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EU rules have forced the Greek government to free up the diagnostics sector. Within a month, legislation will be passed which will end the old rule, that any diagnostics centre had to be 51% owned by a doctor. The move should open up a large and lucrative market, says Kostas Tzoutzouikis, Investor Relations Director at [Hygeia](#) Diagnostic & Therapeutic Centre, one of the three largest hospital groups in the country. He reckons that the larger, more organised, diagnostics market is worth at least €300-350m a year, with EBITA margins at 35%. He adds that there is a further small scale market, worth another €1bn, from individuals going to family doctors for tests: "We can set up centres which can compete for this business."

Expect similar moves to free up diagnostics in other European countries. French investment banker Francois Rivalland, at Aforge Finance, says the government is reviewing legislation which currently states that all labs have to be 75% owned by a practitioner. He reckons there are 4,000 labs in France alone!

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