3.00)	6.00 (2.00)	5.00 (3.00)	
	5.66 \pm 1.85	5.9 \pm 1.80	5.30 \pm 1.90	<0.001
Low	276 (48.8)	126 (41.6)	150 (57.0)	
Moderate	277 (48.9)	169 (55.8)	108 (41.1)	<0.001
High	13 (2.3)	8 (2.6)	5 (1.9)	
Men	5.00 (2.00)	5.00 (1.00)	5.00 (2.00)	
	5.37 \pm 1.73	5.52 \pm 1.70	5.11 \pm 1.75	0.058
Low	126 (58.1)	73 (53.3)	53 (66.3)	
Moderate	86 (39.6)	61 (44.5)	25 (31.3)	0.155
High	5 (2.3)	3 (2.2)	2 (2.5)	
p -value (M-W)	0.034	0.017	0.281	
p -value (Chi-S)	0.062	0.074	0.285	
<i>Age range</i>				
18–24 y	5.00 (2.00)	5.00 (3.00)	5.00 (2.0)	
	4.83 \pm 1.78	5.18 \pm 1.68	4.78 \pm 1.88	0.359
Low	127 (70.2)	15 (68.2)	112 (70.4)	
Moderate	52 (28.7)	7 (31.8)	45 (28.3)	0.829
High	2 (1.1)	0 (0.00)	2 (1.3)	
25–44 y	6.00 (2.75)	6.00 (2.00)	5.00 (3)	
	5.72 \pm 1.83	5.76 \pm 1.83	5.64 \pm 1.84	0.424
Low	166 (46.1)	99 (43.2)	67 (51.1)	
Moderate	183 (50.8)	123 (53.7)	60 (45.8)	0.340
High	11 (3.1)	7 (3.1)	4 (3.1)	
45–64 y	6.00 (2.00)	6.00 (2.00)	6.00 (2.00)	
	6.02 \pm 1.72	6.02 \pm 1.78	6.02 \pm 1.65	0.984
Low	93 (42.9)	70 (41.9)	23 (46.0)	
Moderate	119 (54.8)	93 (55.7)	26 (52.0)	0.873
High	5 (2.3)	4 (2.4)	1 (2.0)	
≥ 65 y	5.00 (1.50)	5.00 (2.00)	6.00 (1.0)	
	5.28 \pm 1.13	5.18 \pm 1.14	6.00 \pm 1.0	0.222
Low	16 (64.0)	15 (68.2)	1 (33.34)	
Moderate	9 (36.0)	7 (31.8)	2 (66.7)	0.238
High	0 (0.)	0 (0)	0 (0)	
p -value (K-W)	<0.001	0.021	<0.001	
p -value (Chi-S)	<0.001	0.085	0.010	
ρ (p -value)	0.19 (<0.001)	0.03 (0.526)	0.25 (<0.001)	
<i>BMI range</i>				
< 18.5 Kg/m ²	5.00 (2.00)	6.00 (4.00)	4.50 (3.00)	
	5.32 \pm 2.32	5.96 \pm 2.20	4.50 \pm 2.28	0.041
Low	23 (56.1)	11 (47.8)	12 (66.7)	
Moderate	16 (39.0)	11 (47.8)	5 (27.8)	0.425
High	2 (4.9)	1 (4.4)	1 (5.6)	
18.5 - 24.9 Kg/m ²	5.00 (3.00)	6.00 (2.00)	5.00 (2.00)	
	5.60 \pm 1.78	5.89 \pm 1.66	5.27 \pm 1.85	<0.001
Low	226 (51.8)	100 (43.5)	126 (61.2)	
Moderate	199 (45.6)	124 (53.9)	75 (36.4)	0.001

	<i>High</i>	11 (2.5)	6 (2.6)	5 (2.4)	
25.0 - 29.9 Kg/m ²		5.00 (2.00) 5.69 ± 1.78	6.00 (2.00) 5.76 ± 1.91	5.00 (2.00) 5.60 ± 1.61	0.568
<i>Low</i>		101 (51.3)	54 (49.1)	47 (54.0)	
<i>Moderate</i>		93 (47.2)	53 (48.2)	40 (46.0)	0.265
<i>High</i>		3 (1.5)	3 (2.7)	0 (0)	
≥ 30 Kg/m ²		6.00 (3.00) 5.49 ± 1.81	6.00 (3.00) 5.53 ± 1.75	5.00 (4.00) 5.33 ± 2.08	0.466
<i>Low</i>		46 (46.9)	34 (44.2)	12 (57.1)	
<i>Moderate</i>		50 (51.0)	42 (54.5)	8 (38.1)	0.296
<i>High</i>		2 (2.0)	1 (1.3)	1 (4.8)	
<i>p</i> -value (K-W)		0.450	0.680	0.065	
<i>p</i> -value (Chi-S)		0.760	0.920	0.381	
ρ (<i>p</i> -value)		-0.01 (0.876)	-0.07 (0.172)	0.10 (0.078)	
<i>Disease status</i>					
No pathology		5.00 (3.00) 5.54 ± 1.80	6.00 (2.00) 5.75 ± 1.73	5.00 (2.00) 5.26 ± 1.86	<0.001
<i>Low</i>		341 (52.7)	169 (46.5)	172 (60.6)	
<i>Moderate</i>		292 (45.1)	187 (51.5)	105 (37.0)	0.001
<i>High</i>		14 (2.2)	7 (2.0)	7 (2.5)	
One pathology		6.00 (2.00) 5.95 ± 1.90	6.00 (3.00) 6.19 ± 1.93	6.00 (3.00) 5.67 ± 1.85	0.236
<i>Low</i>		42 (42.5)	20 (37.0)	22 (48.9)	
<i>Moderate</i>		54 (54.5)	31 (57.4)	23 (51.1)	0.175
<i>High</i>		3 (3.0)	3 (5.6)	0.0 (0.0)	
Multi-pathology		6.00 (2.75) 5.81 ± 2.31	6.00 (5.00) 6.00 ± 2.74	5.50 (2.50) 5.50 ± 1.51	0.826
<i>Low</i>		7 (43.8)	4 (40.0)	3 (50.0)	
<i>Moderate</i>		8 (50.0)	5 (50.0)	3 (50.0)	0.710
<i>High</i>		1 (6.3)	1 (10.0)	0.0 (0.0)	
<i>p</i> -value (K-W)		0.117	0.354	0.271	
<i>p</i> -value (Chi-S)		0.292	0.205	0.353	

N: sample population size. The Mann–Whitney test (M-W) was used to assess the differences in the 14-MEDAS score between sexes. The Kruskal-Wallis (K-W) test was applied for comparisons of the 14-MEDAS score across age ranges, BMI categories and disease status subgroups. Chi-Square tests (Chi-S) were used to assess differences between nominal and ordinal variables. Correlation between variables was calculated using the Spearman coefficient (ρ) adjusted in each case for the corresponding confounding variables (sex, age, BMI, disease).; *: *p*-value across countries adjusted for sex, age, BMI and disease (General Linear Model); differences were considered significant when *p*-values < 0.05.