The procedure of involuntary hospitalization has been an ongoing subject of study. Its implementation requires the systematic co-ordination between the Justice and Health Care systems around the globe. In the case of Greece, the procedure under discussion is regulated by Law 2071/1992, which designates the Police as the agent that links the aforementioned systems together. The present study aims to shed light upon the procedure of involuntary hospitalizations, regarding the preparatory stage and the Police involvement up to the individuals ' admission to the on-call hospital for a mental health assessment (MHA). The entry data of two police stations in Athens was recorded by the respective Duty Officer responsible for each case. The police records were retrospectively inspected and information on socio-demographic, clinical and parametric characteristics was extracted. The data collection took place between March and July 2020 and included 324 cases, 80.3% of which referred to involuntary hospitalizations; 17.6% of sample cases did not meet the criteria of the procedure, as opposed to 1.9% of the cases in which the patients eventually ended up being voluntarily admitted and afterwards hospitalized for treatment. There was a statistically comparison of socio- demographic, clinical and parametric variables in relation to the status of hospitalization groups (involuntary, voluntary and no hospitalization). Additionally, statistical comparisons were made between parametric and clinical variables in relation to the type of prosecution order (written: standard route, oral: emergency route). Acute mental health deterioration accounted for around 45% of the total data and it has been identified as the main factor for informing the Hearings Prosecutor office mainly by the patient's family and subsequently proceeding to the issuance of an order (in either written or oral form) to the Police. This enables the Police to escort the individuals and lead them to a psychiatric unit for mental health assessment (MHA) and based on this, for involuntary hospitalization if deemed necessary. In 87.9% of the cases, the individual was transported by police vehicles over a time span ranging from the very same day to 22 days. In total, the written prosecution orders (63.6%) outnumbered the oral ones (36.7%). The findings of the present study demonstrate that the Prosecution order type varies significantly depending on the causes that instigated the involuntary hospitalization procedure. The psychiatric decision whether there should be hospitalization or outpatient therapy also significantly varies depending on the diagnosis. Lastly, the results point out that the need for improvement and further clarification of the aforementioned Greek Law is absolutely essential.

Keywords: Preparatory involuntary hospitalisation procedure, Police records, Prosecution order type, Clinical psychiatric evaluation