



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Distr.: General
24 November 2015

Original: English

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report
of Greece**

Addendum

**Information provided by Greece in follow-up to the
concluding observations***

[Date received: 12 October 2015]

Note: The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.
* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

15-20672 (E) 021215



Please recycle 



1. During the fifty-fourth session of the Committee, recommendations were issued on the seventh periodic report of Greece, to be taken into account by the Ministries in defining and implementing respective policies. In response to the Commission's recommendations contained in paragraphs 31 and 35 of the text of the observations, we present the following information on their implementation.

Paragraph 31

(a) Improve and increase access, as well as use of effective and affordable methods of contraception, including by subsidizing them, in order to starkly reduce the practice to abortion as a method of family planning;

Family planning; mother and child care

2. In accordance with the relevant provisions of Laws 1036/80, 1397/1983 and 4238/2014, Family Planning and Mother-Child Care Units or services or programmes are operating, medical-nursing and obstetric acts, consultation — interconnection with services, information-training-research on reproductive and sexual health issues are carried out.

3. By virtue of Law 4272/2014, the operation of Family Planning Units and Mother-Child Care Sections or Units is foreseen, as well as services or programmes within the framework of University Clinics, NHS Nursing Units, PEDY structures and local authorities.

4. Moreover, in 2015 the establishment of a Pilot Network of Family Planning Units/Services and Mother-Child Care Units was completed, involving 33 institutions per Health-care Region Administration, NHS Hospitals and PEDY Health Units, classified into three types: (a) 19 Health Units that have developed programmes and services; (b) 7 Health Units that are developing informal activities and actions; and (c) 7 Mother-Child Care Units. The relevant circular provides for the prescription and free of charge performing of prevention actions (pap test and installation of intrauterine devices) while the possibilities for developing information and awareness-raising activities at the local society level concerning reproduction and sexual health are presented.

5. In addition, about 60 Mother-Child-Adolescent Protection Stations operate across Greece, which were transferred as services to PEDY Health Units. Such preventive health structures provide to pregnant women, mothers, infants-children and adolescents, EOPYY insured persons, health care, counselling, prevention — health promotion, vaccination services etc.

(b) Reduce the rate of caesarean sections performed without medical necessity by training or retraining medical personnel on natural birth and introduce strict control of medical indications for caesarean sections in order to reach the WHO recognized rates;

Improvement of perinatal care

6. The Directorate for Public Health having regard to Decision No. 2 of the 238th plenary session of the Hellenic Central Health Council (KESY) of 6-12-2012 “on improving perinatal care in Greece”, which has been accepted by the Minister of Health, as well as to the recognized right to health and the need for further improvement of perinatal care services in Greece, has suggested the enactment of a

law provision on improving perinatal care, which has been voted by the Parliament (article 2 of Law 4316/2014 “Establishment of a dementia observatory, improving perinatal care, regulations for issues under the competence of the Ministry of Health and other provisions”, Government Gazette, 270, v. A’).

7. In particular, this law provides for the establishment of:

- Perinatal Centres;
- Simple-, Intermediate- and High-Dependency Neonatal care Units;
- The mandatory monitoring of high-risk pregnancies and the mandatory use of Perinatal Centres for high-risk deliveries. High-risk pregnant and ready-to-give-birth women are to be referred to the Perinatal Centres under the responsibility of the doctor who monitors them in accordance with medical protocols for selecting high-risk pregnancies and deliveries. By decision of the Minister for Health upon the recommendation of the Central Health Council, the protocols for selecting high-risk pregnancies and deliveries will be defined;
- The development of public Perinatal Centres in all Health-care Regions and their interconnection with all health-care units of the Health-care Region;
- The drawing of a five-year National Action Plan, the creation of a mechanism for monitoring perinatal care and the formation in the Central Health Council of a Permanent Committee on Perinatal Care.

8. All the aforementioned measures aim at providing efficient and high-quality perinatal care services to all pregnant women (and consequently raise awareness on the benefits of natural birth and avoidance of caesarean section where it is not necessary), women in puerperium and newborns in accordance with their health status and regardless of their place of residence, economic situation or other socio-economic barriers.

(c) Improve the quality and accessibility of sexual and reproductive health services and guarantee their access to disadvantaged groups of women;

Accessibility to primary health-care structures

9. In accordance with Law 4238/2014, a Primary National Health Network (PEDY) has been established in the National Health System (ESY). Primary Health-Care services include, among others:

- the assessment of the citizens’ health needs, the drawing and implementation of measures and programmes for the prevention of diseases, the overall implementation of a national screening programme for selected diseases and the health promotion;
- the family planning and the services for mothers and children;
- the primary dental and orthodontic care, focusing on prevention;
- the implementation of vaccination programmes.

10. In the operational framework of this network, equal access to primary health-care services of PEDY Health Units is ensured, regardless of their economic, social, professional, insurance status, etc.

