



# Greece Report

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Sustainable Governance  
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## Executive Summary

In the period under review, the progress which Greece had made up until mid-2014 – fiscal consolidation and structural reforms – gave way to government volatility. This instability began with the parliamentary elections of January 2015, but was exacerbated by the 5 July 2015 national referendum, on the European Commission’s second-to-last proposal of reforms for Greece, called by Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, leader of the new governing party Syriza. Just two months later (September 2015), political stability was further shaken when Tsipras was forced to call snap parliamentary elections as the radical left-wing faction of his left-wing party broke away, leaving the government coalition (between Syriza and the nationalist right-wing party ANEL) in danger of collapse.

Prolonged negotiations between the Syriza-ANEL coalition government and the country’s creditors in the first half of 2015, combined with the previously mentioned political turmoil, brought economic activity to a standstill. As a consequence, the country’s economy, which had started growing in 2014, albeit by less than 1%, fell into depression. Capital controls were imposed on the banks when the government announced the aforementioned referendum. The Greek banking system was in dire need of recapitalization to a larger extent than previously understood.

Even so, Greece’s democracy has been able to withstand long-term economic deterioration and acute political conflict. The Syriza-ANEL coalition came into office in January 2015 after a smooth transfer of power from the coalition government of the center-right party New Democracy (ND) and the center-left party Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK).

However, political participation fell: the electoral turnout in the September 2015 elections was the lowest (56%) since Greece’s 1974 transition from authoritarian rule. Moreover, the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn, with 7% of the vote, emerged as the third largest party, after Syriza and New Democracy. When Syriza came to power, it imitated its predecessors, circumventing the parliament through the periodic issuing of legislative acts (instead of submitting bills to the parliament) and appointing governing party cadres within the high- and middle-echelons of the administration (e.g., special secretaries of ministries and regional directors of public education).

The politicization of the government machinery did not decrease at a time when economic challenges, the vast inflow of refugees from Syria and pressing social problems required depoliticized technocratic experience, which naturally any new governing party, including Syriza, lacks. The new government re-hired low-skill public employees who had been dismissed between 2012 and 2014 by the then ND-PASOK coalition government in the context of implementing the second bailout package. Admittedly, the new government did pass progressive legislation facilitating the integration of second-generation migrants into Greek society and accelerated criminal investigations in the fight against corruption. For example, in the fall of 2015 new corruption investigations were launched against Greek arms dealers. In addition, the Syriza-ANEL government allocated funds and ministerial support to relieve households severely hit by the austerity policies of the preceding governments.

However, the government also pumped public funds into already ailing state-owned enterprises, such as the Hellenic Sugar Industry (EBZ), put in a large order with foreign suppliers to repair fighter planes and delayed privatization plans.

Regarding state management capacity, the government established new management structures, such as a General Secretariat of the Vice Presidency of the Cabinet (which was added to the existing but understaffed three General Secretariats serving under the prime minister) and a new Anti-Corruption General Secretariat (which was added to the existing General Secretariats already in the Ministry of Justice).

In the review period, policy performance did not improve in comparison to preceding periods. The aforementioned measures did not alleviate the social problems caused by prolonged austerity, such as extensive poverty and soaring unemployment (25% of the labor force in July 2015). Indeed, unemployment remains a lingering problem.

After Tsipras' signing of the third bailout package on 13 July 2015 and its approval by the Greek parliament on 14 August 2015, more harsh austerity measures were exacted. They were to be implemented within a very limited timeframe if Greece was to continue receiving bailout funds. Long-awaited structural reforms, such as the opening of "closed shop" professions (e.g., pharmacists) and the imposition of taxes on previously unaffected groups, such as farmers, were met with fierce opposition by these constituencies.

Despite the well-meaning efforts of the new government to proceed with

reforms, its lack of experience, lack of planning, and insistence on shedding all government personnel which had been in place under preceding governments (including high-level officials in independent authorities) negatively affected the structure of state administration and its reform capacities. Poor state administration may hamper further reform efforts by the Syriza-ANEL government. Such efforts, however, are necessary if Greece wants to change its model of production, currently based on services (e.g., tourism) and agriculture.

Greece needs to embark on a new path of economic development. The state must intervene less in the economy than it does today and simultaneously steer the economy away from its traditional economic model, driven by domestic demand (which is currently too weak), and toward the adoption of an export-oriented economy.

## Key Challenges

The next twelve months will be a period in which Greece must proceed with the remaining reforms required by the third bailout package (agreed to between the Greek government and the country's creditors in July 2015). Given that all but two opposition parties, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn, voted in favor of these reforms last August, it is expected that a larger, though not always solid, political consensus will be formed in parliament around the major policy changes included in the package. Examples include reforms of the banking system, the opening of occupations to job seekers, and the privatization of state-owned enterprises and assets (e.g., ports, airports and land). The aim of this drive for reforms will be threefold: first, to raise government revenue; second, to change the reigning anti-business climate; and third, to stimulate the economic growth promised by the Syriza-ANEL coalition government (growth that, so far, has been impeded by the government itself).

In 2015 the government was torn between, on the one hand, a radical left-wing inclination to base economic policy on large-scale intervention in the economy and to cater to the interests of public employees at the expense of the rest of Greek society and, on the other hand, a realization that private investment will be the motor of development. In addition, structural reforms are also necessary if Greece is to receive the €6 billion earmarked in the third bailout package for the next three years.

Between January and November 2015 the government delayed, if not

discouraged, private investment, preferring to raise taxes to redress fiscal problems of the Greek state and to recruit new public sector employees. Increased recruitment in the public sector was a popular pre-election pledge made by Syriza, which wanted to enlarge its pool of voters by promising to re-hire low-skilled public employees dismissed by previous governments. This high-risk development strategy, which combines a distaste for the free market with a preference for Keynesian-like expansion of the public sector, in a period in which the market is starved for cash, may lead to highly unpredictable economic developments.

Indeed, foreign investors remain unclear about Syriza's plans. While the party has since shifted away from Keynesian policies, its primary aim remains the renegotiation of the third bailout package, which party leaders openly claim they disagree with. Syriza leaders have asked that Greece's public debt (182% of the GDP in October 2015) be written off, even before Greece completes the series of reforms required by the third bailout package. Naturally, Greece's creditors demand the reverse and, in fact, expect Greece to rapidly proceed with reforms, perhaps too rapidly. The demand to alter a slow-moving, weighed down economic model in the span of three years (July 2015 to July 2018) may render the whole exercise of changing Greece's model of production unrealistic.

Primarily because of the current government's meandering economic policy in the first half of 2015, the key challenge for Greece's economy will be to overcome the resulting slump into which it has fallen. Overcoming the crisis is possible despite the imposed austerity measures, but will depend on the pace with which structural reforms are adopted (under the supervision of the country's lenders: the EC, the ECB, the ESM and the IMF, although the latter is not fully involved in the third bailout package).

In conclusion, the Greek economy has experienced a delay in its gradual recovering and remains fragile, as foreign direct investment (FDI) is not forthcoming. Domestic pressures from below (i.e., from various interest groups) will increase as the government tries to implement the third bailout package, while the size of unemployment will remain very high (25% as of mid-2015). In 2016, the most important challenge for Greece and its creditors is to determine – and avoid – the tipping point beyond which Greece, having completed some but not all required structural reforms, will collapse economically without a substantial alleviation of its public debt.

Data on the Greek public debt is drawn from <http://www.debtclocks.eu/public-debt-and-budget-deficit-of-greece.html> [last accessed on 04.11.2015]. Data on unemployment is drawn from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/greece/unemployment-rate> [last accessed on 04.11.2015].

# Policy Performance

## I. Economic Policies

### Economy

Economic  
Policy  
Score: 3

Greek economic policy is bound by the third adjustment program, based on an agreement concluded between Greece and its creditors in July 2015. The program, which provides new funds to service Greek public debt in exchange for banking, fiscal, pension, and income policy reforms, was agreed to by the Greek PM Alexis Tsipras and representatives of the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the European Stability Mechanism, after protracted negotiations which negatively affected the Greek economy. Major goals of the new program include saving the Greek banking system, which needs recapitalization, and raising government revenue.

Earlier in 2015, negotiations between Greece and its partners had repeatedly failed to find a solution. The new coalition government of the radical left party (Syriza) and the right-wing party Independent Greeks (ANEL) sought to formulate Keynesian policies without committing to structural reforms. Indeed, there were major ideological differences between the government and its creditors over policy priorities, the former having been elected on a platform to end austerity. The negotiations obliged Athens to accept a different policy frame.

GDP per capita shrank by one-fourth between 2008 and 2014, while Gross Fixed Capital Formation was more than halved in the same period. Inflation was negative for two years in a row (2013 and 2014) and Greece still has the highest unemployment rate in the EU. In 2014, after six continuous years of negative growth, Greece achieved a positive growth rate (0.8%), but the political instability caused by two parliamentary elections and a national referendum in the span of nine months (January to September 2015), combined with the government's meandering economic policy, produced disappointing results on all economic fronts by the close of 2015.

Greece is still required to proceed with structural reforms, linked to the EU's bailout conditions. The EU itself has been somewhat clumsy with regard to managing Greek

public debt, as it has sent mixed signals about extending the grace period, prolonging maturity dates and lowering interest rates as well as about starting negotiations on debt restructuring.

In summary, the Greek economy was slightly revived in 2014, but then derailed again in 2015. The debt is clearly unsustainable, but as long as the Greek government does not pursue long-awaited structural reforms, the country's creditors will not give into pressures to forgive part of the Greek debt. Unemployment remains at a painfully high level, prompting fears of permanent social dislocation for the long-term unemployed. Without foreign direct investment (FDI) in tourism and agriculture as well as the privatization of state-owned enterprises and property, it is unlikely that the economy will grow in the near future.

Citation:

Information on Gross Fixed Capital Formation and GDP per capita drawn on the SGI provided by this platform. Information on real annual GDP growth drawn on Eurostat data, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&language=en&pcode=tec00115>

## Labor Markets

Labor  
Market  
Policy  
Score: 2

The crisis exposed some of the rigidities in the labor market and it has led to a transition that is difficult to manage politically and is painful in its social effects. The unemployment rate was 27% in 2013, remained almost the same (26.7%) in 2014 and declined to 25% in mid-2015. This rate was the worst among all countries surveyed by the SGI. In addition, long-term unemployment was also very high. Youth unemployment rate stood at 58% in 2013 and 52% in 2014.

The labor situation did not improve in the second half of 2015 because of government instability (two parliamentary elections in the span of eight months) and the government's aversion to private investment, which could have created job openings. Indeed, the electoral victory of the radical left party Syriza in January 2015 and again in September 2015 did not ameliorate the situation for the unemployed, as the party's priority was to re-hire public sector employees dismissed from Greece's national broadcaster (ERT), the Ministry of Finance (i.e., cleaning personnel) and state-run primary schools and high schools (i.e., porters), all of whom had been sacked by the preceding government. In the private sector, the new government revoked the license of a large foreign gold-mining company operating in Northern Greece (in Halkidiki), which reacted by placing approximately 2,000 workers on leave. In other words, in the period under review, the government focused on hiring its electoral clientele to the public sector, rather than on paving the way for private investment, which could have started absorbing some of the unemployed.

Many small and very small enterprises have failed, while former entrepreneurs and

dismissed workers find it difficult to find new jobs, as most of them do not possess advanced skills. Unemployed people in the middle- and old-age groups also find it difficult to re-integrate themselves into a job market which, beleaguered by recession, has shrunk continuously since 2008. The situation became worse after July 2015, in the wake of the government's decision to launch a referendum on the European Commission's third rescue package. With the threat of Grexit in sight, Greeks rushed to withdraw their bank deposits, capital controls were imposed and cash-starved enterprises, which had been taken by surprise, either dismissed workers or went out of business altogether.

The pre-crisis division between insiders and outsiders has been modified in two respects. First, insiders of the public sector, such as "stagiaires" and employees hired on political patronage-driven fixed-term contracts, have been laid off. The ranks of the outsiders have grown also because of the spread of labor contracts which promote flexible labor relations. Businesses offer prospective employees only individual, tailor-made contracts and do not negotiate collective agreements with labor representatives. In the meantime, there has been a rise in part-time and short-term labor contracts over contracts of indefinite time. Thus, increasingly more employees receive a fraction of an already low minimum salary (€80 gross per month since 2012). Employers exploit the widespread fear of unemployment and call in workers to work unpredictable and long hours.

### Taxes

Tax Policy  
Score: 4

Improving tax revenue administration has been a key emphasis of the Troika overseeing the Greek bailout as well as a major policy priority of the coalition government of Syriza and ANEL which came to power in January 2015. Until the end of 2014, the bailout memorandums detailed very specific changes required of Greece and the Troika reports had identified improvements. In 2015, political instability has hampered the collection of taxes. It is telling that the deadline for submitting tax declarations for income incurred in 2014 was repeatedly changed and finally Greek households were allowed to submit declarations until the end of August 2015. In 2015, the Syriza-ANEL government twice reshuffled the cabinet, including ministers of the state's finances and tax collection. Even so, in contrast to its predecessors, the new government upgraded the fight against tax evasion by establishing a new anti-corruption minister post, who focuses on tax evasion.

According to Greece's adjustment program, raising government revenue should have been effected through a combination of tax increases and privatizations, but the Syriza-ANEL coalition government has been hostile to any privatizations. It has thus preferred to increase taxes and broaden the tax base. At the same time, the government does not want to impose personal income taxes on income earners below the €12,000 annual income threshold. This may prove problematic as more than half of all



taxpayers (3.5 out of 6 million) declare an annual income below this threshold. Obviously, a large share of personal income goes unrecorded.

During the tourist season, income raised in small and very small businesses remains undeclared. The same holds true for income raised in the liberal professions (e.g., engineers, lawyers, medical doctors and dentists as well as craftsmen, plumbers, electricians and computer technicians).

Frequent changes in tax legislation and government indecisiveness have not helped either. Tax revenue still derives primarily from indirect taxes, such as taxes on the use of oil products (gasoline, heating oil) and VAT. In 2015, the VAT on restaurant and coffee shop consumption was raised to 23% (up from a 2013/2014 level of 13%). In the autumn of 2015, the government was still debating whether to increase VAT on tuition fees for private schools and private tutoring as well as whether to increase the tax paid on income derived from renting private property. So long as such tax policy issues are constantly under revision, the business environment of Greece will not stabilize and progress will not be achieved in improving horizontal or vertical equity.

### Budgets

Budgetary  
Policy  
Score: 4

The Greek government achieved fiscal consolidation in 2013 and 2014. With the exception of Iceland, by 2014 Greece's consolidation effort had topped that of all other advanced economies. This was a result of the sustained austerity policies of the New Democracy-PASOK coalition government (2012 to 2014), which obviously had a downside with regard to social protection.

In 2014, vocations requiring a higher education degree were required to abide by stricter tax regulations, which helped increase tax revenue. However, inadequate planning and insufficient resources for the collection of taxes resulted in delays in 2013. In 2014, erroneous tax invoices were sent to taxpayers and were later corrected through the distribution of amended tax invoices. In 2015, the government, consumed in negotiations with the country's creditors, essentially only started collecting direct taxes in August. In 2014 and 2015, the government was also late in paying private suppliers for some goods and services, which resulted in the near collapse of some private businesses.

Compared to the first phase of the crisis, budgetary policy was better coordinated and more effective. It is telling that after a decade of continuous annual budget deficits (2002 to 2012), Greece achieved a primary budget surplus of 1.17% in 2013 and 1.50% in 2014. Yet, the protracted negotiations over the Greek adjustment program between the new Syriza-ANEL government and Greece's creditors (February to July 2015), the re-hiring of dismissed civil servants by this government, and the successive electoral contests (referendum over the European Commission's reform proposals in

July 2015 and snap parliamentary elections in September 2015; which have twice halted large areas of economic activity), may well have wiped out the positive fiscal results of the previous two years.

Citation:

Data on Greece's public finances are drawn on Eurostat's government finance statistics, available at [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government\\_finance\\_statistics/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/introduction)

Data on the primary budget surplus and Greece's fiscal consolidation effort are drawn on the SGI database.

## Research and Innovation

R&I Policy  
Score: 3

Even though spending on research and development increased somewhat during the period spanning 2004 to 2013, Greece has never made research and development a priority policy sector. Greece ranks 29th among 41 advanced economies in terms of public R&D spending and even lower in terms of private R&D spending. This is a factor of overall economic activity, institutional weaknesses, and cultural resistance to public-private collaboration.

In the period under review, as in the past, most research was conducted at state universities and state research institutions. However, universities and research centers saw their funding (based on the state budget) decline in 2015, as the new coalition government of Syriza and ANEL scrambled to withhold budget outlays for the seven-month long period that it negotiated with Greece's creditors over a new bailout program. Despite economic adversity, there are clear "islands" of excellence at these universities in areas such as biology, IT and computer science, economics, various branches of engineering, archaeology, and history.

A law which had been passed by the previous government (New Democracy-PASOK coalition) in October 2014 has not actually been implemented because of the change of government in January 2015. The law was supposed to accord larger decision-making powers to general managers of research institutions and render researchers' labor contracts less secure. The same bill downgraded the national council of research and technology (ESET) from an agency which advised the minister of education to an appendage of the general secretariat of research and technology (GGET).

Notably, Greek researchers who seek EU funding are often disproportionately successful in securing it. For instance, the National Technical University of Athens actively participates in international projects, as does the Heraklion-based Institute for Technology and Research.

At the same time, institutional and cultural barriers have undermined R&D collaboration between state bodies and the private sector, as has been evident in the very low take-up of EU-funded schemes to support such partnerships.

Under “Europe 2020,” Greece is committed to an unusually low target for research funding as a percentage of GDP (1.2% as opposed to the EU mean of 3%) and the five-year plan for R&D developed by the previous ESET has not been implemented. The current trajectory is thus very concerning.

In summary, Greek research and innovation policy during the review period has definitely proved suboptimal.

Citation:

Data on expenditure on research and development are on tables provided by SGI on this platform.

### Global Financial System

Stabilizing  
Global  
Financial  
Markets  
Score: 3

Greece, a rather small European economy which continues to navigate through a severe crisis of its own, is not in a position to take initiatives to monitor the global economic environment. Even so Greece, as an EU member state, has participated in EU-driven efforts to regulate the global economic environment. The ongoing euro zone crisis of previous years has driven the introduction of new safety valves and financial stability mechanisms.

## II. Social Policies

### Education

Education  
Policy  
Score: 4

While the Greek state’s expenditure on pre-primary education is one of the lowest among advanced economies, Greece performs better than Italy, Portugal and Spain as far as upper secondary education is concerned. With regards to tertiary education attainment, the country scores higher than Italy, Portugal and even Germany as well as most Eastern and Southeast European countries. One-fourth of the Greek adult population has a university-level degree. The rate of attrition after nine years of schooling is not as alarming as in other OECD countries. In short, Greeks on average have good access to education and remain in education.

Access to education is, however, not equitable as students from middle- and upper-class backgrounds are usually more successful in passing entrance examinations. Moreover, Greeks spend more on education per capita than the EU average in order to receive private tutoring to help pass necessary pre-university exams and/or send their children to study at universities abroad. This reflects a cultural contradiction between seeing education as an entirely public sector activity (e.g., university students pay

neither tuition fees nor textbook costs) and success being dependent on private tutoring.

In the 2012 PISA results, Greece receives middling to above-average rankings among the OECD. Greek secondary school pupils perform better than one would have expected, given the spending cuts in education.

The quality of education at Greek universities is very uneven. Some university departments have a long tradition of excellence, such as Athens Law School and most of the engineering departments of the National Technical University of Athens. The distribution of infrastructures is generally very uneven across university departments and most universities suffer from the fact that academic and administrative staff are underpaid. In addition, frequent strikes and sit-ins organized by student groups associated with specific political parties makes for a tumultuous campus life. In 2013-2014, administrative employees went on strike in response to government measures placing certain categories of public employees “on reserve,” which further disrupted already unpredictable scheduling. From September to December of 2013, Greece’s largest universities, namely the University of Athens, the University of Thessaloniki and the National Technical University of Athens, essentially did not function at all, as striking employees barred access to most university buildings. The situation improved from mid-2014 onwards, when strikes and sit-ins were drastically reduced. This change probably resulted from the fact that left-wing political factions of students and administrative employees shifted their attention to the national political scene. The most vocal among them actively supported the radical left opposition political party Syriza, which in January 2015 replaced the center-right/center-left coalition government which had been governing since 2012.

Education in Greece was diverging from the country’s labor market trends even before the crisis. This tendency has been exacerbated throughout the crisis period, as the skills acquired by those in secondary and tertiary-level education learned do not match the types of jobs needed in the Greek economy. Notably, even before the crisis, youth unemployment in Greece exceeded 20% among those aged 18 to 24. In the wake of the crisis, this percentage increased dramatically. In 2013, youth unemployment was just above 60%, the highest in the European Union. This divergence between education, economic needs and employment patterns has been the largest problem faced by Greek education policy.

Meanwhile, left-wing student organizations and professors opposed all legislation passed to reform universities in 2012 and also in 2013 and 2014, when reforms were under implementation. Despite such resistance, most professors and students supported policy changes and by the end of 2014, most reforms were eventually implemented by most state universities, albeit often in a watered-down form.

## Social Inclusion

Social  
Inclusion  
Policy  
Score: 3

After the economic crisis erupted in 2010, the social situation of groups facing social exclusion worsened. By 2012 the share of people at risk of poverty or of social exclusion had reached 35% (EU-28: 25%, Eurostat data) and has stayed at that level ever since. The Gini coefficient jumped from 32.9 in 2010 to 34.5 in 2014.

In 2014, Greece at last established a minimum income guarantee scheme for those who fall below a certain threshold of income. The scheme was implemented in a pilot form for only a few months, between November 2014 and February 2015, and only in 13 municipalities (one municipality selected from each of Greece's 13 regions). Moreover, the mobilization of NGOs in the field of social assistance as well as charity work by the Greek Orthodox Church have intensified. Finally, the traditional extended Greek family, often including family members over three generations who pool resources, has served as a solution of last resort for the poor and the socially excluded. In summary, past governments' negligence in anti-poverty measures and social exclusion policymaking have left those most vulnerable in Greek society unprepared to sustain the effects of the economic crisis.

The Syriza-ANEL government which came to power in January 2015 had promised to strengthen social inclusion in order to fight what the Syriza party calls "Greece's humanitarian crisis", attributed to the austerity policies of 2010 to 2014. In March 2015, the Syriza-ANEL coalition passed a law allocating a total of €200 million to deal with the humanitarian crisis. Such resource allocation, however, fell short of Greece's grave social problems. It also fell short of the funds earmarked one year earlier (i.e., in 2014 by the previous coalition government of New Democracy-PASOK, €450 million). Moreover, the government discontinued the minimum income guarantee scheme which the previous government had adopted just before falling from power. All in all, it seems that successive governments either did not have a comprehensive plan to fight poverty or deferred to react to increasing social exclusion.

### Citation:

Data on the share of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion are taken from Eurostat. Information on all EU-28 countries for 2012 is available at [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/People\\_at\\_risk\\_of\\_poverty\\_or\\_social\\_exclusion](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/People_at_risk_of_poverty_or_social_exclusion)  
Data on the GNI coefficient provided by the SGI data set.

## Health

Health  
Policy  
Score: 3

After the crisis erupted, public spending on health care was subjected to cuts similar to those effected in other welfare policies. Moreover, the restructuring of Greek public debt in February 2012 negatively affected the finances of health insurance funds, which held some of that debt. After 2010, the economic crisis became a severe crisis for health insurance funds. Moreover, as Eurostat data shows, in 2012 government expenditure on health care (excluding the expenditure of social security funds) was roughly equal to household out-of-pocket expenditure on health care. This speaks volumes to two perennial problems of Greek health care policy: first, the volume of transactions between patients and doctors which goes unrecorded and is not taxed; and second, the differential in health care access based on the purchasing power of households.

Up until the onset of the crisis, mismanagement and corruption in state-run health insurance funds and public hospitals had led to runaway public expenditure on medical supplies and medicines. It is telling that public health insurance fund expenditure on medicines sprang from 0.9% of the GDP in 2000 to 1.8% in 2010 (EU-27: 0.8% in 2000, 1.1% in 2010).

Since 2010, pharmaceutical companies and suppliers of necessary goods and services to public hospitals have delayed making deliveries to such organizations. Additionally, the job motivation of doctors serving in public hospitals suffered from wage cuts imposed across the public sector. All this injured the capacity of the public health care system to meet demand for health care services. Some of this demand was met in various Greek cities by makeshift “social clinics” providing services to patients free of charge. Such clinics were staffed by volunteer medical doctors and nurses and hosted by municipal authorities.