11. In addition, by virtue of a circular entitled “Development of a single platform for planning appointments at national level”, citizens have been enabled to make an appointment with a doctor or other health services via Internet free of charge for Primary Health-Care (P.H.C.) which will include the public bodies that provide primary health-care services of the Primary National Health Network (PEDY), the Outpatient clinics of NHS Hospitals (regular full-time function) as well as the private doctors (affiliated to EOPYY).

(d) Promote education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, especially targeting adolescent girls and boys, in order to foster responsible sexual behaviour, prevention of early pregnancies and of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV-AIDS;

Health education and information

12. In the context of developing the Pilot Network of Family Planning Units and Mother-Child Care Units several actions and information campaigns, information and awareness-raising acts and particular population groups such as women, students, couples, etc., on issues relating to reproductive and sexual health, contraception, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and gynaecological neoplasia, promotion of breastfeeding, etc.

13. In parallel, the production of printed and electronic health education material on relevant issues is promoted, as well as the use of existing material already produced under NSRF programmes, by competent bodies such as KEELPNO, Institute for Children Health, etc.

14. Additionally, health professionals from NHS-PEDY health units participate in health education programmes organized by the Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs at the level of schools of Primary and Secondary education, such as the “Open School”.

15. Finally, Health Education Programmes are being developed by the competent units of Primary and Secondary education Directorates of Greece, aimed at pupils and related to the following issues:

- Intersexual relations — sexual education.
- Sexually transmitted diseases.
- Interpersonal relationships — Mental health (Racism — Violence — Dealing with Mourning — Xenophobia).
- Cancer — Smoking — Nutrition.
- Gender equality.
- Social exclusion — Equal opportunities.

16. Furthermore, in the context of education in reproductive and sexual health issues, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE), estimating that information and counselling on these issues are particularly important for the new generation, girls and boys, has started cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the General-Maternity District Hospital Helena Venizelou to provide counselling and information on issues of contraception and sex education to students of secondary education. During the school year 2013-2014 (March-April)

the GSGE has completed a project, which included seven (7) information awareness meetings with students/pupils in seven (7) schools/High Schools. Within the current school year, the GSGE has completed lectures in 11 high schools in Athens, in total 845 male and female students.

Paragraph 35

(a) Take measures to reduce the number of women in detention, including through targeted prevention programmes aimed at addressing the causes of women's criminality;

17. As regards the taking of measures to reduce the number of women in detention, it should be noted that, in the context of the administrative return procedure, the measure of detention is not applied in a general and indiscriminate manner and efforts are being made to apply less intrusive measures alternative to detention, by implementing the Return Directive 115/2008/EC, as transposed into the national legislation by Law 3907/2011, such as regular appearance before the competent authorities, the deposit of a financial guarantee, the submission of specific documents or the obligation to stay in a specific place.

18. Furthermore, the enactment of Law 4322/2015 seeks, among other things, decongesting prisons in order to improve both their function and the living conditions of prisoners, without gender discrimination. A typical example is the Women's Detention Centre of Eleonas Thebes. Recent statistics in that Centre show a decrease in the number of women detainees of around 15 per cent. Specifically, on 16 April 2015 the number of female prisoners was 452, while on 1 July 2015 amounted to 384.

19. The aforementioned law reserves special attention to mothers prisoners. Article 6, paragraph 4 of the Law provides beneficial calculation of detention days for mothers prisoners, for the period they keep their minor children with them, namely each day of detention is counted as two days.

(b) Address the situation of women and girls in detention through the development of comprehensive gender-sensitive policies, strategies and programmes aimed at facilitating their access to justice and ensuring compliance with their fair trial guarantees; and providing educational, rehabilitative and resettlement programmes for women and girls;

20. As regards the resettlement and overall psychosocial empowerment of women prisoners, the Ministry of Justice states that several programmes are organized and take place (educational and entertaining). In particular, in Women's Detention Centre of Eleonas Thebes, in the years 2014-2015 took/take place the following programmes:

1. Second Chance School, which offers cooperation opportunities with the local community.

2. Programme "Ulysses", which was designed to teach the Greek language to foreign prisoners and has been underway since early 2015.

3. Curriculum for the qualification in Primary Education, with the aim of conquering the Greek language for better communication and understanding and the opportunity to continue studies at the School of Second Chance.

4. Programme of private learning from the Ministry of Education, to provide the necessary knowledge to continue the study and preparation for the final exam classroom and/or success to Higher Education exams.

5. Within the Therapy Centre for Dependent Individuals (KETHEA), the Programme “IN ACTION” is implemented. The programme provides therapeutic newsgroups, counselling and group therapy in an organized community.

6. Learning Group of traditional musical instruments.

7. Cooking-pastry Group “Memories of the senses”, with the assistance of Young Women Christian Association of Thebes.

8. Programme “Word and fabric”, which is implemented on a fortnightly basis from the Social Support Association of Youth “ARSIS”.