There is a very unequal distribution of 131 public hospitals across the territory of Greece, resulting from a patronage-ridden selection process where hospitals should be built. The number of doctors in the country is also quite high (in 2011 there were 4.4 doctors per 1,000 residents, in contrast to 3.8 for every 1,000 residents in Germany). However, there is a lack of nurses, while ministry-level mismanagement of health services combined with the reluctance of doctors to serve in hospitals located away from Greece’s largest cities have resulted in a highly uneven distribution of medical personnel. Moreover, major budget cutbacks for public hospitals have left some hospitals without enough medicines and medical supplies. In summary, the quality and inclusiveness of health care deteriorated over the last five years, but cost efficiency improved substantially.

The runaway costs of pharmaceuticals in 2000-2010 are documented in a study by Greece’s Center for Economic Programming and Research (KEPE), a think tank of the Ministry of Finance, published in February 2013. Data is taken from Table 3.3.1 in KEPE’s publication, available at [http://kepe-server.kepe.gr/pdf/Outlook/teyxos\\_20gr.pdf](http://kepe-server.kepe.gr/pdf/Outlook/teyxos_20gr.pdf)

Data on the density of doctors per country is taken from the World Health Organization (WHO) and is available at <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A1444>

Data on health expenditure is taken from Eurostat and is available at [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/1/1c/Healthcare\\_expenditure\\_by\\_financing\\_agent%2C\\_2012\\_%28%25\\_of\\_current\\_health\\_expenditure%29\\_YB15.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/1/1c/Healthcare_expenditure_by_financing_agent%2C_2012_%28%25_of_current_health_expenditure%29_YB15.png)

## Families

Family  
Policy  
Score: 5

Family policy is associated with the position of women in the labor market – a position which puts women at a disadvantage. The law says that private employers should grant women maternity leave and hire them back nine months after giving birth. The situation is completely different for women employed in the public sector. Female public employees are guaranteed their jobs following maternity leave. They are also granted maternity leave without fear that upon returning to their job they may be allocated to a subordinate job post or suffer wage or salary cuts, as is the case of women employed in the private sector.

Because of the crisis, since 2011 there have been cuts in government social expenditure which have taken their toll on allowances for maternity leave. Nowadays, for the last six out of the nine months of maternity leave, women in the private sector must survive on the minimum wage (€80 gross per month).

Moreover, family allowances in Greece are small: they amount to €40-€50 per child per month. As Eurostat data shows, the risk of poverty or social exclusion for children under 18 has increased from 28.7% in 2010 to 35.4% in 2012. In 2011, government expenditure on child and family benefits amounted to only 1.8% (EU-27: 2.2%). State-owned child care facilities managed by municipalities remain underfunded. As such, it is unsurprising that Greece continues to belong to the group of advanced economies in which child poverty is quite pronounced.

Some improvement has nonetheless been achieved in family and child policy even as the economic crisis was evolving. First, the logic in the distribution of child allowances has changed. In the past, the bulk of family-related allowances were channeled to families with three or more children, regardless of family income level. A new law passed in 2013 provided a yearly allowance of €500 per child (income-tested allowance) to families with three or more children.

However, in the meantime, the entire logic of family and child policy had changed. Based on a law passed in 2012, a new policy imposed income-tested thresholds for families receiving child allowances. The new policy has expanded the pool of potential recipients of child allowances, as it does not exclusively favor families with three or more children, but instead families with children in need.

Second, since August 2013, programs designed to fight unemployment have prioritized jobless households, unemployed, long-term unemployed and young people. An example is the government's "short-term public work program." In March 2015, the new Syriza-ANEL coalition passed a law on the "humanitarian crisis" which offered social assistance in kind and in cash to poor households. However, the total amount which the government earmarked for this assistance (€200 million) was clearly incommensurate to the size of the problem. Overall, current policies reflect an improvement over pre-crisis policies and the lack of policies when the crisis first erupted.

Citation:

The new child allowance was instituted in 2012 by Law 4093/2012. The special allowance for families with three or more children was reformed in 2013 by Law 4141/2013. Information provided by Manos Matsaganis, Athens University of Economics and Business.(18.05.2013). Additional statistical data provided by the European Commission in the website [http://europa.eu/epic/countries/greece/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/epic/countries/greece/index_en.htm). The Syriza-ANEL government's law on the "humanitarian crisis" was law 4320/2105.

## Pensions

Pension  
Policy  
Score: 4

The Greek pension system is a pay-as-you-go corporatist system, based on a multitude of occupational pension funds (there were approximately 60 pension funds in 2013). In April 2013, it was announced that by the end of 2014, the Greek government planned to merge all pension funds and arrive at a system of only four funds for salaried employees (including the private and the public sector), self-employed (including so-called liberal professions requiring specialized education such as lawyers, doctors and accountants), farmers and persons employed in commercial shipping (ship crews). To date, this reform plan has not been implemented.

Greek pension policy does not successfully prevent poverty among the elderly because the majority of pensioners receive only the minimum pension. According to the World Bank, 14.5% of Greek senior citizens are relatively poor. Greece therefore ranks among the five European countries with the worst ratios of poverty for senior citizens. Women are included among the poorest of pensioners if they rely on a very low-level non-contributory pension.

Pension policy also does not meet intergenerational equity requirements. In response to rising pension spending which threatened to derail fiscal policy, successive governments from 1990 through 2010 attempted but failed to reform the pension system. Unions in favor of existing arrangements that primarily served the interests of middle- and old-age groups at the expense of younger generations of workers successfully mobilized to block such reform attempts.

Greece's pension system is financially unsustainable. Reasons for this include high



replacement rates, early retirement opportunities (in particular for married women with under-age children and public sector workers) and low insurance contributions. It is telling that in 2011, fewer than 40% of Greeks aged 55 to 64 were still working. The Greek dependency ratio is among the worst in Europe, on a par with Sweden, Germany and Italy, which all have better organized welfare states.

As Eurostat data shows, expenditure on pensions jumped from 13.5% of GDP in 2009 to 17.5% in 2012 (the highest level in the EU-28). The continuous decline of Greece's GDP during a recession stretching over five years (2008 to 2012) accounts in part for this increase. However, it can also be explained by the increased outflow of middle- and old-age employees who – driven by the fear that the longer they stay in employment, the greater the chance that their pension rights are reformed for the worse – have retired as soon as permitted.

After the crisis broke out, the coalition government of New Democracy and PASOK, under pressure from the Troika, approved a series of pension reforms which involved lowering replacement levels, raising contributions, preventing early retirement and merging dozens of small social insurance funds into a few larger ones.

When fiscal consolidation was achieved in 2013, it was hoped that the system would become sustainable. However, a decline in social security contributions, which resulted from growing unemployment combined with lowered salaries and wages from 2010 to 2014, means that the system, if it has stabilized, has done so at a low level with diminished social security contributions and benefits. By 2014 Greece had joined the group of the six worst performers among developed economies in terms of old-age dependency ratio.

In July 2014, in order to save the pension system from collapse, the Greek government proceeded to cut all supplementary pensions by 5.2%. By the end of 2014, however, fearing that it would lose many votes, the New Democracy-PASOK government had not yet implemented the new pension system. The Syriza-ANEL coalition which, riding on an anti-austerity electoral platform, won the January 2015 elections and succeeded the New Democracy-PASOK government, was completely against any further cuts in pensions. Upon coming to power, the Syriza-ANEL government froze the implementation of the new pension system. However, by accepting the third rescue package in July 2015, Syriza's leader and prime minister, Alexis Tsipras, committed to implementing all reforms which had been included in the first rescue package of May 2015.

Citation:

Eurostat data on government expenditure on pensions is available at <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00103&plugin=0>

World Bank's data on old age dependency ratio for 2014, included in the SGI data set.

## Integration

Integration  
Policy  
Score: 6

The integration of over one million irregular migrants in a society of 11 million is a very difficult task. A law was passed in 2010 that focused primarily on preconditions for the naturalization of migrants, but also somewhat improved the prospects of integration. The law went largely unimplemented and in 2013 a supreme court (Symvoulío tis Epikrateias) decision froze the provisions of the 2010 law. The court's decision reflected a xenophobic attitude in the sense that it was based on a very old-fashioned, if not racist, understanding of how national identity is formed. Yet in April 2014, a new Migration Code was passed. This law codified previous legislation on matters of entry, residency and social integration of irregular migrants (non-EU nationals) in Greece. It simplified the process for obtaining different types of residency permits and opened opportunities for regularizing the status of irregular migrants and stabilizing the residency permits of second-generation migrants. Importantly, the law ratified all relevant EU Directives on the migration of students, trainees, academics and high-skilled workers. Another major step toward the integration of migrants was taken by the coalition government of Syriza-ANEL in May 2015, when a new law opened the way for the naturalization of second-generation migrants under specific provisions. Upon its implementation, this law is estimated to facilitate the integration of 200,000 second-generation migrants.

The integration of migrants into the education system is functional in primary and secondary education, but legal migrants face difficulties entering tertiary education. Entrance examinations to the universities are open to Greek citizens or migrants holding permanent residence permits. Among the latter, the sons and daughters of legal migrants who had settled down and created a family in Greece are included, as long as they have graduated from high school.

As for social integration, this was never a strong point of Greek migration policy. With the exception of Albanians, Bulgarians and Romanians, who probably constitute half of all migrants in Greece and first came to the country after the fall of state socialism in Southeast Europe, the rest of the country's migrants – including migrants from Asia and Africa – are systematically excluded from Greek society. It is telling, for instance, that Muslim migrants in Athens, where the majority of the migrant population lives, still cannot fully exercise their religious rights, as a license to build a mosque in Athens was issued by the Greek government only in early 2013 and construction of the mosque has, at the time of this writing (end of 2014) yet to begin.

Moreover, racism demonstrated on the part of state authorities impedes the integration of migrants. In 2013 and 2014, prosecuting authorities investigated cases of policemen who had mistreated migrants or had been accomplices in racist activities carried out by anti-migrant groups, such as the neo-Nazi political party Golden Dawn. Indeed, since the crisis erupted, there has been an increase in xenophobia and racism, fueled by the

tensions of the economic crisis. Violent acts against migrants and minorities have increased and the police have demonstrated neglect of and/or sympathy for far-right agendas.

Finally, some progress in the fight against racism took place in September 2014 when a new anti-racism bill was adopted by parliament. The passage of this law was timely, if not delayed, given the the rising influence of Golden Dawn since the onset of the economic crisis and the assassination in September 2013 of a young, left-wing musician by a Golden Dawn militant. The law, which provided for criminal sanctions against anyone inciting actions to hatred, discrimination and violence and higher sanctions against public officials engaging in racist or discriminatory behavior, modified previous legislation and set anti-racist policy in line with the Framework Decision 913/2008 of the Council of the European Union.

To sum up, while significant problems in terms of policy efficiency remain and policy setbacks are entirely possible, Greece has made some progress by adopting new policies on integration. Only time will show whether the two new laws, passed in 2014, will actually help alleviate the pressures faced by irregular migrants and prevent racist or discriminatory treatment.

#### Citation:

Information on migration was obtained from ELIAMEP's researcher Michaela Marouf. Information on the integration of migrants in Greece is available (in English) at <http://www.eliamep.gr/en/%CE%B5%CE%BA%CE%B8%CE%AD%CF%83%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%82-%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1-%CF%84%CE%B7-%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%83%CE%B7-%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B7%CE%BD-%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%BB/> and also at [http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/info\\_sheet.cfm?ID\\_CSHEET=50](http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/info_sheet.cfm?ID_CSHEET=50). Accessed on 02.06.2013. The most relevant pieces of legislation are laws no. 3386/2005, 3838/2010, 4251/2014 and 4285/2014. The Syriza-ANEL government's law granting citizenship, under specific conditions, to second - generation migrants is law 4332/2015.

### Safe Living

Safe Living  
Conditions  
Score: 6

As UN data on homicides for 2012 show, Greece, despite suffering from a severe economic crisis, is not a dangerous country to live in. However, in the wake of the crisis, many people consider some areas in central Athens as “no go zones.” It is telling that while in 2008, 12% of respondents in nationwide surveys of living conditions reported vandalism and criminality as major problems, by 2012 this figure increased to 20%. Regarding theft, after a surge in the number of reported thefts between 2011 and 2013, there was a drop in this crime against property in 2014.

Efforts to improve safety have been made since 2012. The Ministry of Public Order placed policemen on the streets at visible points and intersections. However, Greeks do not feel safe. According to data from a study conducted in 2011 by the Greek

Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), Greeks report noise (25% of respondents), environmental pollution (also 25%) and vandalism and criminality (20%) as the greatest risks with regard to housing.

Citation:

Data on homicides are drawn on the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. Data on risks Greeks perceive are drawn on research conducted in the context of EU-SILK program by the Greek Statistical Authority and is available at [http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/PressReleases/A0802\\_SFA10\\_DT\\_AN\\_00\\_2011\\_08\\_F\\_GR.pdf](http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/PressReleases/A0802_SFA10_DT_AN_00_2011_08_F_GR.pdf)

Data on the share of nationwide survey respondents reporting vandalism and criminality is drawn on the Greek Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), available at [http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ver-1/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/PressReleases/A0802\\_SFA10\\_DT\\_AN\\_00\\_2012\\_08\\_F\\_GR.pdf](http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ver-1/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/PressReleases/A0802_SFA10_DT_AN_00_2012_08_F_GR.pdf)

Information on thefts in 2011-2014 is taken from data provided in this data base.

### Global Inequalities

Global  
Social  
Policy  
Score: 5

Until the onset of the economic crisis, Greece used to be active in assisting less developed countries, but later focused on managing its own national social policy problems. Still, under the crisis, Greece participated in all of the European Union's decision-making efforts related to global social policy. In fact, Greece has continued to provide humanitarian assistance to developing areas of the world: in 2012, Greece contributed \$33 million to humanitarian assistance. Since 2013, Greece has not contributed to humanitarian assistance in the same way, but in practice it has offered humanitarian assistance at the point it matters most, namely at its own shores. In 2014 and, particularly, in 2015, tens of thousands of Syrian, Afghani and Iraqi refugees landed on the shores of three large Greek islands (Kos, Lesbos and Samos) as well as smaller Greek islands opposite the coast of Turkey. The island of Lesbos has 100,000 inhabitants but in the first week of September 2015 hosted 20,000 refugees who had been washed ashore. Port authority officers registered the incoming refugees, while residents offered them food. Greek NGOs also stepped in, as the situation overwhelmed local Greek authorities. This does not amount to a concerted effort at humanitarian assistance by Greece, but one has to acknowledge Greece's efforts on the ground at a time when European Union officials were still pondering the number and distribution of refugees the rest of the EU members would admit.

Overall, because of the constraints on the government from the economic crisis, Greece has not helped curb inequalities in developing countries, but has done more than its share to help people from developing countries. It has received and helped, and continues every day to receive and help, refugees from developing countries of the Middle East who have fled their homes.

Citation:

Data on the contribution of different countries to humanitarian aid are reported in chapter 2 of the "Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) Report 2013" available at <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp->

[content/uploads/2013/07/GHA-Report-2013.pdf](#)

Data on Lesbos and the rest of Greek islands receiving refugees are available at [http://www.oregonlive.com/today/index.ssf/2015/09/greek\\_island\\_of\\_lesbos\\_pushed.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/today/index.ssf/2015/09/greek_island_of_lesbos_pushed.html)

### III. Environmental Policies

#### Environment

Environmental Policy  
Score: 4

Compared to other OECD Nations, Greece is one of the relatively large producers of energy. With regard to waste management and renewable energy sources, Greece ranks average.

Moreover, while compared to the rest of OECD nations Greece's CO2 emissions are average and its energy intensity rather low. Its ecological footprint is surprisingly large for a country that is nowadays clearly de-industrialized and has never been an industrial power. Unchecked urban development, large infrastructural works and negligent consumer behavior have probably had a negative impact on the country's natural environment.

Indeed, in Greece, economic development in tourism and agriculture has often proceeded in a haphazard manner and has always taken priority over environmental concerns. During the economic crisis raging since 2010, environmental policy has been neglected even more than in the past. Environmental NGOs were only nominally consulted by the Ministry of Environment, Town Planning and Public Works (YPEXODE). In fact, public works and town planning have always been afforded priority over environmental protection. The result has been that none of the three targets of environmental protection – climate, renewable water sources, forest area biodiversity – have ever been pursued in a systematic fashion. Moreover, Greece has struggled to develop a land registry (i.e., an inventory of land ownership) to determine responsibility and control. In 2015, the new radical left-wing/right-wing coalition government tried to stop a major gold mining investment in Northern Greece. It retracted the license granted to a foreign company to invest in the mines, claiming technical and environmental complications. However, the country's supreme administrative court has annulled the government's decision ruling that the environmental concerns have been taken care of by the investors.

Forest management is haphazard, too, and subject to the vicissitudes of changing political leaderships and interests. It is also vulnerable to fires, although in the summer of 2015 the extent of forest destruction by fires was not as large as in previous years.

To sum up, regarding environmental sustainability and given its conducive geographical morphology (long coastline) and helpful weather conditions (sunshine, winds blowing in the Aegean sea), Greece certainly has the potential for improvement.

#### Global Environmental Protection

Global  
Environmental Policy  
Score: 4

The Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs participates in international meetings and conferences that address environmental protection issues by sending diplomats tasked with such matters, but one cannot say that the Greek government has substantially contributed to efforts to strengthen global environmental protection regimes.

## Quality of Democracy

### Electoral Processes

Candidacy  
Procedures  
Score: 10

There is no discrimination in registration procedures and no potential candidates or parties are prevented from participating in elections. Exceptions include, for example, active military officers, who cannot run for office. Prison convicts are the only citizens deprived of voting rights for the duration of their prison sentence.

Before elections, parties and candidates are required to submit a petition to the highest civil and criminal court (Areios Pagos) which monitors formalities such as checking to make sure no other parties have the same name.

The legality or fairness of elections is not challenged by parties nor candidates. Despite the acute political conflict with respect to the causes and management of the crisis, the conduct of electoral procedures in Greece is reliable. Indeed, the two parliamentary elections which took place in Greece in January and September 2015 were smoothly organized and, in budgetary terms, cost much less than previous national elections (each of the two elections cost approximately €50 million).

Citation:

Regulations for registering a candidate are listed in article 55 of the Constitution, while incompatibilities are listed in articles 56, 57 and 58. For the relevant provisions of the Constitution, translated into English, see <http://www.venice.coe.int/VOTA/en/s tart.html> [accessed on 11.05.2013].

Media Access  
Score: 9

Incumbent political parties represented either in the national parliament or the European Parliament have equal opportunities for media access. In 2015, the country's national broadcaster (ERT), which had been shuttered by the New Democracy-PASOK coalition government in June 2013 in order to fulfill a bailout-related quota of dismissing state personnel, was re-opened and all its personnel were hired back.

Most media outlets provide a fair and balanced coverage of the range of different political positions. However, private media are more selective in their reporting and many are sensationalist. Today, relevant media outlets obviously include new social media, which played a major role in promoting the “no”

vote in the July 2015 national referendum. The “no” vote won by 61%. Incidentally, in the same referendum almost all private media had supported the “yes” vote, which indicates that a large share of Greek public opinion falls under the radar of these media outlets.

Since the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn won parliamentary representation in the 2012 elections and repeated its success by obtaining 7% of the vote in each of the two parliamentary elections of 2015, most media have not invited the party’s leaders to political debates nor to interviews because it has consistently expressed strong anti-parliamentary and racist views.

Citation:

[http://aceproject.org/epic-en/me/Epic\\_view/GR](http://aceproject.org/epic-en/me/Epic_view/GR) [accessed on 08.05.2013]

Voting and  
Registrations  
Rights  
Score: 10

All Greek citizens of at least 18 years of age have the right to vote, with the exception of those serving a prison sentence. There is no discrimination in the exercise of the right to vote nor any disincentives for voting. Upon being born, Greeks are registered by their parents in the municipality where their family resides. These records serve as lists of citizens eligible to vote. There is, however, a need to clean these records to remove persons who are deceased or have permanently migrated to other countries.

Citation:

<http://aceproject.org/epic-en/countries/CDCountry?country=GR> [accessed on 11.05.2013]

Party Financing  
Score: 5

Until 2014, party financing for national elections was regulated by Law 3023/2002, while the financing of competing electoral lists for local government elections is regulated by Law 3202/2003. A new law (4304/2014), which adheres to guidelines established by the Council of Europe, constrains the size of budget outlays to parties, increases transparency regarding donations to parties and bars the practice of parties’ obtaining bank loans against future revenue which the parties expect to receive from the state. Every year, the interior minister issues a ministerial ordinance which distributes funds to parties which have received at least 1.5% of the total vote in the most recent elections.

Even though the new law is an improvement over past legislation, it has only partially been implemented. A new state committee, the monitoring mechanism of electoral campaign spending, is still not fully operational. While parties publish information on their finances annually, neither all contributions made to the party coffers nor all sources of revenue are disclosed. In other words, monitoring is ineffective.



## Citation:

A brief article on the new law in English is available at

<http://www.ekathimerini.com/162022/article/ekathimerini/news/bill-introduces-new-rules-for-funding-of-greek-political-parties>. Accessed on 03.11.2015.

Popular Decision-  
Making  
Score: 2

In 2015, Greeks had an opportunity to vote on an issue of importance, but this was not an effective opportunity for popular decision-making, as the resolve to launch the referendum destabilized the economy and negatively affected the relations between Greece and its euro zone partners. On 5 July 2015, a referendum was held on the European Commission's second-to-last proposal of reforms for Greece. PM Tsipras rejected that list of reforms, launched the referendum and won it, with 61% of Greek voters agreeing with him and voted "no." A week later, however, Tsipras accepted a bailout package of €86 billion, under at least equally severe conditions dictated by the country's creditors, after capital controls had been imposed in Greece, the government had skipped a June 2015 payment it owed the IMF and the economy had become starved for cash.

## Citation:

The conduct of referendums in Greece is regulated by article 44 of the Constitution and Law 4023/2011.

### Access to Information

Media Freedom  
Score: 6

After closing down the national public broadcaster, ERT, in June 2013, the coalition government of New Democracy and PASOK (in power between November 2011 and December 2014), passed legislation in May 2014 to establish a new national public broadcaster (this time named NERIT). After the parliamentary elections of January 2015, in which Syriza came to power and formed a coalition government with the party of Independent Greeks, the new government began closing down NERIT and reestablishing ERT. The reestablishment of ERT and the re-hiring of all its employees (who had been dismissed in June 2013) was a major item in the pre-electoral agenda of the Syriza party. In April 2015, the Syriza government passed a law abolishing NERIT and reinstating ERT. It can be argued that this rectified the previous situation. ERT started operating again in June 2015.

Since the onset of the economic crisis, state TV and radio programs have mostly reflected the political views of journalists rather than a solid government line. After 2010, there were a few cases in which journalists were mistreated during protest marches. Such incidents were repeated in the following years, but clearly did not form a pattern. Nonetheless, the unacceptable, though rather rare, mistreatment of journalists prompted Reporters Without Borders to rank Greece 86th out of 179 countries surveyed

in the Freedom of the Press Index 2013 – placing Greece under dozens of developing countries, including war-torn and authoritarian-ruled states. According to their study, the situation worsened in 2015 when Greece was ranked Greece 91st out of 180 countries, but had improved compared to 2014 when it had ranked 99th.

Except for the saga of closing down, replacing and then reopening the national broadcaster (ERT), Greece does not encounter problems relating to governmental actors intervening in the day-to-day functioning of the media, violating rules governing the media sector or changing these rules at will. Greece has a vast range of press, TV and radio outlets that span the political spectrum from the extreme right to the extreme left. This precludes the government from restricting the diffusion of information, commentary and analysis in Greek media.

Citation:

The law establishing the new public broadcaster, NERIT, law 4173/2013, was voted in July 2013.

Media Pluralism  
Score: 6

There are a large number of electronic and print media organizations, but the structure of ownership remains oligopolistic with strong cross-ownership across media formats. In a country of 11 million inhabitants, there are more than 120 analog private TV stations with a national, regional or local license. There are also approximately 950 regional/local radio stations. After the shuttering of the national broadcaster (ERT) by government fiat in June 2013, the new public broadcaster (NERIT), which effectively started operating only in May 2014, occupied three TV channels and three radio channels. NERIT functioned under heavy political criticism of the then opposition party Syriza, the leaders and deputies of which never accepted invitations by NERIT to participate in panel discussions or talk shows. After coming to power in January 2015, Syriza closed down NERIT and re-opened ERT, re-assigning it the status of national public broadcaster.

The large number of private TV channels does not indicate a diversified ownership structure. Four of them (Mega, Antenna, Star, Skai) attract the majority of TV viewers, as they offer popular shows, including Turkish and Brazilian soap operas, and infotainment. Their owners also hold majority shares in national daily newspapers (He Kathimerini, Ta Nea, Ethnos). There is extensive cross-ownership not only among electronic and print media, but also within the field of TV and radio channels.