9. Group for expression and art, through video, photography, speech and drama, aiming to improve the quality of life of the prisoners, which has been completed with the assistance of NGO “AMAKA”.

10. Group for artistic expression, with the assistance of an art-therapist and a social worker.

11. Photography Group, with the Association of Photography Thebes “Eleitrochos”.

12. Programme “APOPSI”, subsidized by KEK (Vocational Training Centre), with specialization on bakers training. The programme was completed in December 2014.

21. Similarly, the Independent Women’s Department Detention Centre of Korydallos, in the years 2014-2015, implemented/implements the following programmes:

1. Therapeutic Community KE.THE.A, aiming to the psychological independence from psychoactive substances.

2. KE.THE.A — Unit for Counselling and Support of Prisoners, aiming to mobilization, treatment and rehabilitation of addicted prisoners.

3. Training workshop on handmade jewellery, on a weekly basis for the creative employment of prisoners from the private entity “EPANODOS”.

4. Seminar “COMMUNICATION WITHOUT VIOLENCE” by the female association “Centre for Research and Action for Peace”, aiming to redefine the behaviour and roles within the family and in society in general, as well as manage negative emotions and ways of behaving.

5. Programme “Schools for Parents”, which is a parent counselling programme to support parents prisoners regarding mental, social, spiritual and other needs of their children.

22. The courtyard of the Independent Women’s Detention Centre of Korydallos, is equipped with modern fitness open space equipment, which is used daily by prisoners of all ages. Periodically many cultural and recreational events are also organized (film screenings, music events, etc.).

23. As part of measures to combat violence against women, included in the “National Programme for the Prevention and Combating Violence against Women 2009-2013”, the GSGE operated Counselling Centres that provide free information and counselling services to women addressed thereto. The Counselling Centres of the GSGE operate in the capitals of administrative regions (Athens, Patras, Tripolis, Lamia, Larissa, Komotini, Ioannina, Corfu, Heraklion, Crete, Mytilene, Syros, Thessaloniki, Kozani and Piraeus). In order to support and facilitate the access of women victims of violence to justice the GSGE has established a formal cooperation with Bar Associations in the aforementioned cities (signature of cooperation protocols) with the aim of providing free legal aid to women victims of violence.

24. Law 3500/2006 introduced measures to protect victims of domestic violence, while article 28, para. 2 of Law 4055/2012 (“Fair trial and reasonable trial duration”), abolished the obligation to pay a fee for a lawsuit from victims of domestic violence.

25. In August 2013, the GSGE in cooperation with the Greek Police, updated a Police Order to all police services on “Handling of domestic violence cases and strict application of provisions of the Law 3500/2006”. The Police Order contains guidance to all country police officers for the handling of victims.

(c) Improve the conditions of women’s detention facilities in accordance with international standards, to solve the problem of overcrowding in prisons, guarantee separate accommodation for different categories of detainees; and ensure the provision of adequate health facilities and services, in accordance with the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules).

26. Pursuant to the existing legislation and, more specifically, article 67, paragraph 4, subparagraph κε’ of Presidential Decree 141/91, which provides that “[...] separate detention facilities shall be provided for military and police personnel, women and minors”, the Hellenic Police take measures to improve conditions for women in detention and, therefore, this category, as well as all persons belonging to vulnerable target-groups, are separated from other detainees and accommodated in separate detention areas (wings) for their safety until the required administrative procedures are completed (i.e. screening, identification, registration, taking of fingerprints and photos).

27. In the region of Attica, all necessary interventions have been made for the use of the Hellinikon migrants’ detention facility exclusively for women, in order to serve, in the most adequate and appropriate manner, the specific needs of women.

28. The Ministry of Justice refers that on the issue of separation of prisoners, the female pre-trial detainees are kept in the Women’s Independent Department Detention Centre of Korydallos, while convicted women are detained to Women’s Detention Centre of Eleonas Thebes.

29. The provision of health services at Pre-Removal Detention Centres falls within the competence of the Ministry of Health and efforts are being made to cover this need through the Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (KEELPNO) and various non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In this context, medical treatment is provided to aliens on a daily basis either by the nearest general hospital or by doctors and nursing staff of NGOs working in such centres.

30. In the same spirit, the Hellenic Police places particular emphasis on protecting and safeguarding the rights of those detained in police facilities, by ensuring that all necessary rules regarding detainees' (men and women) hygiene and accommodation safety are observed.

31. To ensure the improvement of detention conditions and the protection of detainees and Hellenic Police personnel's health, explicit orders and instructions have been given to all regional Services for the strict implementation-observance of Presidential Decree 45/2008 on "Health and safety measures for the uniformed personnel of the Hellenic Police", as well as guidelines for preventing the transmission of infectious diseases.