Electronic media is also flourishing in the form of websites and blogs. In fact, the pro-EU profile of most major TV and radio stations, which became evident on 5 July 2015, when almost all of them supported the “yes” vote in the referendum to accept or reject the European Commission’s proposal of

reforms, has had an unpredictable effect on the Greek media landscape: those citizens who may have distrusted the major media outlets in the past, in 2015 completely rejected news and analysis flowing from such outlets. These citizens instead turned to small, marginal or even obscure electronic sources of information which supported the “no” vote. These included the website of the left-wing faction of the Syriza party, aptly named Iskra ([www.iskra.gr](http://www.iskra.gr)), after the famous Russian socialist newspaper, originally managed by Lenin and then by Plekhanov in the early 20th century. There are an unknown number of such anti-establishment electronic media. Their influence is difficult to assess, although one suspects that it is quite large, given that a shattering 62% of the voters in the referendum voted “no.” In terms of pluralism, this is an advancement in Greek media over previous less pluralistic periods.

The print media landscape is also pluralistic. There are 59 national newspapers and around 500 regional/local ones. However, over the last two decades (1990 to 2008) circulation has dropped by 50%. The owners of the Sunday newspapers (To Vima, He Kathimerini) also have shares in the major private TV channels. Some other large Sunday newspapers offer sensationalist coverage (Real News, Proto Thema). There are also regional daily newspapers in large cities.

While Greece lacks an effective anti-monopoly policy for the media business, the media do report a wide range of opinions. The opposition has a voice in the media, as political party leaders participate daily in state and private TV as well as radio programs, and two national newspapers (Efimerida ton Syntakton, Eleftherotypia) reflect opinions very close to the radical left party Syriza. The latter also runs its own daily, He Avgi. The traditional communist party (KKE) also has its own daily newspaper, while smaller left-wing groups run their own weekly newspapers and websites. Similarly, there are low-circulation weekly newspapers voicing hardline, extreme-right political views.

Citation:

Information and analysis on media cross-ownership and newspaper circulation in 1990-2008 is drawn on Nikos Leandros, “Media Concentration and Systemic Failures in Greece”, *International Journal of Communication*, vol 4, 2010, pp. 886-905. Information on the numbers of print and electronic media businesses and media ownership in Greece is available at Evangelia Psychogiopoulou, Dia Anagnostou and Anna Kandyla, “Does Media Policy Promote Media Freedom and Independence? The Case of Greece”, case study report included in ELIAMEP’s MEDIADEM research program, available at <http://www.mediadem.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Greece.pdf>. Accessed on 08.06.2013.

Access to  
Government  
Information  
Score: 9

Citizens’ free and easy access to official information has been regulated since 1986. A new law passed in 2010 provided for the creation of an electronic system allowing access to any public document. There are a few reasonable access restrictions pertaining to matters of national security and defense.

There are effective mechanisms of appeal and oversight enabling citizens to access information. Firstly, there are administrative courts, including the highest administrative court (Symvoulío tis Epikrateias). Secondly, there is the Greek ombudsman, which was established in 1997. Unfortunately, owing to work overload, administrative courts can take a long time to decide on a case, but the office of ombudsman represents a well-managed mechanism of appeal and oversight. The ombudsman can demand that any public service respond to a citizen's right to information.

In October 2014, the Greek government passed a new law which further expanded access to public documents and adapted Greek legislation to the Directive no. 2013/37/EE of the EU's Council of Ministers. A new codification of all relevant legislation took place in March 2015, without practically changing any regulations.

Citation:

The two most important laws regulating access to information are Law 1599/1986 and Law 3861/2010. The most recent relevant law, passed in October 2014, is Law 4305/2014. Presidential Decree 28/2015 codified all previous legislation on access to information and was issued in March 2015.

### Civil Rights and Political Liberties

Civil Rights  
Score: 6

Civil rights are protected by and included in the constitution (passed in 1975 and amended in 1986, 2001 and 2008) and the criminal code. Judges are tenured and cannot be removed nor transferred by incoming governments. Courts guarantee the protection of life, freedom and property and protect all individuals against illegitimate arrest, exile, terror, torture or unjustifiable intervention into personal life. Greek citizens enjoy equal access to the law and are treated equally by the law. Notably, despite intense political conflict since the start of the economic crisis (2010), Greek democracy has continued to function and the courts have administered justice, albeit with very significant delays, because judges are unable to handle the constant overflow of cases. Lack of digital infrastructure and modern management methods aggravate the situation.

There are rare cases of officials failing to uphold the law as far as human rights protection are concerned. Such cases, which have occurred in detention centers for migrants and in prisons, have acquired wide publicity, and have taken a long time to be processed by the courts system. Independent control mechanisms, such as free media, NGOs and social movements, are very sensitive to such violations. Prosecuting authorities have also become more sensitive to these issues, as attested by the wide-ranging investigations against party cadres of the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn which started in September 2013 and are still going on. Greece has been subject to international criticism

for its long-term failures (prior to the recent migration crisis) in processing and distinguishing asylum-seekers from illegal entrants.

In summary, the state protects civil rights, but in practice organizational and infrastructural obstacles stand in the way of comprehensive protection of these rights, which disproportionately harms religious and ethnic minorities and asylum seekers.

Political Liberties  
Score: 9

Political liberties are well protected by the constitution, including the right to vote, to think and speak freely, to assemble and demonstrate, to organize in collectives such as unions and associations and to submit petitions requiring a timely response by the competent authorities. In the period under review, protests against the austerity measures almost ceased as two anti-austerity parties, the radical left Syriza party and the right-wing nationalist ANEL party, formed a coalition government; as a result, their supporters stopped taking to the streets. Compared to the years between 2010 and 2014, after January 2015, demonstrations became rare and the police intervened only when protesters threatened to storm the Greek parliament or the prime minister's office. Demonstrations in favor of parties in the two parliamentary elections of January and September 2015 were peaceful. In other areas – the right to worship, for example – liberties are affected by the constitutionally imposed impediments on proselytism and the establishment of places of worship. For example, the Muslim community of Athens still does not have an officially recognized place of worship (i.e., a state recognized mosque).

Non-discrimination  
Score: 6

Protection against discrimination on the basis of race has been regulated since 1979, while protection against gender discrimination is regulated by the New Family Law passed in 1983. The European Union's legislative acts also provide protection from gender discrimination. However, legislation against discrimination has rarely been implemented.

In February 2013, Nils Muižnieks, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, stated that “between October 2011 and December 2012 more than 200 racist attacks were recorded in Greece by the racist violence recording network headed by UNHCR and the National Commission for Human Rights.” After the murder of a left-wing rap singer by neo-Nazi militants in September 2013, the Golden Dawn party became more restraint, as prosecuting authorities launched criminal investigations against the party's leadership and scores of its militants. In the period under review, the outcry against racism and the rise to power of a strong left-wing party, Syriza, probably contributed to the decline of discrimination. In fact, the opposite of racist discrimination, namely tolerance, solidarity and support of foreigners, was observed in the summer and the fall of 2015, when Greece received a vast inflow of refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan (210,000 refugees arrived in and passed through Greece in the month of October alone).

## Citation:

Family relations are regulated through law 1329/1982, while anti-discrimination legislation is found in law 927/1079 (amended in 2001 to facilitate the intervention of prosecuting authorities against trespassers). European Union law, naturally also applicable in Greece, regulates gender discrimination. See, for instance, the Gender Directive, officially known as Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004.

For a summary of Muižnieks' conclusions, as presented to the Council of Europe, see the document "Racist violence a real threat to democracy in Greece" available at [http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/News/2013/130201Greece\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/News/2013/130201Greece_en.asp) [accessed on 07.05.2013].

### Rule of Law

Legal Certainty  
Score: 7

The state administration operates on the basis of a legal formalism and a complexity of legislation that is extensive, numerous and sometimes contradictory. In other words, while legal certainty may be provided through established rules and regulations, not knowing what applies and under what conditions makes it difficult to apply legislation. Acts passed by parliament often have seemingly extraneous items added, which only confuses things further.

After the onset of the economic crisis in the winter of 2009/2010, the government repeatedly adapted past legislation to changing circumstances because the conditions accompanying Greece's bailout required reforms in many policy sectors. Many changes have been made to areas such as taxation legislation which, though necessary, have not fostered an institutional environment conducive to attracting foreign investment. Moreover, because of the need to effect reforms rapidly, the government resorted to governing by decree after passing legislation, which left ample room for discretion. The same practice was continued under the Syriza-ANEL government, which has been in power since January 2015. Indeed, in the period under review, changes in taxation legislation took a long time to be formulated, while government by decree was common. The politics of successive coalition governments has fostered further uncertainty and successive parliamentary elections in 2015 also complicated the situation.

Yet, the fact that in 2015 the Syriza-ANEL coalition government and the parties of the opposition (ND and PASOK) converged on the reforms contained in the third bailout package may be a sound basis from which to expect that – in contrast to the past – Greek public policy will feature fewer loopholes and contradictions in the future.

Judicial Review  
Score: 7

Courts are independent of the government and the legislature. Members of the judiciary are promoted through the internal hierarchy of the judiciary. There is an exception, namely the appointment of the presidents and vice-presidents of the highest civil law and criminal law court (Areios Pagos) and administrative

law court (Symvoulio tis Epikrateias), for which a different process is followed. The heads of such courts are selected by the cabinet (the Council of Ministers) from a list supplied by the highest courts themselves. In the past, such higher judges were clearly supporters of the government of the day. Successive governments, including the incumbent coalition government of Syriza and ANEL, have not resisted the temptation to hand pick their favored candidates for the President posts of the highest courts.

Justices are recruited through independent entrance examinations and are then trained in a post-graduate level educational institution. The court system is self-managed. In a formal sense, courts in Greece are able to monitor whether government and administration act in conformity with the law.

Whether courts do so efficiently is another matter, because they cannot ensure legal compliance. They act with delays and pass contradictory judgments, owing to the plethora of laws and the opaque character of regulations. One example of a law-infested policy sector is town planning, where courts have not managed to control the government and administration in a sustained manner.

Appointment of  
Justices  
Score: 7

Before the onset of the crisis, the appointment of justices was to a large extent controlled by the government. After the Panhellenic Socialist Party (PASOK) came to power in October 2009, the government made the process of appointing higher-ranking justices more transparent. Today, candidates for the presidency of the highest civil law and criminal law court (Areios Pagos) and administrative law court (Symvoulio tis Epikrateias) as well as the audit office are nominated by justices themselves. Then the lists of candidates are submitted to a higher-ranking organ of the parliament, the Conference of the Presidents of the Greek parliament. This is an all-party institution which submits an opinion to the Cabinet of Ministers, the institution which appoints justices at the highest posts of the courts mentioned above. Between 2011 and 2014, the government applied the seniority principle in selecting justices to serve at the highest echelons of the justice system. In 2015, under the coalition government of the left-wing Syriza and the nationalist right-wing ANEL party, the principle of seniority was partly curbed as the new President of the Supreme Court was not the court's most senior member. On 30 June 2015 the person who was appointed for this post by the government was a well-known, high ranking judge who, functioning as a leader of the trade union of judges, had publicly denounced the austerity policies of New Democracy and PASOK.

Citation:

Law 2841/2010 stipulates that the appointment of presidents and vice-presidents of the highest courts requires the non-binding opinion of the high-ranking parliamentary committee titled Conference of the Presidents of the Greek parliament.

Corruption  
Prevention  
Score: 5

Public officeholders are not efficiently prevented from exploiting their offices for private gain, but things changed in the period under review. In 2011, Greece's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) score was far lower than that of all other EU member states, except for Bulgaria. In 2012, Greece's score fell below that of Bulgaria, but in 2014 Greece again caught up with Bulgaria and both countries were ranked at the 69th rank among 175 countries (Denmark was ranked first, as the least corrupt country, followed by other Scandinavian countries).

Between 2012 and 2014, the government passed extensive anti-corruption legislation, following the advice of the Troika and the Council of Europe. Yet, there still is an implementation gap in enforcing legislation on party financing, parliamentary integrity, the corruption of civil servants and tax evasion. After Syriza's rise to power in January 2015, the earlier lack of resolve among political and administrative elites to control corruption was reversed. However, the Syriza-ANEL coalition was undecided on how to steer anti-corruption policy. In January 2015, a new post of Minister for Anti-Corruption was established; in September the post was abolished and a post of Deputy Minister for Anti-Corruption was created and subsumed under the supervision of the Minister of Justice. A new General Secretariat on Anti-Corruption was created under the aforementioned Minister, but remains understaffed. In September 2015, the government transferred the 3,500 employees of the Economic Crime Unit (SDOE), who had been functioning under independent authority, to the General Secretariat of Public Revenue, a unit within the Ministry of Finance.

Regardless of such organizational turmoil, in the period under review visible progress has been made on most fronts. For instance, in March 2015 the trial of former Minister of Finance Giorgos Papakonstantinou, for misconduct, infidelity, and document falsification (for removing files from the Lagarde list that involved his relatives), ended with a guilty verdict. However, the court found that his offences were minor and he received a one year suspended prison sentence. Between April and November 2015 the competent anti-corruption prosecutors, entrusted with fighting corruption among public officials, intensified their efforts to unearth evidence of corruption and charged two well-known Greek arms dealers, Thomas Liakounakos and Costas Dafermos, with offences which led to their arrest. They are now awaiting trial.

The visible, though not always stable, progress in fighting corruption is associated with multiple factors: the plethora of legislative acts on corruption; the lack of expertise and resources available to institutions entrusted with the fight against corruption and the problematic coordination between these institutions; and the ongoing very generous immunity protection offered by the



Constitution of Greece to serving and former ministers. Without constitutional reform, the effort to control corruption will always stumble into recurring legal impediments.

Citation:

<https://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results>. Accessed on 05.11.2015. Law 4254/2014 (section IE), passed in April 2014, contains very strict penalties for public officials receiving bribes and also protects whistleblowers who help prosecuting authorities to fight corruption in the public sector. Law 4320/2015, passed in March 2015, re-organizes anti-corruption authorities, by assigning the relevant tasks to a new General Secretariat and a Minister of Anti-corruption.

# Governance

## I. Executive Capacity

### Strategic Capacity

Strategic  
Planning  
Score: 3

Strategic planning has long proved difficult for the central government in Athens. Government has often suffered from an “archipelago”-like quality, with conflicting political interests, clientelism, and a highly formalistic administrative culture serving to enhance segmentation.

Traditionally, strategic planning has relied on small groups inadequately integrated into the governmental process. The units at the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) and the Ministry of Finance are usually staffed by academics who are affiliated with the incumbent government and work on fixed-term contracts. From 2012 to early 2015, the PMO included a group of lawyers and party cadres who are close associates of the prime minister and leader of the governing center-right party New Democracy (ND). At the PMO there is a Directorate of Strategic Planning, whereas at the Ministry of Finance there is a Council of Economic Advisors. Between 2013 and 2014, the PMO closely followed the passage of specific reform measures that had been dictated to the Greek government in exchange for continued bailout installments; after New Democracy’s defeat in the May 2013 elections to the European Parliament, however, the PMO relaxed Greece’s reform effort. The coming to power of the Syriza-ANEL government in January 2015 meant the complete reshuffling of the PMO, as had been the case in all previous government turnovers. In March 2015, the Syriza-ANEL government established a new unit at the PMO, the General Secretariat for Coordination of Government. This followed pressures from an OECD review and the Troika criticizing the weak coordination of the government. In addition, the new government completely mistrusted advisors of different political persuasions who had served under preceding governments between 2010 and 2014. Instead of drawing on their experience, the government assigned the tasks of policy planning, implementation and monitoring to Syriza party cadres who had neither previous government

experience nor were familiar with the EU institutional setting and processes on which Greece continues to heavily depend.

In summary, strategic planning is limited to the time horizon of the latest bailout package and does not look beyond what the third bailout package stipulates for the period up to June 2018. Long-term planning suffers as a result, but the PMO and individual Syriza-ANEL ministries have benefited from learning to work with representatives of Greece's creditors. They became familiar with planning and implementation the hard way, having tried between January and July 2015 to drastically alter Greece's commitments to its creditors. Ultimately, they were eventually forced back to the dependent and weak negotiating position their predecessors had occupied between 2010 and 2014.

Scholarly Advice  
Score: 6

Non-governmental academic experts are consulted as advisors to the government, prime minister and ministers. Most of the ad hoc committees formed by ministers on public policy reform are staffed by academic experts. The numerous academics who supported the anti-austerity party line of Syriza between 2012 and 2014 took up posts as political appointees in various levels of the central government after Syriza won the elections of January 2015.

The interpenetration of politics (and more specifically policymaking) and academia can be explained by the fact that expertise and substantive research are found more commonly in universities than within government or in businesses or other institutions. It also underscores just how unattractive a career in civil service is to those university graduates with tertiary-level degrees. Qualified academics often serve as experts in all sectors of the economy and administration, where they also act as administrative elites, which simply do not exist in Greece's highly politicized civil service. Moreover, the size and quality of policy think tanks varies significantly and often offers little alternative to ad persona advisory inputs.

#### **Interministerial Coordination**

GO Expertise  
Score: 6

The center of government has traditionally struggled to coordinate and evaluate government legislation. Few prime ministers have had effective staffing to help perform such functions. As with previous governments (including the New Democracy-PASOK coalition government which ended in 2014), under the Syriza-ANEL coalition government (since January 2015) draft legislation has rarely been subjected to substantive review and evaluation. In fact, ministers have often been able to insert last-minute amendments to legislation and thereby foster clientelism.

The two relevant offices at the center of government – the Prime Minister's

Office (PMO) and the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG), which is a separate unit supervised by the prime minister and tasked more narrowly with preparing cabinet meetings and reviewing draft bills, have lacked the staff and resources to act as efficient coordinators and evaluators. The PMO staff has often assigned non-governmental tasks. The GSG has normally played a limited role in coordination and evaluation, largely failing to do so effectively. It has not, for example, kept or circulated minutes of relevant cabinet meetings.

Bailout conditionality has compelled the government to pay closer attention to such matters. In 2013 and 2014, PM Samaras (New Democracy) and Deputy Prime Minister Evangelos Venizelos cooperated closely with the latter ensuring that ministers complied with the government's decisions. In 2015, PM Tsipras only monitored his ministers to an extent as he was intensely preoccupied with negotiations with Greece's creditors which led to the third bailout package of July 2015.

GO Gatekeeping  
Score: 6

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) can return all items on policy grounds, but it has limited resources when it comes to reviewing legislation. In fact, it is the Ministry of Finance, along with the PMO, which may play the role of gatekeeper, as Greece's finances are closely inspected every three months by Troika representatives. During the period under review, foreign gatekeepers held sway in Greece, while domestic gatekeepers found difficulties in reviewing or returning items on policy grounds on several economic, industrial, education and migration policy issues. The PMO itself struggled to adapt to the requirements of the intense and technical negotiations with Greece's creditors and to the challenges of governing a country at the receiving end of financial assistance as well as of unpredictable large waves of incoming refugees.

Line Ministries  
Score: 6

Before the economic crisis, the PMO was not capable of restraining individual ministries from pursuing their own policy agendas, particularly if a minister was a member of one of the high-ranking governing party cadres. In other words, the prime minister was a sort of "primus inter pares."

During the period under review, the governing coalition of Syriza-ANEL was totally new in its composition and inexperienced in government organization. For example, it was only two months after coming to power in January 2015 that the Syriza-ANEL government submitted its first ever bill of law to parliament. Thus, it was unavoidable that in the prolonged period of adaptation to the requirements of its new tasks, the PMO's consultation with line ministries was haphazard, while coordination with individual ministers was practiced on a trial-and-error basis. Regarding the streamlining of policy proposals and coordination, the launching of the referendum in July 2015 and the calling of snap elections in September 2015 did not make things any better.

## Citation:

Kevin Featherstone and Dimitris Papadimitriou (2013), "The Emperor Has No Clothes! Power and Resources within the Greek Core Executive", *Governance*, Vol. 26, Issue 3, pp. 523-545.

Cabinet  
Committees  
Score: 3

There are cabinet committees tasked with overseeing specific policy sectors. However, these committees meet only when a major policy decision has to be made and are not subject to systematic organization. Substantive policy work is done at the line ministries and by the Prime Minister's Office before issues are presented to the cabinet. Ministerial committees often perform a more symbolic function. This was the practice under the preceding government coalitions of New Democracy and PASOK between 2011 and 2014 and was repeated after January 2015 under the Syriza and ANEL coalition government. Only this time, committees functioned more slowly and at a lower level of coordination, a result of the fact that most ministries were consumed for seven months (January to July 2015) with the negotiations of the PMO and individual ministers with Greece's creditors. Then, snap elections were called for September 2015, which brought cabinet and ministerial committee work to a standstill. A new Syriza-ANEL coalition government was formed after these elections and started functioning only belatedly.

Ministerial  
Bureaucracy  
Score: 3

Greek bureaucracy is over-politicized and under-resourced. Political party cadres rather than civil servants coordinate policy proposals. Civil servants in line ministries often lack modern scientific and management skills. Policy proposals are usually assigned to ministerial advisors, who are short-term political appointees and can be non-academic experts, academics and governing party cadres. Top civil servants contribute to policy proposals by suggesting what is legally permissible and technically feasible, although even on those issues ministers often tend to trust their own legal and technical advisors. The remaining civil servants at lower levels of the bureaucratic hierarchy rarely, if ever, know of, let alone contribute to policy proposals. Moreover, there is little horizontal coordination among civil servants working in different ministries. Ministers assign the task of horizontal interministerial communication to their advisors.

Since Syriza's rise to power, in coalition with the ANEL party, in January 2015, the politicization of Greek bureaucracy was further exacerbated. For example, the minister of education replaced all 13 civil servants who were heads of the 13 regional public education services. In November 2015, the Syriza-ANEL coalition government passed a law on the basis of which heads of independent authorities, such as the Greek Ombudsman, were dismissed. In other quarters of the state administration, many, although not all, heads and members of administrative councils of public bodies and state-owned enterprises were replaced with Syriza and ANEL party cadres or sympathizers.

Informal  
Coordination  
Score: 6

Most coordination mechanisms are informal and complement the more meager formal coordination mechanisms such as the infrequently convened cabinet and ministerial committees. Most informal mechanisms are ad hoc meetings among ministers convened at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Such meetings are followed up by person-to-person contacts between staff members of the PMO and advisors to ministers. In the period under review, particularly after January 2015, informal coordination was frequent and was organized by close associates of PM Tsipras, minister of the state, Nicos Pappas, and minister of the state for government coordination, Alekos Flambouraris, at the headquarters of the PMO.

### Evidence-based Instruments

RIA Application  
Score: 2

RIA has been nominally adopted but in practice policy proposals are not accompanied by RIA. The Prime Minister's Office issued a prime minister's circular in July 2006, requesting that all ministries start RIA in their policy field, but in practice little progress has been achieved since then. No progress has been made in this field in the period under review.

Quality of RIA  
Process  
Score: 1  
Sustainability  
Check  
Score: 1

RIA analyses do not really exist nor were they embarked upon in the period under review.

Sustainability checks do not exist; this has been the case under the preceding and the incumbent government.

### Societal Consultation

Negotiating  
Public Support  
Score: 3

Since 2010, the Greek government has sought to manage economic problems through austerity measures, which unions have fiercely opposed. At the same time both large and small interest groups have fought to maintain their collective rights and privileges. In 2014, the divide between government and most societal actors remained deep. After Syriza's electoral victory in January 2015 and the formation of Syriza-ANEL coalition government, some consultation took place with groups which had supported Syriza's drive to win power, such as trade unions of teachers, groups of university professors and the association of journalists of the shuttered public broadcaster (ERT, who were re-hired after ERT was re-opened by the Syriza-ANEL government). The new government also consulted with representatives of industrialists, merchants and the liberal professions who wanted to voice their views on motives and stimuli for private investment and on the policy measures of the third bailout package which will most certainly affect them in 2016.

## Policy Communication

Coherent  
Communication  
Score: 3

Greece's improved fiscal status – manifest in the budget surplus for 2013 and 2014 – prompted the government to prematurely communicate optimism in the summer of 2014 that the country had successfully turned the corner in overcoming the economic crisis. However, by October 2014 it became clear that international capital markets were still a danger for the Greek economy, as the spreads on Greek state bonds were forbiddingly high. Greece needed and will continue to need an extension of credit from the Troika, as demonstrated by the protracted negotiations from January to July 2015 between the Syriza-ANEL government and the EC, ECB, ESM and IMF. During that period, statements by ministers were often contradictory or agnostic about the country's future. All available facts contradicted Syriza's electoral promises to abandon austerity policies and still keep the country within the euro zone. The Syriza-ANEL coalition government, however, is clearly more innovative and more effective in strategic communication than preceding governments. While contradictions and incoherence prevailed, particularly in the beginning of Syriza-ANEL's term in power, the majority of Greeks would come to back the government in the aforementioned negotiations; more than six out of 10 Greeks accepted the government's position to reject the EC's second-to-last list of austerity reforms in the referendum of July 2015. Support of the government prevailed despite the fact that PM Tsipras made a U-turn after that referendum and promised to implement harsh austerity reforms. It was only in November 2015 that some protests started taking place against the government's plans.

## Implementation

Government  
Efficiency  
Score: 4

Policy implementation efforts have been problematic throughout the period under review and even more so since the government turnover of January 2015. From time to time, administrative incapacity coupled with resistance on the part of affected interest groups (e.g., the liberal professions) and economic recession (which has clipped opportunities to raise capital), have delayed the implementation of important policies. Examples of a lingering implementation gap include the problems still encountered by young entrepreneurs and professionals when it comes to establishing and operating a new business or entering a market in a previously restricted profession (e.g., starting a commercial transport business using trucks, opening a pharmacy).

Greece achieved fiscal consolidation between 2013 and 2014. Nonetheless, in 2015, as the new coalition government was still trying to formulate policies in the rapidly changing environment of negotiations with Greece's creditors, the

achievement of policy objectives was severely delayed. Greeks were allowed to file their 2014 income tax declarations in late August 2015. Thus, they started paying income tax only at the end of the summer of 2015. Moreover, it was only in October 2015 that the ministry of finance sent citizens notices on owed Integrated Tax on Landed Property (ENFIA) for the year 2014. Overall, during the period under review, the ministries and state agencies in charge of policy implementation have backpedaled regarding implementation.

Ministerial  
Compliance  
Score: 5

Since 2012, ministerial compliance has improved, as the fear of Greece's default and the specter of Grexit have compelled ministers to follow the party line set by the prime minister, particularly with regard to economic and social policy. Ministerial compliance was relaxed after January 2015 and for the period up to the signing of Greece's third bailout package (July 2015). This was owed to the fact that the coalition government which came to power in January was not prepared to formulate, let alone executive, concrete policy decision. Syriza and (much more so) its junior coalition partner, the right-wing nationalist party ANEL, were unprepared to assume the responsibilities of government. Soon after January 2015, this became evident with regard to incentives for ministers to implement any policies.

Monitoring  
Ministries  
Score: 6

The efficiency of the PMO's monitoring of line ministries improved between 2013 and 2014, when PM Samaras, the head of the center-right New Democracy party, formed a tripartite government in which the vast majority of ministers come from his own party and also assigned the task of monitoring ministries to his close associates. On-site monitoring was also performed by the Troika during its frequent visits, until New Democracy lost the European Parliament elections of May 2014 to the Syriza party and implementation of reforms was slowed down by PM Samaras. Since the government turnover of January 2015, monitoring has been further relaxed because the PMO, under Syriza's leader and PM Alexis Tsipras, was completely absorbed by the futile effort to change the course of Greece's bailout program, overturning the austerity program imposed since 2012. After the failure of Syriza's effort, the Greek parliament's approval of the third bailout program in August 2015 and snap elections in September 2015, the PMO turned inwards and slowly started to monitor the implementation activities of line ministries. Such monitoring is, however, unpredictable, given that the Greek PM has publicly stated that neither he nor his ministries believe in the policies which they are required to implement.

Monitoring  
Agencies,  
Bureaucracies  
Score: 7

In Greece, most ministries supervise dozens of state agencies. For instance, the Ministry of Transport supervises the state-owned public transport companies in Athens and Thessaloniki, the Ministry of Health supervises all public hospitals and the Ministry of Finance supervises numerous state-owned enterprises. Before the crisis, supervision was lax – a tendency which resulted in very high debts incurred by state agencies such as those identified above. The cost of servicing such debts was assumed by the state budget. In the long



run, this pattern, along with other governance deficiencies, led to Greece's deep, ongoing fiscal crisis.

After Greece's first bailout in 2010, the supervision of state agencies tightened considerably. In fact, the Ministry of Finance acquired substantive powers to oversee the management of state agencies even in cases where the latter still nominally belonged to the jurisdiction of other line ministries. Between 2011 and 2013, progress became visible as far as the monitoring of state agencies was concerned, as Greece was able to drastically reduce its primary budget deficit. In the period under review, the decline of New Democracy's legitimacy after it lost the European Parliament elections of May 2014 to Syriza, the ensuing government instability in 2015, two parliamentary elections and a national referendum clearly negatively affected the intensity of monitoring bureaucracies and executive agencies by the competent ministers.

Task Funding  
Score: 2

After the onset of the crisis (May 2010), the government, anxious to effect fiscal consolidation, was extremely frugal with regard to task funding. Moreover, municipal authorities were no longer allowed to obtain easy credit from state-owned banks. As a result, subnational governments began scaling back social and cultural services. The situation became worse in the period under review. After the formation of the Syriza-ANEL government in January 2015, the realization that the state's coffers were being rapidly emptied, as Greece had not received any loan installment since August 2014, led to the compulsory transfer of funds from subnational authorities (regional governments, municipal authorities) to the central government. The Syriza-ANEL government resorted to this measure because for most of 2015 it was under pressure to find money in order to pay the salaries and pensions of public employees, while government revenue was not forthcoming.

Constitutional  
Discretion  
Score: 2

While the autonomy of subnational self-governments is nominally guaranteed by the constitution – which requires that the government provides them with all legislative, regulatory and financial means to accomplish their tasks – in practice, particularly in the period under review, subnational self-governments had very few means at their disposal. The government narrowed the scope of discretion of subnational self-governments because the state's finances were on the brink of collapse, a prospect that came too close to becoming a reality in the summer of 2015.

Citation:

Article 102 of the constitution provides for the autonomy of subnational governments.

National  
Standards  
Score: 2

Before the crisis, an uneven allocation of staff, infrastructure and funds rendered the standards for public services unpredictable. The only thing that was reasonably predictable was that public services, such as public health and education, were substandard in mountainous regions and remote islands. For

example, that hospitals, welfare services and schools were understaffed in these areas was already common and obvious before the government turnover of January 2015 (when the New Democracy-PASOK coalition was thrown from government). In the period under review, owing to the crisis, to meandering policies of the Syriza-ANEL government and to the very long time it took to formulate the third bailout package (eventually signed in July 2015), the situation became worse. Supplies like medical drugs were depleted, while cuts in government spending led to uncertainty about the time, scope and quality of public service delivery at the subnational level.

### Adaptability

Domestic  
Adaptability  
Score: 5

No other country surveyed by the SGI has been subject to such intense or extensive scrutiny as Greece has under the Troika and the EU Taskforce. Loan conditionality has obliged the country to respond to an external agenda.

Under pressure from the Troika, Greece has since 2010 started streamlining and recapitalizing its banking system. By 2014, four of Greece's systemically important banks successfully passed all relevant stress tests. However, the same four banks were in dire need of recapitalization by the end of 2015, as mismanagement, the worsening of the economic climate in Greece and government instability in 2015 took a heavy toll on the banking system. Moreover, during the period under review, the Greek government halted the process of slimming the size of central services provided by ministries. Furthermore, because of the traditional lack of trust between outgoing and incoming governments, after January 2015 the PMO's office was completely reshuffled and inexperienced party cadres from Syriza assumed the relevant posts; as a result, Greece failed to strengthen the administrative capacity of the PMO.

International  
Coordination  
Score: 4

Greece, through its membership in the euro zone and through EU summits and meetings of ministers, has participated in international efforts to foster the provision of public goods. For instance, Greece has been vocal at international forums in pressuring for a global response to migration issues, emphasizing that migration from the developing world into Europe is not solely a Greek problem arising from its geographical position between Europe and Asia. This was particularly underlined by the Syriza-ANEL government in 2015, as it found itself unable to manage the huge inflow of refugees landing on Greek shores. However, given its own severe economic crisis, Greece has been unable to develop institutional capacities beyond its role as an EU member state in fostering the provision of public goods nor has it been able to devote resources to ensure that its own policies are in line with international policies. Still, credit must be given to Greece's new PM, Alexis Tsipras, whose fiery rhetoric against austerity and electoral victories in Greece has incited

worldwide discussions about the efficiency and fairness of providing public goods through orthodox neo-liberal economic policies (policies still followed today in the EU and around the globe).

### Organizational Reform

Self-monitoring  
Score: 5

Again, the external monitoring of Greece's bailout loans has pressured Greece to overcome its operational weaknesses within government.

A report, produced by the OECD in 2011 at the request of the Ministry of Public Administration (now renamed as the Ministry of Administrative Reform), offered an overview of government organization and public administration, and presented reform proposals. Since 2012, many of these proposals have been implemented and resulted in a new organizational chart for central services provided by ministries as of 2014. However, after New Democracy's defeat to Syriza in the European Parliament elections of May 2014 and Syriza's rise to the seat of government in January 2015, monitoring was only very selectively and sporadically implemented as the country went through a period of reform inertia, government instability and renegotiation of its bailout package.

In brief, in the period under review, though some new mechanisms for monitoring governing were available, such as competent parliamentary committees and the Government Council on Reform, successive governments marginalized these mechanisms.

Institutional  
Reform  
Score: 5

Under pressure from the Troika, the government tried to improve its strategic capacity by establishing the Government Council of Reform in 2012. This was a cabinet committee entrusted with the task of enhancing reform capacity. However, between 2013 and 2014 the committee was never endowed with adequate administrative support to perform its role and only played an auxiliary role to the Prime Minister's Office. The committee was even more marginalized after the Syriza-ANEL coalition government was formed in January 2015, as Syriza ministers associated reforms exclusively with neo-liberalism and viewed with suspicion almost all government organs which they found in place.

## II. Executive Accountability

### Citizens' Participatory Competence

Policy  
Knowledge  
Score: 4

Before the economic crisis, voter turnout in Greek parliamentary elections was very high and steadily exceeded 70% of all those registered to vote, but in the most recent parliamentary elections of June 2012, turnout dropped to 62.5%. In the elections of September 2015 turnout fell even further (down to 56.6%). This was symptomatic of the political estrangement felt by Greek voters who blamed Greece's political elites for the ills the country has faced since 2010. Moreover, even before the crisis, citizens did not really obtain enough information on government policymaking, as the media leaned toward infotainment, while individual members of parliament rarely discussed substantive policy issues with their voters in the electoral districts which they represented.

In Greece there is a tradition of appealing to government ministers or members of parliament in order to obtain favors such as accelerating the award of a pension or facilitating the hiring of a family member in the public sector. However, since 2010 this practice has probably been curbed, as the government succeeded in achieving fiscal consolidation at all costs between 2013 and 2014. In the European Parliament elections of May 2014 most parties made unrealistic pledges to voters about alleviating austerity policy measures, thus obfuscating the policy knowledge citizens had. The same tendency was observed in the electoral campaign for the parliamentary elections of January 2015.

In Greece, a small number of individuals voice policy opinions to politicians either through writing letters on policy issues to the press or by participating in the open electronic consultation on new government measures which each ministry announces and sustains before drafting a bill of law. On the other hand, there is a strong tradition of organized interest groups voicing opinions on policy matters relevant to their material interests.

Since the onset of the crisis, citizens have acquired a more precise view of the reforms agreed on between the Greek government and the country's creditors. Yet they have not been able to fully follow developments. The Memorandums of Understanding signed by the Greek government and the Troika – which have included government measures to be taken in economic, tax, income, pension and labor relation areas – were extensive, detailed and complicated.

Citizens have had only rare glimpses at the precise content of policy measures, which are filtered through the distorting lens of polarized party conflicts between the pro-Memorandum and anti-Memorandum political parties. The situation became worse in 2015 as the new government tried in vain to convince the country's creditors that its pre-electoral promises to follow Keynesian policies of fiscal expansion and to abolish taxes (e.g., the single landed property tax, ENFIA), were to be honored despite the dire condition of the Greek state's finances. Citizens believed that all this was possible and that a tougher negotiating strategy on the part of the Greek government would bring the desired changes in austerity policy. They rewarded anti-Memorandum parties, such as Syriza and ANEL, with enough votes to form a new coalition government. Yet, most citizens were clearly misinformed about the rules of the game of EU politics as well as about the minimal say Greece had with regard to decisions on its fate and the country's financial state; these promises of fiscal expansion and tax cuts were completely unrealistic.

Citation:

The Ministry of Interior reports turnout in elections. The relevant percentage figures are available at the Ministry's [http://ekloges.ypes.gr/current/v/public/index.html#“cls”:"main",“params”:](http://ekloges.ypes.gr/current/v/public/index.html#“cls”:). Accessed on 03.11.2015.

### Legislative Actors' Resources

Parliamentary  
Resources  
Score: 7

Members of the Greek parliament are granted full access to the well-resourced library of the parliament. They are also entitled to hire two scientific advisors who are paid out of the parliament's budget. However, some members of parliament hire family members or friends who, in effect, do administrative and secretarial rather than research work. This practice was continued in the period under review. Nevertheless, each party represented in parliament has its own scientific support group that is funded by the state budget. In fact, despite cuts across the public sector, the resources provided to MPs were arguably the least affected.

Nowadays updated academic advice is available also through two recently founded institutions. The first is the Office of the Budget, a policy-oriented committee of university professors with economic expertise who work under the auspices of the parliament. They are independent of any influence of the Ministry of Finance and periodically publish academic reports on the Greek economy and the finances of the state. The second is the Foundation of the Parliament, which is headed by a former law school professor. This is a more scientific-oriented foundation focusing on institutions and constitutional matters.

Obtaining  
Documents  
Score: 10

Members of parliament may request the supply of government documents and frequently exercise this right. Documents are normally delivered in full, within one month, from the competent ministry to the parliament. Restrictions apply to documents containing sensitive information on diplomatic, military or national security issues. Overall, the Greek case is generally a good example of parliamentary scrutiny, as MPs are usually very demanding regarding information.

Citation:

The supply of government documents to the parliament is regulated by article 133 of the Standing Orders of the Parliament. Information on this regulation is available at <http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/Kanonismos-tis-Voulis/article-133/>. Accessed on 04.06.2013.

Summoning  
Ministers  
Score: 9

The rights of committees are plentiful and are often exercised. Ministers are regularly summoned to committees but they are obliged to appear in front of a committee only if two-fifths of the committee members require them to do so. There are a few restrictions with regard to information given to the committees by the Minister of Defense and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The former may restrict his or her comments only to armaments supplies, while the latter is not obliged to give information on any ongoing negotiations or talks in which Greece still participates. Owing to the many parliamentary and electoral battles waged in the period under review, ministers were frequently summoned, defended government policies and engaged in acute debates with the opposition in parliament.

Citation:

The summoning of ministers is regulated by article 41A of the Standing Orders of the Greek parliament. Information on this procedure is available (in Greek) at <http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/Kanonismos-tis-Voulis/article-41a/>. Accessed on 05.06.2013.

Summoning  
Experts  
Score: 9

The rights of regular committees are not at all limited. They summon experts from ministries, universities, NGOs and professional associations. Examples include high-ranking EC officials who have briefed the European Affairs Committee and university professors who have briefed the Committee on Cultural and Educational Affairs on university reforms.

However, government and the opposition tend to disagree on everything, even if there is consensus among experts that policy choices are very limited. This pattern reflects the long-term polarization in the Greek party system which, since the elections of 2012, has become very acute due to the clash between the coalition government and the opposition. Initially these clashes manifested between the center-right New Democracy and center-left PASOK government and the opposition radical left Syriza party. These roles were reversed when Syriza rose to power in January 2015 and the two aforementioned parties became the opposition.

## Citation:

Summoning experts to regular committees is regulated by article 38 of the Standing Orders of the Greek parliament.

Task Area  
Congruence  
Score: 7

There were 17 ministries in Greece until the end of 2014, but owing to the rise to power of Syriza in January 2015, the organization of government was altered. There are 14 ministries today, whereas there are just six regular parliamentary committees (called “Standing Committees”). This still creates a task mismatch as there are more ministries than committees, but tasks are jointly carried out. For instance, there is a Standing Committee on Cultural and Educational Affairs and a Standing Committee on National Defense and Foreign Affairs.

The problem with monitoring ministries is connected to the sparse information channeled from ministries to parliamentary committees; and the sometimes decorative participation of members of parliament in committee meetings. Even though competences have been transferred from the plenary of the Greek parliament to the regular committees (which examine new bills of law), this has not improved the quality of legislation and parliamentary control.

## Citation:

Information on the number, competences and tasks of regular committees of the Greek parliament in English is available at <http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en /Koinovouleftikes-Epitropes/Katigor ies>. Accessed on 07.06.2013.

Audit Office  
Score: 5

The audit office is an institution independent of the government and the parliament. It is both a court that intervenes to resolve disputes related to the implementation of administrative law (e.g., civil service pensions) and a high-ranking administrative institution supervising expenses incurred by ministries and public entities.

The staff of the audit office is composed of judges who follow a career path comparable to that of judges of the Greek court system. At the end of the year, the audit office submits to the parliament an annual financial statement and the state’s balance sheet. The submission of some of these financial statements has been delayed. In fact, the audit office has assumed a political role from time to time. It has proceeded with a constitutional review of particular clauses of laws implementing the successive bailout packages. For example, in October 2015 it found clauses of the third bailout package, signed by PM Tsipras, which pertain to cuts in public pensions to be unconstitutional.

The audit office’s president and vice-presidents are selected by a high-ranking parliamentary body consisting of the president and the vice-presidents of the Greek parliament, but it is the government which makes their final

appointment, as in the case of the high-ranking judges in the rest of courts. After being appointed, audit court judges are not accountable to the government or the parliament and in fact enjoy the same tenure and independence as their counterparts in the rest of courts.

Citation:

Information on the Greek audit office in English is available at [www.elsyn.gr/elsyn/root.jsp](http://www.elsyn.gr/elsyn/root.jsp). Accessed on 07.06.2013.

Ombuds Office  
Score: 8

The ombuds office is one of the most well-organized public services in the country. The Greek ombudsman is selected and appointed by a group of high-ranking parliamentarians from the Greek parliament, and is obliged to report to the parliament by submitting an annual report.

The ombuds receives and processes complaints from citizens who are frequently caught in the web of the sprawling Greek bureaucracy. Depending on the complaint at hand, the ombuds office can intervene with the central, regional and local bureaucracy. The staff of the ombuds office can pressure the government to change existing legislation and can also inform the prosecutor's office of any criminal offences committed by administrative employees and officials in the course of discharging their duties. In the period under review, and more specifically in November 2015, the Ombudsman, who had served under successive governments, was forced to step down, as the Syriza-ANEL government passed a law relieving the serving Ombudsman and other heads of independent authorities of their duties.

Citation:

Information in English on the Greek "ombuds office" is available at <http://www.synigoros.gr/?i=stp.en>. Accessed on 07.06.2013.

## Media

Media Reporting  
Score: 5

The most popular TV and radio channels are privately owned and provide infotainment rather than in-depth information. Such channels may offer in-depth information only in cases in which the economic interests of private media owners are affected by a prospective government decision. Media owners often change sides, first favoring the government, then the opposition. The state-owned TV and radio channels – which cater to a small audience and cannot effectively compete with the private channels – offer somewhat more sophisticated information and analysis.

However, the sudden shutting down of the national broadcaster (ERT) by the government in June 2014 led to a gap in public broadcasting. A transitional, understaffed, public broadcaster functioned until May 2014 when a new public



broadcaster (NERIT) fully replaced the previous one. Throughout 2014, Syriza's party cadres rejected all invitations by NERIT and demanded the reopening of ERT. In NERIT, the quality of information and analysis depended on the professionalism of producers and journalists. In June 2015, five months after coming to power in January 2015, Syriza abolished the NERIT, re-established the ERT and hired back almost all personnel dismissed by the preceding government.

On the other hand, the circulation of dailies is comparatively low. Sunday newspapers have a larger circulation and Sunday newspapers feature articles based on investigative journalism. Most people inform themselves through TV programs or various news websites. In a few websites, one may follow debates provoked by an informed contributor. Such debates often revolve around the causes and consequences of the economic crisis and the management of the crisis. In short, one may find interesting in-depth information by browsing Greek websites.

Citation:

The public broadcaster, ERT, was re-established by the Syriza-ANEL government through law 4324/2015, passed in April 2015 and implemented two months later.

### Parties and Interest Associations

Intra-party  
Democracy  
Score: 7

Large parties such as New Democracy and Syriza, as well as PASOK, continue to suffer from intense factionalism and heavy-handed control of lists of candidates and agendas of issues by the party leadership. These phenomena are extremely pronounced in small parties, such as the traditional communist party (KKE) and the nationalist right-wing party of Independent Greeks (ANEL), where a small circle around the party leader has the final word over who is going to be included in the party lists.

However, since 2012, Syriza has been able to revive political party life, in the sense that its own party members and voters participate actively in meetings of local party cells and social movements (i.e., those which are closely associated with Syriza). This is a partial reversal of long-term political apathy. It is not observed in most other parties. Among the other parties, however, a step forward was observable from September to November 2015, when the main party of the opposition, New Democracy, organized an open election for its new leader. Four candidates for the party's leadership competed for the post and toured Greece to gather votes from among New Democracy's voters, as the new leader would be elected directly from the party's base. Moreover, New Democracy issued an open call to whomever wanted to join the party and vote in the election.

Association  
Competence  
(Business)  
Score: 4

To sum up, in the period under review and particularly so at the regional and local levels, there has been some improvement as far as the inclusiveness and openness of one of the major parties is concerned.

Interest associations make few relevant policy proposals in a few policy areas, such as macroeconomic policy, incomes and pensions, and labor relations. Leading businesses do not have their own associations, but some leading private banks produce policy papers and reports through their economic research departments.

The think tank of the association of Greek industrialists (SEV) is the Institute of Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE). Depending on the policy issue, this think tank may retain some autonomy from the leadership of SEV and promote the policy views of its own staff. The rest of the interest associations, such as the national association of merchants (ESEE) and the association of artisans, craftsmen and owners of small enterprises (GSEVE), have relatively less well-resourced and smaller think tanks.

From 2012 to 2014, policy formulation was confined to the results of negotiations between the government and the Troika. There was little space and time for interest associations to formulate policy proposals, even though they continued producing interesting policy papers. Even if interest associations had been able to formulate policies, in 2015 it was difficult for interest associations, other than the pro-Syriza associations of public employees, to catch the attention of the Syriza-ANEL government. This was owed, first, to the fact that the government was extremely, if not exclusively, preoccupied with trying to alter austerity policy by renegotiating with Greece's creditors and, second, to the propensity of government ministers to periodically and openly express anti-business sentiments, thus keeping business representatives at bay.

Citation:

The opinions expressed by INE, a think tank associated with labor unions, are available at its website <http://www.inegsee.gr/> (no foreign language version of this website's contents). For opinions mostly reflecting the views of Greek industrialists, see the website of the think tank IOBE at [http://www.iobe.gr/index.asp?a\\_id=122](http://www.iobe.gr/index.asp?a_id=122) (English version of the website).

K Featherstone & D Papadimitriou, *The Limits of Europeanization: Reform Capacity and Policy Conflict in Modern Greece*; London, Routledge, 2008

Association  
Competence  
(Others)  
Score: 5

Greek civil society is relatively underdeveloped. A survey of the European Foundation for Working and Living Conditions, conducted in 2011, is telling enough: while on the average in the EU-27, more than 20% of citizens participated in voluntary activities, Greece (along with Portugal, Spain, Malta, Bulgaria and Romania), showed a much lower participation rate of between 10% and 15%. According to the Eurobarometer 2011 study, only 14% of

Greeks participated regularly or occasionally in a voluntary activity. In this context, “voluntary activities” means unpaid work such as charity or communal work. Non-economic interest associations do not have the resources to become involved in policy formulation and the Greek state does not invite them to do so. There was no change in these patterns in the period under review, except of course for the spontaneous and intensive grassroots mobilization of informal teams and social solidarity networks of Greeks in the summer and fall of 2015, as they strove to help the masses of Syrian, Iraqi, and Afghani refugees arriving on the Greek islands of the Aegean Sea. But this of course, if anything, reveals the lack of relevant policy formulation.

Among all social non-economic interest associations, environmental associations are most developed in Greece. The World Wildlife Fund claims that there are more 300 environmental groups in Greece, but their impact remains small, because policymakers prioritize other policy targets over enhancing environmental protection.

On the other hand, the Greek Orthodox Church plays a preponderant role in formulating ecclesiastical matters and (to some extent) matters of education. For instance, religion is a compulsory subject in all grades of primary school and high school. The Greek Orthodox Church enjoys a tailor-made taxation regime which allows it to sustain a large amount of property.

Citation:

Data from the survey of the European Foundation for Working and Living Conditions are available in the press release <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2011/021/en/1/EF11021EN.pdf>. Accessed on 04.06.2013. Data from the Eurobarometer survey are available in Figure QA15, page 7, available at [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2011/juillet/04\\_07/rapport\\_%20eb75\\_2\\_%20benevolat\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2011/juillet/04_07/rapport_%20eb75_2_%20benevolat_en.pdf). Accessed on 04.06.2013.

Data on Greek environmental associations are available at WWF's Greek language website [http://politics.wwf.gr/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=476&Itemid=384](http://politics.wwf.gr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=476&Itemid=384). Accessed on 04.06.2013.

The provisions of the Constitution of Greece on the Greek Orthodox Church can be found in article 3 of the Constitution.

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